QUEENSHIP AND POWER

WICKED WOMEN *of* TUDOR ENGLAND

Queens, Aristocrats, Commoners

Retha M. Warnicke

QUEENSHIP AND POWER

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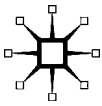

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Contents

Illustrations

Note: Jane More's portrait was not painted and arrangements could not be made to obtain a copy of the portrait in the Royal Collection that has been identified as Queen Katherine Howard.

Acknowledgments

This book is the culmination of years of research. I first became interested in Jane More and Alice More, wives of Sir Thomas More, when I was completing *Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation*, published by Greenwood Press in 1983. Subsequently, *Moreana* accepted two short articles on the More women in 1983 and 1985. After the late Sir Geoffrey Elton, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, read my book on women, he suggested that I write on Anne Boleyn. In 1989, Cambridge University Press published the results of my research. By then I had begun examining funeral sermons preached for seventeenth-century English women with my colleague, Bettie Anne Doebler, professor emerita of English, and in 1995 our introduction to a funeral sermon of Thomas Taylor's that was dedicated to Lettice Dudley, Countess of Leicester, was published by Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints. After becoming interested in the life of another allegedly wicked woman, Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset, my invited, short article on her, Anne Boleyn, and Alice More appeared in *Quidditas* in 1999. For their 2004 publication of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Oxford University Press requested that I write entries on Queen Katherine Howard, Lady Somerset, and Alice More. If I had not been invited to investigate the lives of the two executed queens consort of Henry VIII, I should never have turned to them. Like most Tudor historians, I had assumed that Anne Boleyn's flirtatious behavior was the cause of her fall, and I accepted Katherine Howard's involvement with Sir Thomas Culpeper as imbecilic after she married Henry VIII. My interpretation of the evidence about them, taking advantage of recent work on the history of gender relations and reproduction, has thrown doubts on those traditions. Since the above publications on these women, I have continued to seek information about their lives. For all six, I have discovered new evidence, helping me to continue challenging the received historiography; I have also questioned modern translations of Latin and Greek documents in the chapters on Jane More and Alice More. Like the late Garrett Mattingly, I understand that rehabilitating past reputations does not and cannot matter to the dead, but to us, to the living, it should matter.

During these years of research, I have been grateful for the opportunity to read documents and books at the Huntington Library, the Bodleian Library, the Lambeth Palace Library, the Public Record Office, its successor, the National Archives, the British Library, and

the Institute of Historical Research. Many friends and colleagues have assisted my research efforts or have been willing to read segments of it: Mary Robertson at the Huntington, Karen Hearn at the Tate, Jessica Keene at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and my colleagues at Arizona State University, Antonella Dell' Anna of the School of International Literature and Culture and Andrew Barnes of the History faculty. In October 2011, I benefited from participation in sessions at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference where I discussed John Foxe and Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset, with two scholars, Thomas Freeman, Cambridge University, and Scott Lucas, The Citadel. During meetings of the Early Modern British History Seminar at the Huntington Library, then chaired by David Cressy, now at Ohio State University, many scholars heard my research papers and offered helpful comments on them. Sara Mendelson's and Patricia Crawford's *Women in Early Modern England*, published by Oxford University Press in 1998, is a continuing inspiration for my work. Both Arizona State University and the College of Liberal Arts have granted funds for some of this research, and I am also grateful for the ongoing scholarly support of the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. For her PhD dissertation in 2009, my student Susan Schmid translated and placed in publishing and historical context Lancelot de Carle's French poem on Anne Boleyn's life. My interpretations have benefited from her fine work.

My family has been both patient and supportive during the long years of research on these women. They are my husband, Ronald; my son, Robert; his wife, Cynthia; their seven-year-old daughter, my granddaughter, Winter; and my daughter, Margaretha, who has often kept my computer functioning under trying circumstances.

Finally, I value highly the scholarly activities of Carole Levin, Cather Professor of History at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, who has recently stepped down as president of the Elizabeth I Society In the years since I first met her in 1979, she has supported not only my research but also the research of many other Tudor scholars. As its president, she invited me to give a keynote address at the meeting of the Elizabeth I Society in San Antonio, Texas, in 2007, and my essays are included in several volumes that she has coedited. It is to her that I dedicate this book, which appears in Palgrave Macmillan's series Queenship and Power, coedited by her and Charles Beem.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This book examines the lives of six Tudor women celebrated for their reputed negative characteristics, thus the adjective "wicked." They are Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, two consorts of Henry VIII executed for adultery; Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset, and Lettice, Countess of Essex and Leicester, two defamed noblewomen. Lady Somerset stands accused of arrogantly disputing over precedence with Katherine Parr, the dowager queen, and of urging her reluctant husband, Edward, first Duke of Somerset, to commit fratricide. Lady Leicester allegedly committed adultery with her future spouse, Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester, while married to Walter Devereux, first Earl of Essex. They also include Jane and Alice More, two wives of Sir Thomas More charged with contrariness and shrewishness. Their supposed flouting of patriarchal conventions may not seem serious enough to warrant the wicked characterization. They were not murderers or abusers of children.

Nevertheless, contemporaries described women as wicked who were disobedient to their husbands, their natural rulers. In 1617, William Whately claimed: "Nature has framed the lineaments of his body to superiority, and set the print of government in his face... He must not suffer this order of nature to be inverted." A woman, Whately continued, should carry herself as "inferior."[1]

During the 1550s, Edwin Sandys had supported men's right to rule their wives but warned that they should bear their female "infirmities" and honor them as weaker partners. Sandys clarified that husbands ought not to abide foolish dissolute women, who should not be a "gadder abroad, a tattler, or a busybody." When men had difficulties with their wives, he related, it was because they had married "wicked" women, choosing them for their beauty or wealth rather than for their love of God.[2] Thomas Becon, sometime chaplain to Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and to Somerset, stated that "all wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman... A wicked wife," one who is "contrary to her husband," makes a "sorry heart, a heavy countenance."[3]

Various measures were used to punish wickedness. Women whose contrariness disrupted the family and community gained reputations as "moral criminals" and could be tried and punished in church courts.[4] They might be seated in cucking stools and dunked into water several times. Neighbors labeled naggers of their husbands as scolds; usually, but not

always, they had to exhibit excessive rudeness or threaten violence before courts ordered them to undergo shame rituals.[5] Adulterers as well as adulteresses were sometimes forced to parade in their churches in a "linen sheet with bare feet and legs and carrying a lighted wax candle in one hand and a rosary in the other."[6] Neighbors might shame adulteresses by attaching to their doors animal horns, the symbols of a cuckolded husband.[7]

Because of their high rank, gentlewomen normally escaped shame punishments. Henry VIII's approval of the execution of two consorts represented an extreme response to their alleged behavior, but as monarch he moved to protect his lineage and to restore its and his realm's honor. His voice belonged to the civil government, which, unlike that of private husbands, possessed the power to arrange capital punishment for illicit acts. When debating whether husbands had the right of life and death over adulteresses, virtually all theorists denied them this authority.[8]

That they raised this issue reveals much about contemporary gender relationships. Husbands, like Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, could and did humiliate their wives by returning them to their parental homes for unproved sexual offences. Oxford reluctantly reconciled with his countess, but the future Duke of Somerset repudiated his first wife, Katherine, daughter of Sir William Fillol, and a statute settled his property on the children of Anne née Stanhope, his second wife. Men could also punish their wives for challenging their authority. After Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk, housed his mistress with his protesting countess, Elizabeth, he kept his wife a virtual prisoner and withheld her apparel and jewels. Probably, this kind of deep spousal tension troubled only a minority of marriages.

The lives of the six women highlighted here deserve special consideration because scholars have cited evidence either from mostly unreliable archival evidence or polemical works to denigrate them. Writers critical of Henry's reign have argued that Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard manipulated him into marriage only to betray him with sexual crimes; scholars validating the martyrologist, John Foxe's characterization of Somerset, Edward VI's lord protector, as the "good duke," partially excused his failures because he was wedded to a shrew; authors disparaging the professionalism of Elizabeth's favorite, Leicester, have denied that he had sexual relations with her but have concluded that he sired two children with his future countess while she was married to Essex. By attacking Leicester's character, they not only defamed his wife as wanton but also raised questions about the queen's judgment in selecting a roué as her favorite. Finally, experts on More, who was sainted in 1935, have alternatively used his wives' alleged disobedience to extol his patience or to disparage his misogynous treatment of them.

To offer a context for rescuing their lives from these mostly invalid interpretations, this chapter will examine the importance of early-modern rumormongering and gender expectations. Their reputations were extremely important to men and women alike, but women were especially vulnerable

because both elite and popular culture viewed them as morally inferior, a view derived from scripture, legal institutions, and classical lore. Men sometimes exploited this vulnerability, striking at male rivals by defaming their wives. Recent scholars have explored defamation issues, focusing on the middle and lower levels of society, and drawing on the records of church courts through which those battles were often fought. Defamation was even more significant to the elite, but it was not socially acceptable for them to seek legal redress. Finally, this chapter will briefly examine the sources that early-modern and modern writers have cited to define these women's wickedness and then turn to female domestic roles to place information about them in a contemporary context.

In investigating the oral and literate culture of early-modern England, Adam Fox discovered that individuals eagerly sought intelligence about the monarchy, the events at court, and other titillating matters. People at all ranks demonstrated great interest in obtaining this knowledge and sharing it with others. This gossip often originated in London and Westminster. At St. Paul's Cathedral, the law courts, bookstalls, the Royal Exchange, taverns, and wherever people gathered, they gossiped.[9] About London, "we are left with an impression of a city alive with news."[10]

Travelers, assize justices, and traders repeated this news at provincial alehouses, fairs, churches, and assizes. Many of their tales, which were repeated in documents, should be recognized as misinformation or unverifiable facts. These documents include legal records, diplomatic dispatches, and reports to the privy council, which often acted to suppress the "frenzied stories" for fear that they might lead to panic or even rebellion. After the crown required parish priests to maintain records of births, marriages, and deaths in 1538, for example, rumors claimed that the census-taking would lead to increased taxation.[11]

Gossip also served as an important pastime, for as Erasmus admitted in *The Praise of Folly,* gossiping was "one of the chief pleasures of this life."[12] In his *Annals of the First Four Years of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* in 1599, Sir John Hayward, relying on others for occurrences before his birth, described the speculations about Queen Mary's illness in 1558: "False rumors were spread abroad that she was dead... Every report was greedily both inquired and received, all truths suspected, diverse tales believed, many improbable conjectures hatched and nourished."[13]

Individuals with grudges could spread falsehoods to harm enemies' reputations. Bernard Capp concluded that gossiping offered opportunities for some persons, especially women, to enforce conformity to customary practices and to provide them with an outlet for their "nursing resentment."[14] Laura Gowing also discovered that women attempted to monitor the morality of others of their sex. They confronted neighbors whom they suspected of misbehavior, attempting to ascertain, for example, whether they were hiding an illicit pregnancy. A woman humiliated publicly could retaliate by defaming the accuser or by litigation.[15]

The number of defamation suits increased in early-modern English religious and secular courts. J. A. Sharpe's study of cases in York ecclesiastical courts, for example, indicates that by the 1590s, about one-third of the new suits involved plaintiffs' claims of their neighbors defaming them.[16] Women, supported by husbands, who shrank from the cuckoldry label because it signaled their failure to maintain household order,[17] increasingly sought redress in courts, perhaps amusing observers. Michel de Montaigne remarked, "We laugh as readily at the man who tries to prevent being a cuckolded as we do at him who is one and doesn't know it."[18] Elite women rarely followed the example of Lady Leicester in seeking legal remedies in 1604; most tried preventive tactics, such as adopting deep religious demeanor or forming alliances with clerics.

Many books thundered against gossiping. In Anne de France's lessons for her daughter, Suzanne, perhaps written in the 1490s, she advised that if someone from "envy or hatred" defamed her, she should bear it "patiently." Anne, the daughter of Louis XI, warned Suzanne to "mind" her "own business" without asking or wanting to know anything about others' affairs. If she discovered anything, she should not repeat it. In the late sixteenth century, William Vaughan claimed that gossipers "tickle the hearers' ears" so that "most commonly the accusers are believed, & they, that are accused, are not called to give answers." He opined that "they, that lend their ears to these cur-dogs' barking" ought to be reproved "no less" than the "barkers" because they do not "correct such slanders."[19]

Often researchers have difficulty determining whether records contain facts or fictions. Despite the impossibility of the archives' providing just the facts, many writers have validated their information without considering seriously enough the cultural context in which they were composed. As Robert Shephard observed, rumors often reflected "people's underlying anxieties" and "most deeply held assumptions" that were "shaped by their particular historical circumstances." An examination of them is more likely to provide a deeper understanding of cultural attitudes than reliable facts about those defamed.[20]

This gossip circulated at a time when scholarly opinions treated females as inferior, both intellectually and physically. Reinforcing each other, the legal systems, medical lore, and religious instruction contributed to this ethos. Experts on these subjects created the expectation that wives should be in some sense subject to their husbands' control: they needed male supervision to combat their lecherousness and to oversee their godly worship.

Legal systems treated women more harshly than men in crimes associated with women: for example, witchcraft, infanticide, and husband murdering. Tim Stretton has discovered, however, that women otherwise were less likely than men to be accused of felonies at assizes or quarter sessions. He also found a gulf between statutes enacting laws for women generally and the practice of justices "who sometimes showed leniency to particular women." All widows and single women from the age of 14 held

the status of *feme sole,* allowing them, like men, access to various courts. Many never-married women could not take advantage of these rights because statutes mostly required them to remain in service under the head of a household until reaching 40 years of age. Theoretically, they, as well as widows, could sue in equity, common law, prerogative, ecclesiastical, and customary courts. Meanwhile, wives, deemed *feme covert* by the common law and treated as one person with their husbands, were dependent upon their spouses for finances if they wished to initiate litigation. At marriage, women usually lost control of their property to their spouses, who had rights to their wives' subsequent earnings. Laws excluded married women from suing in the common law courts, but that their husbands possessed coverture rights did not mean that they always enforced them. In Elizabethan England, according to Stretton, a small percentage of women (married and single) participated as litigants in the courts, ranging from about 25 percent in chancery to 13 percent in common pleas. Since women composed about 50 percent of the population, the percentages are disappointing. In total numbers, a "steady stream of women," indeed, thousands sued or were sued in courts.[21]

Citing Aristotle, medical writers treated women as inferior males and following Galen, diagnosed illnesses using the four humours. Describing men as hot and dry and women as cold and moist, Galen allowed the hotter and drier men more importance than women in procreation. During intercourse both partners were thought to release seeds, but male seeds were deemed stronger.[22]

Writers routinely claimed that women's wombs caused them to be more lecherous than men since they could not resist their innate need to fill them with babies. Wombs were also blamed for female hysteria. Menstruating women, as well as new mothers, were considered "polluted and polluting" and should be avoided until their monthly cycle was over or until the churching service was conducted.[23]

Religious treatises furthered the view of women's inferiority. Since Eve, created as Adam's helpmeet in the biblical story, tempted him into sinful action, causing their expulsion from paradise, all subsequent women had to share in her punishment. Condemned to bear children in pain and suffering, wives were also subjected to their husbands' rule. St. Paul's admonition that women be silent at church and seek religious assistance from their husbands at home meant for many wifely obedience was an unchallengeable maxim.[24]

Social historians have concluded that the assertions about women's subordination, discussed in numerous prescriptive books, did not mirror actual marital relationships. Writers usually added statements requiring husbands to love their wives and to treat them with respect. Furthermore, even if women accepted their subordinate status, it did not necessarily mean that they acted submissively. A tension existed between men's need for wives' careful household supervision and their desire to meet social expectations by exercising male dominance at home. Evidence indicates

that women often sought "personal accommodation" within the patriarchy and did "soften its edges."[25]

Authors of conduct books seem to have conceptualized the family as a uniform model, composed of a husband seldom absent from home and a submissive wife needing his guidance. In reality, various circumstances created diverse marital relationships. Vivienne Larminie discovered in her study of the seventeenth-century Newdigates that their wives' familial position relied on their financial security and their household skills but mostly on their "individual capacity to attract, and thus influence or dominate, their husbands."[26] In her essay on two sixteenth-century women who married into the Thynne family, Alison Wall reported that they made complex decisions concerning their families' estates. They controlled business affairs not only because they possessed managerial capabilities but also because their husbands were absent for extensive periods, thus requiring active partners to sustain their families' well-being. It was probably from concern that women would control households in their husbands' absence that writers admonished men to reside with their wives.[27]

From their childhood, nevertheless, women learned that they were the inferior sex. In a letter written by Sir John Cheke to a young woman, Penelope Pie, in 1549, he said about the gender divide:

> Remember that as justice and fortitude are the more proper virtues of men, and the greater shame for men to lack them; so chastity, shamefacedness, and temperance are the more particular virtues of women, and the greater shame for women to offend therein.

He also warned "in the whole part" of her life that "concerned the rule of herself," there was no "place secret," since she stood before the eyes of "God, his angels, saints," and her deceased father.[28]

Other statements identifying women as the weaker sex can be found in many documents, official and personal, private and public. From the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, foreign diplomats, even her officials, referred to her feminine frailties. Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, Duke of Feria, the Spanish ambassador in England in 1559, noted how "troublesome" it was "to negotiate with this woman," who "was naturally changeable," and as she was a "spirited and obstinate woman . . . passion" had "to be considered." The next year, Robert Jones informed Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the English ambassador to France, how Sir William Cecil complained to Jones about his informing Elizabeth of Throckmorton's view of the Council of Trent, "a matter of such weight, being too much . . . for a woman's knowledge."[29]

Women were thus socialized to view themselves as the weaker sex or, at least, to express that attitude, dubbed by Alison Wall as the "rhetoric of submission."[30] In Anne de France's lessons for her daughter, she called her "a feminine and weak creature" and instructed her to give her husband, "after God . . . perfect love and complete obedience."[31] To

the compliment of André Hurault, Sieur de Maisse, the French ambassador, about her language skills, Elizabeth later responded, "It was no marvel to teach a woman to talk; it were far harder to teach her to hold her tongue."[32]

The sources containing information about these six women include various early-modern documents: diplomatic dispatches, the creativity of Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and other poets; legal records, especially interrogatories and depositions; an assortment of historical writings and chronicles; Erasmus's letters and satires; and the polemical religious treatises of John Foxe, Nicholas Sander, and other authors.

The evidence frequently cited to depict them as wicked, especially the queens consort and noblewomen, can be found in diplomatic documents and legal records. In the sixteenth century, in addition to sending ad hoc agents on short-term assignments, rulers commenced appointing resident ambassadors for indefinite periods. Henry VII began the English practice; his first identifiable resident was John Stile, who served in Spain from 1505 to 1510 and in Henry VIII's reign from 1512 to 1517.[33]

The most significant diplomatic documents for this study are the residents' dispatches. Sometimes their material was so sensitive that the ambassadors utilized ciphers, fearing the interception of their reports. Indeed, the residents' primary function was to act as spies, collecting intelligence for their superiors. Since all ambassadors were expected to gather news, host rulers knew that the foreigners were seeking information about them. In response, royal officials introduced moles into embassies; in 1586, for instance, Guillaume de l'Aubespine, Baron of Châteauneuf-sur-cher, the French ambassador to England, discovered that spies had infiltrated his household.[34]

Occasionally, monarchs incarcerated or expelled diplomats from their kingdoms. Elizabeth, for example, deported two Spanish ambassadors, Guerau de Spes and Bernardino de Mendoza, for furthering the Ridolfi and the Throckmorton Plots, which included obtaining armed forces to release Mary, Queen of Scots, from captivity and place her on the English throne.

It can be assumed that diplomats wrote fairly reliable reports about their exchanges with host rulers, but it cannot be assumed that the intelligence imparted to the residents was factual. In 1561, Bishop Alvaro de la Quadra related that when he allowed English officials to cheat him "willingly," pretending he was unaware of their deception, they expressed delight "and ceased not to shower blessings" on his monarch. This Spanish resident also accused Elizabeth of telling him invented stories.[35]

While concerned host officials were plying them with inaccuracies, residents could respond with falsehoods. In 1539, Edmund Bonner, future Bishop of London, complained about having to "dissemble" and speak tactfully regardless of his private thoughts. The most well-known reference to this practice was Sir Henry Wotton's later statement: "*Legatus est vir bonus,*

peregre missus ad mentiendum reipublicae causa" (An ambassador is an honest man sent abroad to lie in the service of his country.)[36]

Besides detailing their meetings with royal officials, ambassadors repeated rumors, the veracity of which can seldom be verified. The claim circulating in 1584 about the demise of Philip II, who lived until 1598, was obviously erroneous, but others cannot be so easily dismissed or corroborated.[37] Residents also regularly hired spies, who gathered reports that could prove inaccurate. In 1608, Wotton, then the English resident at Venice, confessed some news he had bought was invalid.[38]

Dispatches contain many allegations about rulers' sexual behavior. In 1571 at Blois, Catherine de Medici denounced the gossip about Elizabeth to Sir Francis Walsingham, the English ambassador:

> It is all the hurt that evil men can do to Noblewomen and princes, to spread abroad lies and dishonorable tales of them, and that we of all princes that be women, are subject to be slandered wrongfully of them that be our adversaries, other hurt they cannot do us.[39]

It is possible that Catherine dismissed the tales because she hoped to match Elizabeth with one of her sons, but her judgment about the penchant to defame elite women was valid.

Legal records also have evidence used to prove these women's wickedness. These are especially important in evaluating the lives of Anne Boleyn, Katherine Howard, and Lady Leicester. Witnesses often sought to provide information pleasing their inquisitors perhaps because they feared torture. Officials created interrogatories, occasionally coached the answers, and then created composite confessions. As Elizabeth Foyster related, court records are "the product of many voices."[40]

Writers have gleaned biographical information from poetry. While this evidence can lack the negativism found in other documentation, some experts have interpreted it to discredit elite women's behavior. The tradition that Wyatt competed with Henry for Anne Boleyn's attentions is partly derived from his undated verses in which her name never appears. Modern scholars have also identified a haughty, anonymous wolf in Surrey's undated poetry as the future Duchess of Somerset.

Another important source is contemporary correspondence, the familiar letters of private individuals, as well as the official dispatches of governmental agents. During the late medieval period, this correspondence became far less formulaic and more detailed than its earlier, shorter documentary and formal counterparts. In his 1520 publication on the writing of letters, Erasmus denounced those medieval practices.[41] As the century advanced, the number of private and public letters, many of which grew extremely long, greatly increased.

Erasmus edited for publication several volumes of his Latin correspondence, which, along with his other writings, modern scholars have mined for information about his acquaintances. This practice has posed

problems, since Erasmus imbibed many of his culture's antifemale attitudes. He supported widespread literacy and the reading by men and women of the Bible in their native tongues, but he did not advocate classical training for women generally although he was impressed by Thomas More's household school for his daughters. It is not surprising, therefore, to find antifemale statements in Erasmus's writings. His works form some of the major evidence for the alleged misbehavior of More's wives.

Another important source for evidence of these women's wickedness is the polemical literature of the English Reformation. In 1570, John Foxe defended Somerset's assenting to his brother's execution by repeating, without actually validating, rumors blaming the fratricide on his duchess. Responding partly to the popularity of "Foxe's Martyrs," English Catholic exiles published tales discrediting Elizabeth and her councilors. As Sir Francis Englefield, an exiled ally of Mary, Queen of Scots, explained in 1585, "Instead of the sword which we cannot obtain, we will fight with paper and pen which cannot be taken from us."[42] He advocated writing "fresh" pamphlets similar to those of Nicholas Sander and other Catholic English exiles, the most important of whom for this study has been identified as Charles Arundell. Sander painted Anne Boleyn with monstrous features to dishonor her daughter. To defame Elizabeth's favorite, Leicester, Arundell and his associates wrote a libel usually referred to as *Leicester's Commonwealth,* which has colored the way biographers define not only the earl's sexual behavior but also that of his countess.

Finally, chronicles and other writings contain mixed messages concerning women. Some authors, such as Hayward, condemned the haughtiness of women, like Lady Somerset. Others could gloss over their biases if they sought patronage from the ladies whom they lauded in their publications. In contrast to Hayward's attitude toward Lady Somerset, for example, several clerics praised her religious commitment.

These six women mostly did not know each other. It is unlikely that Anne Boleyn, who was executed in 1536, ever met Katherine Howard, her younger first cousin who reached court in 1539. Their distant cousin, the future Lady Somerset, however, knew at least two of the women. She served as Anne Boleyn's host in 1535 and attended court during Katherine Howard's queenship. Although members of prominent families, no direct evidence links the duchess and the younger countess, who served as Elizabeth I's maiden of honor. These two noblewomen surely knew about each other even if they remained unacquainted. Not born until 1543, when the queens consort and Jane More were dead, it is unlikely Lady Leicester met Alice More, who lived until 1551. Because Jane More died in 1511, she could only have known Alice Middleton, her successor as Thomas's wife. They were probably acquainted since two of his stepmothers were, like Alice, mercers' widows. No record places Alice at court, and when Anne Boleyn was crowned queen in 1533, the More family was living in disgrace at Chelsea.

Nevertheless, they had at least four qualities in common. First, besides being of gentle birth, they married men of higher social rank than they or who achieved higher social rank. Second, their husbands possessed considerable political power or influence: a Tudor monarch, a lord protector, a queen's favorite, and a lord chancellor. The king, himself, linked them all together. Besides marrying Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, he appointed More as lord chancellor, arranged the government for his son Edward over which Somerset gained control, and fathered the daughter, whose favorite married Lady Essex. Their lives prove that the poisonous words of rumormongers and of propagandists could touch the lowest and highest gentlewomen. A high public profile was not required.

They shared a third quality: their husbands played major roles in the emerging Christian divisions. Because Henry removed England from the Roman confession, Catholics attacked both his character and those of his wives. Lady Somerset's husband supervised the issuance of Edward VI's prayer book, leading John Foxe to extol him as the "good duke" and to charge the dispute between his wife and Katherine Parr, married to Somerset's brother, passed from the women to their husbands. Some writers have identified Foxe's popular "Martyrs" as the spur that caused Catholic polemicists to attack Elizabeth's Protestant settlement. To denounce her, they defamed her favorite, Leicester. Their libels exaggerating his lechery besmirched the honor of his second wife, whom they alleged committed adultery with him. Finally, Jane and Alice, wives of the man who resigned his position as lord chancellor, refusing to accept the division of Christendom, have gained reputations for disobedience and shrewishness. Authors denounced their characters to enhance his status as a patient, true man for all seasons. Featuring these women's lives together offers opportunities to strengthen the claim that because of their spouses, writers have created negative evidence about them.

They possessed a fourth characteristic in common. Some researchers are interested in their lives partly because enough information or misinformation about each has survived for, at least, a mini-biography. Many studies of Anne Boleyn exist, both positive and negative; unfortunately their sheer number and the sometimes contradictory minutiae in the six wives' genre cause readers difficulty in sorting out facts from fiction. Authors of the six wives' genre constructed their views of the queens consort to fit preconceived notions of Henry's character. It is interesting that the three authors of the full-length studies of Katherine Howard painted her more negatively than did the writers of the six wives' genre. The studies of Lady Somerset, Lady Leicester, and Jane More appear elsewhere only in short articles or in family histories. A modern biography of Alice More is available, but its author conceptualized her life through the lens of her husband's saintliness.

This present investigation draws upon recent women's history, gender analysis, and the history of sexuality for an understanding of their lives. Utilizing this methodology, this study supports Sara Mendelson's claim

that a separate female culture, subordinate to the male culture, entailed "certain common experiences which transcended class differences."[43] Some important attributes of that culture do not appear in the biographies of these women mostly because of the lack of surviving detail. Even so, a few conclusions can be reached.

To contrast the lives of these four queens consort and noblewomen with those of the two wives of More is useful because it offers an opportunity to observe that they belonged to a similar female culture. Often the class differences between them can be seen primarily in their possession of material goods. All women were expected to marry, give birth to the family heir, and to manage their household duties. In their daily lives, More's wives would obviously have had more hands-on work than the four elite women. Besides obtaining food and clothing for their families, wives at all ranks were expected to offer hospitality to friends and other guests and to provide medical assistance to household members. Great ladies also tended to the medical needs of nearby villagers.

In their homes, mothers held first place, followed by the daughters in their birth order, and then the female servants according to their employment. Outside the home, married women enjoyed precedence over single women. In public processions, the former held placement rights that reflected their husbands' status, unless it was inferior to their fathers'; then they kept his name and marched as his daughters. Recognizing the importance of these hierarchical arrangements is crucial to understanding early-modern cultural attitudes.

Mothers supervised their daughters' education at home, where questions were raised about how much academic instruction they should have. The majority of early-modern women could not read and write, but these six women probably had this training. As children, they also received some religious instruction and were, as adults, expected to oversee their offspring's and servants' Christian exercises. Katherine Howard's youth and the paucity of information about her, it might be thought, would cause her to be exempted from this generalization, but she attempted to obtain advancement for her clerics.

Whether widows should remarry was frequently debated. Many described a second marriage as bigamous; in their wills, husbands sometimes admonished their wives to remain unwed and devote their lives to their children. Widows remarried far less frequently than widowers, but even so, three women, Lady Somerset, Lady Leicester, and Alice More, when widowed, did take another husband. It is interesting that the two noblewomen chose to wed younger men of nonnoble status, following a tradition that emerged by the medieval period. Both great ladies, after their last husbands' deaths, acted as their family's matriarch, overseeing the affairs of their children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren.

The royal court was of vital interest to the gentle classes. To gain advantageous marriages for their daughters, parents sought appointments for them as the queen's maidens of honor. The four noblewomen and queens

consort served as maidens of honor before marrying men with great social and political potential. Although sewing was a traditional female occupation, it survives in the evidence about these six women only for the life of Queen Anne Boleyn, who required her maidens to sew clothes for the impoverished. As *feme soles*, queens consort possessed the legal authority of single women and could sell and purchase property and goods without their spouses' authorization. They also had public responsibilities: they joined their husbands at public functions and occasionally interceded on behalf of individuals accused of criminal activity.

It must have been difficult for women to protect their honor, defined as good household management as well as sexual loyalty, in a rumormongering environment that denounced assertive women as shrews or adulteresses. Modern studies have usually condemned these six women for flouting the submissiveness authorities demanded of wives, even though as noted above, the experiences of women generally did not necessarily meet the standards outlined in prescriptive literature.

But how submissive were they? Both Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard lost their lives when the king decided to punish them, attempting to protect his and his dynasty's honor. Neither admitted committing adultery and both died a good death, expressing their devotion to him. During the period of her husband's protectorate, when some contemporaries charged Lady Somerset with bullying her husband, he actually rebuked her for gossiping. By contrast, Lady Leicester accepted a limited association with her second husband; she continued for some time to sign her letters as Lady Essex and delayed visiting some of his properties from concerns about angering Elizabeth who held his first loyalty. After Somerset's and Leicester's deaths, it is not surprising that their widows selected spouses of lesser status, but then Lady Leicester had to endure her husband's exploitation of her wealth. Finally, Erasmus pronounced Jane a dutiful wife and Alice, although possessing a strong personality, obedient to her husband in household matters.

What else do their lives tell us about contemporary women? Like Katherine Howard, Anne Boleyn failed to give birth to a healthy male child, but she seems to have been more successful than her cousin in fulfilling her royal duties partly because of her personal qualities and her training. Both acted as religious patrons and participated in royal events but failed to maintain their reputations for sexual honesty. Lady Somerset and Lady Leicester were also patrons of clerics. They had input into their family's decisions, protecting their heirs and other children from harm as best they could. During her first two marriages, Lady Leicester had extensive responsibility for the management of her households because of her husbands' absences. In their last years, as family matriarchs, both noblewomen carefully supervised their estates, occasionally seeking governmental assistance. We know few specifics about Jane's duties as More's wife except that she gave birth to a healthy male child and three daughters. Evidence confirms that Alice More skillfully managed her household

during her husband's many absences and cared for his children. The lives of these women demonstrate women's limitations but also the ways in which they could act productively for their relatives and clients. Despite setting out to accomplish these domestic goals and participating in religious observances, however, they have gained reputations for wickedness.

Information about each of these woman will be offered in one chapter, divided into two sections. The first section surveys early-modern and modern writings about them to demonstrate the bias of the historical and literary record. Afterward, the verifiable facts will be presented, including, whenever possible, their early years, their spousal duties, their influence with their husbands, and their activities, if any, as religious patrons. The chapter on Anne Boleyn offers new information supporting the arguments in my 1989 study of her life, except for the discussion concerning Wyatt's relationship to her that I now view as problematic.

Respecting the hierarchical views of early-modern society, this book will present these women according to their social status rather than their place in historical chronology. Because they were queens consort, Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard are the most well-known examples of biographers' treatments of them as wicked. Since they were accused of being too flirtatious or of actually cuckolding a king, their lives demonstrate how contemporaries, including diplomats and later writers, especially religious polemicists, formed conclusions about them that were based on early-modern gender and reproductive biases. Next, this book investigates the noblewomen's lives. Diplomatic records and polemical religious treatises continue also to vilify the duchess as a haughty shrew and the countess as a whore. Finally, important to restoring the honor of More's wives are a better understanding and analysis of Erasmus's writings and of the views of More's early biographers.

While this book attempts to reinvent these women's characters, it does not feature them as idealized versions of womanhood. Here their lives are interpreted realistically while correcting earlier gender biases. The goal is to move representations of them away from traditional denunciations and draw them closer to the actual reality of their lives. Revealing how distorted the printed and manuscript evidence about them is will not, of course, undo the damage to their reputations during their lifetimes or over the centuries since their deaths. Still, it is important to recognize how the use of questionable evidence in the archives and in publications has skewed the story of their lives.

Chapter 2

Queen Anne Boleyn

Historiography

The major dates of Anne Boleyn's queenship are well known. In September and October 1532, Henry VIII ennobled her as the Marquess of Pembroke and then escorted her to Calais. They were married in January 1533; she was crowned queen at Whitsuntide and gave birth in September to their daughter, Elizabeth. Less than three years later, in May 1536, she was beheaded, having been convicted of adultery and incest with five men. This chapter first examines some of the early-modern and modern statements about her character and behavior. Then, it turns to the facts of her life, examining various disputes about her, especially her age and the reason for her execution. It denies that she brought about her own death by acting too flirtatiously or that she actually committed the crimes for which she died.

The first chronicler of her career at court was an anonymous Spanish writer at Ghent, who moved to London possibly by 1530, to work perhaps as a merchant, trader, or soldier. His 1550 "uncouth and ungrammatical" narrative is virtually without dates and has a "confused and slovenly order." First published in Spanish in 1874, it appeared in English translation in 1889. He chronicled some easily refutable assertions, for example, that Anne accompanied the king to Calais after, not before, marrying him. His comments about her alleged lovers focused mostly on Mark Smeaton. An old woman enabled Smeaton, addressed as Mark indicating his low social status, to enter Anne's bedchamber from an antechamber with a closet stocked with preserves and candied fruits. She hid Mark in the closet and instructed Anne to request some preserves when her ladies fell asleep. After Anne called for a "little marmalade," her abettor led Mark to her. They slept together that night and many other nights.[1]

It is noteworthy, concerning the chronicler's credibility, that he did not recall the exact names of the five accused lovers. Besides Mark, he identified Masters Brereton and Norris and her brother, incorrectly dubbed a duke, but omitted Sir Francis Weston. Also recording the innocent Sir Thomas Wyatt's imprisonment, the Spaniard claimed that Henry admitted to the poet he, himself, was "blinded by that bad woman." The chronicler was apparently unaware of the arrest of Sir Richard Page, who, like Wyatt, was only temporarily incarcerated. About her character, he

Figure 2.1 Anne Boleyn by an unknown artist, © National Portrait Gallery, London.

said, "No man could imagine all the wickedness . . . Anne invented, or the pleasure she took in doing harm to blessed Queen Katherine." At her execution, she showed a "devilish spirit," refusing to "confess her adultery."[2]

In the 1550s, four other authors wrote about Anne's royal marriage. Nicholas Harpsfield, whose study was first published in 1878, explained why Sir Thomas More refused to take the oath of supremacy, which the

Figure 2.2 112694. Henry VIII (1491–1547), by Rowland Lockey after Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/8–1543), Petworth House & Park, Petworth House, The Egremont Collection (acquired in lieu of tax by H. M. Treasury in 1957 and subsequently transferred to the National Trust), © NTPL/Derrick E. Witty.

writer believed would have signaled his approval of Anne's royal marriage. His reasons were as follows: Henry wed her secretly before Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, nullified his first union to Katherine of Aragon; Anne entered into a precontract of marriage with Henry Percy, and the king committed adultery with both her sister, Mary, and her mother, Elizabeth. Harpsfield also repeated rumors about Wyatt's confessing to the king of having enjoyed "carnal pleasure" with Anne. The only convicted lover he identified was her brother, George, Viscount Rochford.[3]

The two other condemnatory writers in the 1550s were William Forrest, a chaplain of Queen Mary Tudor, and George Cavendish, a servant to Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey. In the verses that Forrest presented to Mary, but not published until 1875, he referred to Anne's singing, dancing, and fluency in French. He thought Wolsey's fall was the result of his preventing Henry Percy from marrying her and of his advising the king to make her his "concubine."[4]

The *Metrical Visions* by Cavendish was first published in 1825. In ones featuring the alleged lovers, Cavendish clarified that Mark was "but a boy." Believing that Anne was guilty, he had her confess that she was a "vicious queen" who soiled the king's bed.[5]

Cavendish's more well-known work is his study of Wolsey, which is the source for Anne's liaison with Percy. She was "very young" when she went to France, he recalled, and after returning home, she attracted the attentions of Percy, who wished to marry her. It was Wolsey's duty to squash their intentions, since noble matchmaking was more political than romantic in nature. Cavendish mostly blamed that "night crow" for Wolsey's fall from power. Other evidence indicates that when Henry decided to marry her, she attempted to work with the cardinal.[6]

In a Latin volume in 1559, John Foxe, who treated Anne sympathetically, referred to her as a "young woman," "ennobled by beauty" and the "most beautiful of all in true piety and character."[7] Four years later, he issued the *Acts and Monuments,* popularly known as "Foxe's Martyrs," which was greatly enlarged in 1570. The next two editions, in 1576 and 1583, basically repeated the 1570 version about Anne's character, except the 1583 volume added her possible intercession with the king for Thomas Patmore, a heretic. Foxe lauded her support for university scholars and for "professors of the gospel of Christ," namely Nicholas Heath, Thomas Thirlby, Nicholas Shaxton, and John Skip. He also praised her assistance to the poor. Citing as his source, her cousin Mary Fitzroy, Duchess of Richmond and widow of Henry's illegitimate son, Foxe claimed that Anne sent her sub-almoner to neighboring towns to distribute alms and personally dispensed coins to the poor. Among her ladies could be found no "idleness" or "leisure to follow such pastimes as daily are seen now" at courts.[8]

At her execution, this "godly lady," who had practiced modesty and piety toward all men, asked the spectators to think the best of her. A great mystery shrouded her death, probably caused by "some secret practicing

of the papists," since this "devout Deborah" lacked "no enemies" among those "Philistines."[9]

"Foxe's Martyrs" was widely disseminated. In 1570, London's mayor and corporation ordered a copy set up in the hall of the Orphan's Court, and the southern convocation instructed all bishops, archdeacons, cardinal deans, and senior residentiaries of all cathedrals to purchase one for their houses, great halls, or chambers. Because it was displayed in religious spaces, it became associated with the scriptures, gaining a certain "quasi-Biblical" authority.[10]

It was also largely responsible for inspiring Catholics to write a "counter-narrative" of the schism. In 1585, the late Nicholas Sander's history, enlarged by Edward Rishton, was published. In it, Sander claimed that Anne was the daughter of Henry and his mistress, Elizabeth Boleyn, and also identified Mary Boleyn as Anne's older sister, demoting her sibling status and tacitly criticizing Henry for marrying a younger daughter. Sander described her as

> rather tall of stature, with black hair . . . of a sallow complexion . . . She had a projecting tooth under the upper lip, and on her right hand six fingers. There was a large wen under her chin.

He inexplicably then related, "She was handsome to look at with a pretty mouth, amusing in her ways."[11]

Anne was careless of her honor, he remarked, since her father sent her to France when she was 15 after discovering her affair with his butler. Upon returning home, she continued her "shameless behavior" with Wyatt, who confessed to the king's council that he had known her carnally. Planning to marry her, Henry defended her behavior when his councilors disclosed Wyatt's confession to him.[12]

Three years after Elizabeth's birth, Sander claimed, when Anne was due to become a mother again, she was delivered of "a shapeless mass of flesh." Unable to conceive further children with Henry, who was favoring Jane Seymour, Anne committed incest with her brother, hoping to ensure that a Boleyn would be the next monarch, and then led a "lewd life" with the other accused lovers. Their "wicked living could not long be kept from the king."[13]

Written in "highly polished humanist Latin prose," Sander's popular study was the basis for every subsequent Catholic history of the Reformation. By 1628, it had appeared in six Latin editions and was translated into six other languages. In 1677, William Lloyd lamented how Sander "carried the world before him," since many writers repeated his anecdotes without realizing that he was their author.[14] It is the major reason for the continuing distorted facts of Anne's life, as well as that of others, including Anne, Lady Somerset. In creating Anne Boleyn's deformed appearance, Sander adopted the Neoplatonic convention of depicting a person considered evil with monstrous features. The outward monstrosities reflected

the inner wickedness. Believing that she enchanted Henry, Sander pictured Anne as a witch with a libidinous appetite.[15]

When claiming that Anne gave birth to "a shapeless mass of flesh," Sander failed to credit God for the tragedy, although his contemporaries believed that divine intervention was crucial to childbirth. Questions have been raised about what Sander meant by "a mass of flesh?" Was this a deformed fetus sent by God to punish Anne for her sexual sins? The answer is somewhat more complex. Christopher Highley has argued that Sander meant for the "mass" to signify a false conception, as Anne's incestuous marriage to her alleged father should not result in the birth of a healthy male heir. The "mass" did not represent a fetus, considered fully formed by the eighteenth day after conception, but could be associated with a heavy menstrual flow, indicating that she was not pregnant. It also symbolized for Sander the heresy Anne, a Lutheran, had brought to England. Using her miscarriage as a literary device, Highley interpreted Sander's meaning as Anne gave birth "metaphorically to Protestant error."[16]

In his study of Henry in 1649, Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, insisted that Anne was a beauty, specifically denouncing Sander's "foul calumnies."[17] Nevertheless, some scholars have validated George Wyatt's reactions to Sander's aspersions in a manuscript unpublished until 1827. Less sophisticated than Herbert and more personally connected to the subject-matter, George was horrified to read that his grandfather, Thomas, was accused of lechery with a monstrous woman. Naively assuming that Sander had exaggerated some slight defects, George, who claimed to have spoken with one of Anne's maidens, allowed her some moles and an extra fingernail.[18]

Also believing that Sander exaggerated the nature of the poet's relationship to Anne, George demoted the sexual affair to a mere competition between the king and Thomas for her affection, but his dating of those events was problematic. He claimed that Thomas was attracted to Anne when he had been married ten years. Since the wedding occurred circa 1520, by George's account his grandfather first attempted to flirt with Anne about 1530. Still following George's time line, when Wolsey returned from his embassy abroad concerning the divorce, the poet competed with Henry for her love. This is a misdating of the mission, since it occurred in 1527. By then, Henry had decided to wed Anne as soon as the divorce from Katherine was finalized.[19]

As Thomas's livelihood depended on royal largess, he would never have presumed to compete with Henry for any lady's affection. In 1543, Sir Thomas Seymour was in a better position to challenge the king for a lady's love, since he was unmarried and an uncle of Edward, the heir to the throne. When Seymour discovered that Henry was courting Katherine Parr, he withdrew as her suitor. As William Segar later observed, even though kings were gentlemen, "no gentleman of what title soever, may be compared unto a king."[20]

A modern tradition, based partly on George's testimony, claimed that sometime before her marriage to Henry, his admiring grandfather, Thomas, wrote verses honoring Anne. In 1815, 12 years prior to the first publication of George Wyatt's manuscript, George Nott issued a two-volume study of the poetry of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and Thomas Wyatt. In the volume on Wyatt, Nott lamented that no record of the poet's attachment to Anne had been preserved. Aware of Wyatt's imprisonment, Nott quoted Thomas Fuller's seventeenth-century statement: He "fell as I have found into disfavor about the business of Queen Anne Boleyn, but, by his innocence, industry, and discretion, he extricated himself." Because Wyatt and Anne were fond of poetry, Nott assumed that they must have enjoyed a romantic, but platonic relationship.[21] A few years after his volumes appeared, Elizabeth Benger published the first full biography of Anne in which she validated George Wyatt's manuscript.[22] Thus, the literary expert and the biographer seem to have created the tradition that most writers have favored.

This romantic tradition has almost no evidence linking the two together. After Anne's imprisonment, ultimately convicted of adultery with five men, two others, Wyatt and Page, as noted earlier, were briefly incarcerated. Sir William Kingston, constable of the Tower of London, informed Anne about their presence. Although the letter in which he reported this conversation is damaged, it does indicate that she was acquainted with Wyatt, who served at her coronation as chief sewer for his father. Page, the other prisoner, was the father-in-law of the future Lady Somerset and thus a connection of Anne's successor, Jane Seymour.[23]

If not for Sander's book, Anne's relationship with Wyatt might have attracted little attention. Harpsfield accused her of having sexual relations with the poet, but his manuscript remained unpublished until 1878. In contrast, the Spanish chronicler stated that Wyatt was released because he was not guilty.[24] Until Sander's study popularized their relationship, leading George to write his refutation, Catholic rumors about them had actually been contradictory. Finally, these authors either ignored Page's imprisonment or were unaware of it. The latter is more likely since Sander, at least, would surely not have hesitated to provide Anne with another paramour.

One of Wyatt's sonnets, often cited as related to her, concerns an elusive hind. It begins, "Whoso list to hunt? I know where is a hind!" and ends with

> "Noli me tangere; for Caesar's I am,
> And wild for to hold, though I seem tame."[25]

A convention dictated when courtiers learned that a ruler loved a lady, those esteeming him should bestow attention upon her, but in a restrained fashion so as not to worry him about their intentions.[26] Favoring Anne, perhaps writing poetry to honor her, because she was

Henry's intended, would have made sense for Wyatt who sought royal bounty. In my study of Anne Boleyn in 1989, I supposed that the above sonnet might have been about her. It did not contradict my conceptualization of Anne, who wanted to marry the king and would have either rejected or ignored the married poet's attentions. The sonnet obviously does not belong to the chivalric genre of a young man obsessing over his feelings for a possibly older woman in a relationship that could become sexual in nature. But in reviewing my previous supposition, I now doubt that I was correct.

Three considerations about Wyatt's poetry and life do not support the Nott/Benger tradition. In the verse about the hind, Wyatt referred to it as Caesar's, not the king's. This Imperial title could designate Henry, but a real Caesar reigned in Europe: Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, who sired at least two illegitimate children. Furthermore, Wyatt seems to have gained a womanizing reputation; he certainly outraged Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London, when they served together on an Imperial mission. It is possible, therefore, that the hind represented one of Charles's mistresses.[27]

In poetry written on Wyatt's death, John Leland, his oldest friend, included some intriguing references to Caesar. In the verse, *Sherborne* (No. 1) he mentioned "Caesar's orator," a servant of Charles V named Maurentius, and in another verse, *Wyatt's Ring* (No. 30), he explained Wyatt wore a ring with "The head of Julius... The image of Caesar." Finally, Leland's poem, entitled, *Caesar's Estimate* (No. 24), stated that Emperor Charles greatly lauded Wyatt, the poet-diplomat's many admirable qualities, such as his "eloquence."[28]

As England's ambassador to the Imperial court, Wyatt seems to have developed an extraordinary relationship with Charles. After some tense negotiations with him concerning some thorny diplomatic issues in his 1539–1540 embassy, Wyatt's letter describing their last conversation was unusually warm in tone. About one of his requests, Wyatt explained, he had "good and gentle answer" from the emperor. Their conversation then "passed sweetly with smiling and good countenance" and at last "with good and gentle fashions, we parted friends."[29]

Another consideration is the poet's relationship to Katherine of Aragon. On December 31, 1527, the year Wolsey returned from his embassy when George claimed that his grandfather competed with the king for Anne, Thomas signed a book dedication to Katherine as "her most humble subject and slave." It was a translation of Guillaume Budé's Latin rendition of Plutarch's *De Tranquilitate Animi* (*Of the Quyete of Mynde*). In the dedication, Wyatt explained that he had forsaken translating Petrarch's *De Remediis Utriusque Fortunae*, which she requested, because he found the work "tedious," but he believed that Plutarch's study offered the inspiration she was seeking. He asked her to pardon "the overboldness" of her "most humble slave" and prayed that God would send her the "honorable desire" of her "virtuous heart."[30] These do not sound like the sentiments

of someone who had been wooing a woman the king expected to be his second wife.

A final issue is that although Wyatt never once mentioned Anne Boleyn in his writings, he referred to another Anne in an epigram, the first line of which is "Accused though I be without desert." The first letter of its 12 descending lines spells "Anne Stanhope." Wyatt's undated verses, including this one, but in an altered state, appeared posthumously in *Tottel's Miscellany* in 1557. While annotating Wyatt's poetry, R. A. Rebholz discovered that Richard Tottel had altered the beginning of the second and third lines of Wyatt's original epigram, deliberately masking the acrostic name, Anne, in the first four descending lines. Rebholz identified Wyatt's subject as Anne née Rawson, wife of Sir Michael Stanhope, the future Lady Somerset's half-brother. For further discussion of this poem and Anne Stanhope, see Chapter 4.[31] At most, with regard to Anne Boleyn and Wyatt, it can be said that they were acquainted and perhaps, but probably not, he wrote the verse about the hind to honor her. Scholars eager to associate the best Henrician poet with the king's love have read too much biographical material into his undated poetry. His verses could have been written in the 1520s before Henry decided to marry Anne or in the 1530s after their wedding. We shall never know the date of their creation.

It was not until the nineteenth century that biographers, like Benger, turned to Anne as their subject. One of the most important in terms of its impact upon future views, was Paul Friedmann's 1884 two-volume set. He wove into a narrative the comments of Eustace Chapuys, the Imperial ambassador and friend of Katherine of Aragon, about Anne's character and behavior, explaining no "untrue accounts" could be found in the dispatches that presented Henry as "entirely led by others." When she arrived at court, the experienced Anne soon discovered that she could rule him, but her 1536 miscarriage sealed her doom. Friedmann opined: "I am by no means convinced that Anne did not commit offenses quite as grave as most of those of which she was accused."[32]

In a volume on Henry's six wives in 1905, Martin A. S. Hume utilized Chapuys's dispatches to initiate the theory of factional politics.[33] He condemned historians for writing as though "each of the six was an isolated phenomenon." Each instead "was but an instrument of politicians, intended to sway the king on one side or the other," since "he was the easiest man in the world to manage." Hume identified the factional leaders as Ferdinand of Aragon, through his daughter, Katherine; Wolsey; Anne; her uncle, Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk; Sir Thomas Cromwell; and Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester. Hume believed that they used the king's "libidinous tendency" to achieve their goals. In 1536, for example, Jane Seymour "was merely an instrument by which politicians sought to turn the King's passion for her to their own ends." Distracting Henry with Jane, Cromwell deserted Anne's reformed faction and allied with her enemies. Later, in 1540, when Henry's union with Katherine

Howard signaled a revival of Catholic and noble influence under Norfolk and Winchester, they, in turn, brought down Cromwell.[34]

Since the 1920s a number of books about Anne have appeared.[35] The next academic biographer, E. W. Ives, professor at Birmingham University where Hume had served as examiner, did not issue his study of her until 1986. Meanwhile, citing Chapuys's dispatches in his article published in 1972, Ives, like Hume, blamed Anne's execution on factional politics. At court, Ives explained, Anne presided "over a masquerade of amorous intrigue and artifice," and it was this "courtly love" behavior, not her miscarriage, that provided her enemies with the means to effect her fall.[36] Ives has continued to validate this theory, although modern literary critics have denied that the courtly love convention was an actual social phenomenon. Young, usually bachelor, knights obsessing about their love for married mistresses, who might be somewhat older, in a relationship that could become sexual in nature, was not an acceptable court convention.[37]

Henry's inconsistent nature, Ives explained, made him vulnerable to political pressure. "The king was master, but never in a steady, autocratic fashion. He would lead, follow, manipulate, assist, observe or ignore as it suited him." In 1536, Cromwell assumed control of the conservative faction of Henry Courtenay, first Marquess of Exeter, and Sir Nicholas Carew, and used Jane Seymour as the "tool" to manipulate Henry into approving Anne's execution. Ives believed that Cromwell moved against Anne because as a Francophile she was attempting to block his goal of reconciling with the emperor. Another strategy was isolation, utilized most effectively by Cromwell, who kept his enemies away from Henry for years, especially when plotting Anne's fall.[38]

Ives later approved Hugh Paget's 1981 article that seemingly settled the ongoing dispute about Anne's age. Successfully translating a French letter that she sent her father, probably in 1514, Paget explained that its closing words, *script á Veure*, indicated that she was at Veure, a royal park near Brussels in the Netherlands, where Margaret, Duchess of Savoy, was regent.[39] Scholars had long known about the document, but had not realized to what Veure referred. This was the first letter she had written by herself, she revealed, as her French tutor, Semmonet, dictated it to her instead of providing her a model to copy. The result was, according to Paget, "almost incomprehensible passages . . . which can only be understood (if at all) by reading them phonetically." Although he found her letter barely legible, with many misspelled words and certainly not a mature hand, he maintained that she must have been about 13 years old when writing it. He selected this age because he believed that she served as a maiden of honor to the regent, and girls often were 13 when winning those competitive appointments.[40] This was an unlikely age for Anne in 1514, since it meant that she would have been about 26 in 1527 when she became Katherine of Aragon's maiden of honor. This issue will be discussed in more detail later.

In his 1986 biography, Ives fashioned Anne's life to comply with his factional theory, again citing Chapuys's dispatches and claiming that Cromwell led a conservative faction to effect her fall. Ives continued conceptualizing her as a courtly lover but noted that she debated religious topics with the king. Calling her beliefs evangelical, he associated them with Christian humanism and denied that she adopted heretical views. This religious bent, however, seems incompatible with a flirtatious lady's character.[41]

In his second volume on Anne's life in 2004, Ives responded to critics who noted that, even if Anne and Cromwell did disagree about foreign policy, the crown was actually moving toward a rapprochement with the emperor. Ives augmented Cromwell's hostility to include religious disputes, explaining that she was challenging monastic secularization, namely the dissolution of the monasteries, which he was to supervise. For his evidence, Ives cited a sermon given in April by Anne's almoner, John Skip, who may or may not have preached with her approval. Among other subjects, Skip criticized Henry's councilors for greedy attacks on the church but did not specify the monasteries.[42]

Earlier, in 1991 and 1992 articles, G. W. Bernard, who was concerned that the factional theory was denying Henry mastery of his court, declared that Anne was guilty of adultery with the five accused lovers. Bernard noted that scholars of "other periods and in other countries" have "questioned or diminished" the role of factional politics while they have interpreted "the part played by kings and queens . . . as much greater." Also challenging Ives's reliance on Chapuys's letters, Bernard wondered why Cromwell confided the conspiracy against Anne to him and not to the other ambassadors, an issue that will be addressed later.[43]

Eighteen years after his first article appeared,[44] Bernard issued a study of Anne, validating Paget's speculation about her age, Wyatt's affection for her, and her adherence to beliefs supported by Christian humanists. He also continued to claim that she committed sexual crimes, but a religious bent seems even more incompatible with the character of an adulterous wife than a flirtatious one. To prove her guilt, Bernard relied on a poem by Lancelot de Carle, future Bishop of Riez and a secretary to the French ambassador, Antoine de Castelnau, Bishop of Tarbes. Having just reached England in the spring of 1536, perhaps only a month before Anne's death, de Carle would have had little time to discover a source who could disclose information to him about goings-on in the royal bedchambers. Furthermore, his master, Ambassador Tarbes, had been in the realm only since late June 1535. A few of Tarbes's letters from 1536 have survived in which he discussed almost exclusively Anglo-French negotiations concerning official matters. Even in his dispatch to Francis on April 19, after his audience with Henry on Easter Wednesday, Tarbes did not repeat any rumors about Anne's possible fall as Chapuys had been doing.[45]

Indeed, in the poem, completed in June 1536 and published in 1545, de Carle admitted that he was merely versifying rumors he had heard.

Sometimes, he was extremely careless with facts, for example, reversing the sequence of Anne's and her brother's trials, misnaming Elizabeth's christening godmother, and misidentifying her godfather. Nevertheless, maintaining that the poet had an accurate understanding of the court, Bernard accepted his claim that when a councilor learned from his sister about the queen's five adulterous affairs, he shared the information with two colleagues. Subsequently, all three approached the king with the news—an absurd assertion, for later even Archbishop Cranmer was willing only to inform Henry in writing about Katherine Howard's premarital activities. Identifying the unnamed sister as Elizabeth Somerset, Countess of Worcester, Bernard amended his earlier assessments concerning the five men's guilt. He stated that the poet's informer was right about Smeaton's, Norris's, and Weston's involvement but wrong about Rochford's and Brereton's guilt. Thus, without clarifying his methodology, Bernard mined the confession eclectically. He also failed to explain why de Carle claimed that Mark confessed to having had sexual relations with Anne three times while the indictment accused her of kissing five men, one of them Mark, on two different occasions, enticing them to have intercourse with her on two subsequent days. Evoking the name of Princess Diana, to prove royal women could stray sexually, Bernard linked his conceptualization of Anne to his misunderstanding of modern feminism and speculated that she might have used her sexuality to challenge the sexual double standard.[46]

One surprising problem with Bernard's analysis was his factual errors, misidentifying, for example, his major source for Anne's guilt. He indicated that the version of the poem he used was the one issued by Georges Ascoli in 1927, but mistakenly thought Ascoli had edited the 1545 printed version. Perhaps de Carle had not overseen its initial publication, since Ascoli discovered that it was a flawed version and chose to annotate one of the poem's several surviving manuscripts.[47] Bernard also claimed an incorrect maternal grandmother for Anne, called her father Viscount Wiltshire, and noted Sander was a Jesuit.[48]

Recent academic biographers of Anne, as well as those of Henry, have mostly either denied or downplayed Ives's factional theory but, however, except for Bernard, they have usually believed that Anne was innocent of the charges. In the most recent volume on Henry's six wives, published in 2003, David Starkey denied that either courtiers or his wives manipulated Henry, who was master of his court and had wed Anne Boleyn because he was infatuated with her.[49]

Meanwhile, other scholars have concluded that when factions dominated court politics, it was because the monarch held a weakened political position, as during the reigns of a minor, such as Edward VI, or an aging monarch, like Elizabeth, in the 1590s. Factional struggles caused the fall of Edward's lord protector, the first Duke of Somerset, in 1549 and the execution of Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex, in 1601. Neither the circumstances surrounding their deaths nor their political struggles appertain to Henry's reign, especially in the 1530s.[50]

Queen Anne Boleyn's Life

The controversial facts about Anne's life from her birth to death will be interpreted by taking into consideration the early-modern social and cultural ethos. Determining her age is important for understanding her relationship to Henry. When he decided to marry her in 1527, whether she was 20 or 26 years old would have impacted greatly on their interactions. It is possible Henry, born in 1491, at least ten years before her, and more likely, as will be argued here, 16 years before her, had considerably more control over their relationship than is sometimes alleged. His surviving love letters prove not only his great affection for her but also his ability to deny her suits and his willingness to comfort her during her absence from court, probably in 1528.[51] Following the discussion of her age and her place in the family hierarchy, the other events of her life, including the reason for her execution, will be examined.

Two early-modern authors identified 1507 as her birth year. In the margin of his history of Elizabeth, published in 1615, William Camden inserted this date. In the text, he noted Henry was 38 and Anne only 22 when they fell in love. An expert genealogist, Camden was the Clarenceux king of arms, a principal officer in the College of Arms, and began this study at the behest of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, who provided him with materials.[52]

This birth year is also implied in the life of an Englishwoman, Jane Dormer, who married the Spanish diplomat, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, Duke of Feria, and moved to Spain in 1559. Born two years after Anne's death, Jane Dormer was the granddaughter of Sir William Sidney, governor of Prince Edward's household, which she occasionally visited. After his accession, she attended his court and later became a maiden of honor to his half-sister, Mary. In Spain, Lady Feria continued corresponding with her English relatives and acquaintances. Her biographer, Henry Clifford, noted that Anne Boleyn was not 29 when she was executed in 1536. Although writing in the early-seventeenth century, Clifford had learned about Anne's execution as well as Lady Feria's life from the duchess, herself. He offered a more specific part of the year for Anne's birthday than Camden, whose study of Elizabeth, Clifford had read.[53]

Surviving statements about Anne's age predating Camden's are somewhat vague. In 1531, Simon Grynaeus, Greek professor at Basle, described her as "young, good looking, of a rather dark complexion and likely enough to have children."[54] Three years later, Chapuys observed that Anne was "in a state of health and of an age to have many more children."[55] In William Forrest's poem, he dated the year of her entrance into court as 1528:

> In the Court (new entered) there did frequent
> A fresh young damsel, that could trip and go.[56]

Writing in exile, Reginald, Cardinal Pole, seemed to support Forrest's statement. In 1539, Pole claimed that Henry had rejected Katherine

because of his passion for a "girl."[57] In his 1546 edition of the history of England, Polydore Vergil twice referred to her as a "girl."[58] It seems unlikely that Forrest would have identified her as a "fresh young damsel" if she were as old as Sander stated. It seems even more unlikely that anyone would have called her young, as Grynaeus did in 1531, if she were 30 or 31 years old. Some contemporaries even thought of themselves as entering old age upon reaching their fourth decade.[59] As to Chapuy's 1534 prediction about Anne's fertility, she certainly could have more children but the adjective "many" is somewhat questionable if she were actually 33 or 34 years old.

Where she was born is unknown, but later tradition suggested London. In the seventeenth century, Thomas Fuller claimed that some of her still-living relatives believed that London was her birthplace.[60] Since her mother, Elizabeth, was daughter to Thomas Howard, second Duke of Norfolk, it is possible that Anne was born at Norfolk House, Lambeth. In 1538, her mother, then Countess of Wiltshire and Ormond, was buried at the family's Lambeth chapel. It is unlikely that Anne's mother established her lying-in chamber at Blickling Manor, the Boleyns's Norfolk seat, because it was the residence of her widowed mother-in-law, Margaret Boleyn. Tudor women sometimes gave birth to their first child in their parents' homes.[61] Anne's ambitious father would have sought to associate his offspring with the ducal family.

As to her looks, no credible eyewitness account painted Anne with any disfigurements, and it is entirely unlikely that hostile observers who saw her, such as Francesco Sanuto, the Venetian ambassador, and perhaps Lancelot de Carle, would have neglected to refer to them if they existed. Sanuto noted that she "was of middling stature," had a "swarthy complexion" a "wide," rather than a "pretty" mouth, and "black and beautiful" eyes.[62] In his poem, de Carle described her as beautiful with an elegant figure.[63]

Whether she was the older or younger daughter is still also under debate. The birth sequence is of less importance than her age, but it is useful to understand sibling protocols. Twice in his seventeenth-century study of the Berkeley family, John Smyth identified Mary as the younger sister. A longtime Berkeley servant and a contemporary of George Carey, second Lord Hunsdon, Smyth was interested in the Carey lineage because Mary Boleyn's great-grandchild, Elizabeth, daughter of this Lord Hunsdon, married Sir Thomas Berkeley.[64]

A 1597 petition of Hunsdon, requesting the Boleyn family's earldom of Ormond on the grounds that Mary, his grandmother, was the older sister, has been cited as irrefutable evidence of their birth sequences. Both W. Hepworth Dixon and J. H. Round, however, found genealogical and legal errors in his petition.[65]

To obtain titles or estates, Tudor petitioners sometimes created bogus genealogies and legal fictions. Hunsdon was likely frustrated by his inability to obtain the family earldom. An *Inquisition Post Mortem* after the death

of Thomas Boleyn, then first Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, identified his daughter, Lady Mary Rochford, née Boleyn, as her father's "only and next daughter and heir."[66] What "next" meant cannot be entirely resolved, but it seems to indicate she was not the elder daughter.

It would have been awkward for Hunsdon to claim the title because the queen's illegitimate status prevented her recognition as one of Wiltshire's heiresses. If Hunsdon's petition were presented to Elizabeth, she did not approve it. Perhaps, Burghley simply rejected it. Later, the tombstone of Hunsdon's daughter, Elizabeth Berkeley, contradicted her father's assertion. Its engraving stated her ancestor, Mary Boleyn, was the younger daughter.[67]

Actually, the legal strategy Hunsdon seems to have adopted was not uncommon when putative illegitimate children complicated the family's lineage. In 1581, for example, William Stanley, third Lord Monteagle, sought to obtain hereditary lands from the late Katherine Grey, who, he claimed, had died without issue. Her illegitimate son, Edward Seymour, Lord Beauchamp, filed a counterpetition insisting that he was her heir as she had married his father, Edward, first Earl of Hertford.[68]

A family tradition traced back to Mary's grandson, William Knollys, first Earl of Banbury, also stated that she was the younger sister. In a petition to the House of Lords in 1808 in which William Knollys requested his alleged ancestor's earldom of Banbury, he referred to Mary Boleyn as the "youngest daughter of Thomas."[69]

The evidence cited to prove both Anne and Mary went to France is also questionable. A list naming the maidens of honor of Mary Tudor when she wed Louis XII in 1514 includes only one "M. Boleyn," not two. Not all the ladies had titles but a "M. Ann Devereux" and a "M. Wotton" were included. These abbreviations did not denote a given name like Mary but the title mistress, used by both married and unmarried gentlewomen. This observation gains credence when examining another, somewhat later, inventory of ladies remaining in France, which was written in French and signed by Louis XII. It has a few different names than the first list, missing "M. Wotton," for example. It identified the Boleyn maiden as "Mademoiselle Boleyn,"[70] again listing only one Boleyn attendant.

To prove Mary's presence there in 1514, Ives cited a letter written 22 years later, in March 1536, by Redolfo, Pio da Carpi, Bishop of Faenza, reporting a recent conversation with Francis I. That Anne was not pregnant and had only pretended to have a miscarriage in January was the reason, Francis alleged, she would allow no one to assist her except her sister whom he had known in France "per una grandissima ribalda et infame sopre tutte" (a great whore and more notorious than all others). Ives speculated that Francis was recalling his acquaintanceship with her in 1514, when she, according to that historian's calculation, was about 14, a very young age, it would seem, for her to have achieved such notoriety. Since in 1532, four years before Francis's denunciation of her was repeated,

Mary accompanied Henry and Anne to Calais for a meeting with Francis, he could easily have come to this conclusion about her character at that time, aware that she was Henry's ex-mistress.[71]

Even if Mary had visited France, that she returned home before Anne to wed in 1520 a gentleman, William Carey, a younger son, definitely not his family's heir, is reason to argue that she was the younger sister. Anne and Mary were probably about a year apart in age, born in 1507 and 1508, respectively. At this time, as Thomas Boleyn asserted about his wife, it was not unusual for aristocratic women to bear children annually during their early-breeding years. Indeed, some later research indicates that a large percentage of them had a second child within a year or less of their first child's birth.[72]

While in the Netherlands, Anne surely resided in the nursery of Margaret, Duchess of Savoy, who was the guardian of her nephew, Charles, future Holy Roman Emperor, born in 1500; and his sisters, Eleanor, future Queen of France, born in 1499; Ysabeau, future Queen of Denmark, born in 1502; and Mary, future Queen of Hungary, born in 1505. Anne was likely the girls' attendant. After moving to France when Mary Tudor wed Louis XII, she must have entered the nursery of Renée, that king's daughter, born in 1510. An extract from a no-longer-extent manuscript supports the conclusion that Anne was not in Mary Tudor's French household. It lists the wages paid to her attendants between October and December 1514; Anne Boleyn was not among them.[73]

It is relevant to her birth year and whether she resided in royal nurseries that ambitious parents provided their children with primary education at relatively early years. At four years they began to differentiate the vowels from consonants and to read some primary literature. In 1547, when he was three and one-half years, for example, the future Sir Francis Willoughby received two ABC's from his guardian. Writing during the reign of Edward VI, William Forrest stated that children should be sent to school at the age of four to "learn some literature."[74] By their thirteenth birthdays, some were completing quite legible, clearly written manuscripts, as Anne's daughter Elizabeth's presentation books to Henry and Katherine Parr readily demonstrate.

Richard Mulcaster later stated that a gentlewoman should be finished with her education at the age of 13 or 14 when she should be able to "read plainly and distinctly" and write "fair and swiftly."[75] Some aristocratic girls might receive extra training if their parents hoped that the queen would select them as maidens of honor. In 1533, to groom her daughter Anne Basset for this service, Honor Plantagenet, Viscountess Lisle, arranged for her, when she was 12 or 13, to stay with a family at Pont de Remy, France, to learn French and "to ply her work, the lute and virginals." Her education was complete when she won appointment as maiden of honor to Jane Seymour. It is important to emphasize that, in fact, monarchs did not hire tutors to educate maidens of honor; the tutors that can be found at courts usually resided in royal nurseries.[76]

Until 1521, Anne remained at the French court, hoping to attract a foreign noble husband, as Agnes de Venegas, Lady Mountjoy, had earlier achieved in England. When Anne returned home, it was probably because of a proposed match with James Butler, future ninth Earl of Ormond. In his reference to the marriage of James, Lord Berkeley, to Isabel, elder daughter of Thomas Mowbray, first Duke of Norfolk, John Smyth noted that it was because the issue of her younger sister, Margaret, was "advanced in honor before" Isabel's that some conjectured inaccurately that Margaret was the elder sister.[77] The expectation was that the elder sister and her descendants would obtain greater opportunities than younger ones, as did Anne Boleyn.

Besides claiming that Anne was the younger daughter, Sander explained that she was a Lutheran convert. Instead, Marguerite of Navarre's spiritual beliefs, the origins of which lay partly in the Brethren of the Common Life's *devotio moderna,* a religious movement in the Netherlands, probably had an impact upon Anne's personal inclinations. Advocating church reform, the Brethren promoted their beliefs in an inner faith and in imitating Christ daily through their charity and education. Their reforming zeal also greatly influenced Christian humanists, such as Erasmus, who supported biblical study and church reform but never approved of Lutheranism. In France, Anne became interested in reading the scriptures in the vernacular (French) and in England converted to a schismatic view after Clement VII repudiated the king's divorce.[78]

A difficulty in applying the term, evangelical, to her is that it seems to imply proto-Protestantism. Originally, however, it referred only to the first four gospels of the New Testament. Until the mid-1530s in England, it had become enlarged to a "reliance on the scriptures as the major religious authority." Thereafter, it included a denial of the papal headship. More individuals at court should be identified as its adherents, since it has often been limited to Anne, Cranmer, Cromwell, and their associates. In 1546, William Thomas even asserted that the king, who claimed, "The Gospel of Christ ought to be the absolute rule unto all others,"[79] was an evangelical.

Other facets of Anne's personality are important in conceptualizing her life. First, she clearly had been seeking an advantageous marriage, and Henry's letters to her prove that she longed to become his consort as much as he wanted to marry her. She must have, therefore, set out to keep him amused and entertained when they were together. Because he delighted in analyzing the scriptures, she like his last wife, Katherine Parr, who was probably less tactful than Anne, soon indulged in religious discussions with him. She proved capable of expressing her views to the king and sent abroad for French religious books to keep informed about new theories.

Second, when word spread that Henry wished to marry her, petitioners began to seek her help in gaining royal largess. Royal favorites never had to promote solicitation of their assistance, for suitors automatically applied to them. If it appears that she favored many clients with similar views, this

was not a deliberate personal strategy. It was surely because those supporting papal authority and Katherine's cause chose not to seek her patronage. As queen, furthermore, some of her appointees might not have been her selections. Henry occasionally appointed his consorts' servants. Indeed, before Anne of Cleves reached England, Henry and his councilors had already selected the members of her household, including her maidens of honor.

Experts on church patronage have determined that the motivations of people who filled religious offices were largely rooted in local or family concerns. In the 1530s, this issue was even more complicated than later, since pinpointing early evangelical attitudes is extremely difficult. It is impossible, as Alec Ryrie has argued, to predict their future beliefs. Ultimately, some of Anne's clients became Protestants and others remained Catholics.[80]

Anne approached her position as Henry's consort seriously, partly because, like her immediate predecessor, he favored her with a coronation ceremony. In her study of queenship, Joanna Laynesmith explained that this religious rite reinforced a dynasty's legitimacy and affirmed the significance of queenship. Primarily concerned with the queen's role as an integral part of the king's public body, the coronation provided her with "a richer sense of her divinely ordained role."[81]

Although coronations were more than fertility rites, kings often honored wives with them after they conceived, perhaps delaying because of the expense. When examining the pageants of Anne's coronation, Richard Osberg noted that some of them included classical motifs, but the third, eighth, and ninth pageants appropriated a medieval theme, signified by Anne's badge (the crowned falcon); St. Anne, the *veni amica coronaberis* pageant, appropriating a Marian hymn; and the tower of the cardinal virtues, respectively. These produced the theme of the queen "as the virga Jesse" and her child "as the Christ-like prince," providing a religious type for her.[82]

The ceremony highlighted the most important role for Anne, already pregnant with Henry's daughter, Elizabeth—the continuation of the Tudor dynasty. Rulers believed that they gained legitimacy through God's blessing, and if they obeyed his laws, he would favor them with sons. God did not, of course, grant Anne and Henry a live male child. This failure, I believe, was the reason for her fall. No evidence dated between her coronation and that miscarriage points to her having indulged in courtly love exchanges with young men.

Wherever men and women gathered, flirtations could develop between them, but prescriptive literature denounced this behavior. Flirtations, writers warned, were based on lust and might result in the women's seduction. Maidens required protection because their biological compulsion to reproduce made them vulnerable to sexual advances. The queen's responsibilities involved monitoring her maidens' behavior with men, since their illicit behavior would lead to her own dishonor.

Anne de France's advice to her child, Suzanne, denounced flirtatious interactions. She wrote: "When it comes to love . . . honesty must be its foundation because any other love is only false . . . It is important to control your bearing, your expressions, your words, your sentiments, your thoughts, your desires, your wishes, and your passions."[83] This volume, published some time between 1517 and 1521, represented the behavior expected of aristocratic daughters. Anne Boleyn could have known about it, since she remained in France until 1521. She may even have met Anne de France, who lived until 1522.[84]

A conduct book also circulated at the English court in 1524. Juan Luis Vives dedicated his Latin study, later translated as *The Instruction of a Christen Woman,* to Katherine of Aragon. He advised her to have her daughter follow his advice and warned that she should not be permitted to read "books of wanton lust," such as *William of Parlerne, Tristan de Leonis,* and *Guy of Warwick.* Parents should also prevent their daughters from keeping men's company, for "what man is there, that will not suspect ill by them?" Recommending that maidens fast to "quench the heat of youth," he admonished them to be "demure, humble, sober, shamefast, chaste, honest, and virtuous."[85]

Evidence indicates that many royal women attempted to follow those guidelines. It is sometimes assumed that Anne was introduced to licentiousness in France, but its queens consort sought to follow Anne de France's lessons for single women, as well as for wives. Indeed, Sir James Melville, who visited Mary, Queen of Scots, there, credited her French upbringing for behavior that he described as virtuous.[86] In England, consorts also attempted to protect their maidens' reputations. Clifford, author of the memoirs of Lady Feria, heard Mary Tudor chastised "Mrs. Francis Neville," her maiden, for allegedly allowing William, Lord Howard of Effingham, to touch her chin and call her pretty.[87]

When interpreting the evidence concerning Anne's demise, I relied on early-modern cultural, gender, and reproductive expectations and understandings to explain it. My hypothesis does not conflict with any of the known truths about her death and makes sense of the available facts. A question addressed was why Henry had her charged with adultery with five specific men twice, beginning in October 1533, after Elizabeth's birth, and ending in December 1535, just before the miscarriage. The obvious answer would seem to be the ten specific illicit acts were dated during that period because Henry wanted to make it impossible to suggest that he had sired the fetus delivered in January 1536. Perhaps, then, the childbirth was irregular.

Another question is what could possibly have been more devastating to a man's reputation than admitting publicly that he had been cuckolded twice by five men in less than two and one-half years? According to Chapuys, Henry even seemed pleased with the charges; the ambassador claimed that he "never saw a prince or husband show or wear his horns more patiently and lightly than this one does."[88]

Men were expected to defend themselves against charges of sodomy, cuckoldry, and cowardice, but were warned not to publicize the details of this besmirchment of their honor. Or as a writer lamented in 1561, "No pain so fervent, hot or cold as is a man to be called cuckold."[89] To be so labeled was usually considered the worst sexual insult a man could suffer, partly because it proved his failure to "achieve sexual dominance" in his marriage.[90]

A reasonable response to the question of what an early-modern man would deem worse than admitting multiple cuckoldry was acknowledging that his wife miscarried a deformed fetus. Stillborn, as well as miscarried, infants, were "signs of God's power over nature and his use of it for didactic purposes," especially the punishment of sinners who committed illicit sexual acts. Or as Robert Cleaver proclaimed, "God himself has shaped and formed" an infant "in his mother's womb."[91]

Early-modern Europeans not only believed that God punished the fetuses of parents guilty of sexual license but also continued to penalize their descendants. Henry, who interpreted Old Testament verses to claim that he was illegally married to Katherine of Aragon, his brother Arthur's widow, because God forbade men to wed their brothers' wives, would surely have been familiar with warnings, such as Exodus 20:5:

> Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them:
> for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity
> of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth
> generation of them that hate me.

As Henry was head of the Church in England, he would have blamed his consort for the iniquity that inflicted the miscarriage upon his dynasty. He must have, consequently, assumed that Anne committed gross sexual acts. The indictments claimed that she, in witchlike fashion, was the predator, enticing her victims with pigeon or French kisses and on subsequent days having sexual relations with them.[92] Some people believed witches had intercourse with demons and then gave birth to deformed fetuses.[93] Thomas Becon, sometime chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer and the Duke of Somerset, questioned: "What children are to be looked for of such a monster of wickedness but monsters have wicked children, like to their mothers?" He was referring to adulteresses and their "wicked behavior with strange lovers."[94]

Since Henry, according to my hypothesis, already believed that he had the evidence of Anne's guilt, the miscarried fetus, he or Cromwell could have been cavalier about the dates chosen for her misbehavior. Indeed, in some cases, it can be proved that Anne was not at the places and the times that the indictments cited for the affairs. In October 1533, for example, she was recovering from childbirth at Greenwich and could not have been with Henry Norris at Westminster.

One aspect of the charges against Anne is strikingly unusual; it is odd that the crown accused no female abettor. Great ladies, especially queens consort, were never alone. At least one lady, and usually several, were in constant attendance. For example, they brought food to their mistresses, helped them dress, escorted them to chapel, assisted them at their toilet, and slept in their bedchambers. Anne could not possibly have met 20 times with five men, twice to kiss them and twice to have sexual relations with them, between October 1533 and December 1536, without the aid of at least one assistant. This statement gains credence from a reading of Chapter 3, which narrates Katherine Howard's secret meetings with Sir Thomas Culpeper. Preparing for them was complicated. Someone had to locate private rooms, contact the men, ensure doors were unlocked, and distract the female attendants, who might spy on their mistresses. Anne would have needed at least one accomplice, like Katherine's Jane, Viscountess Rochford, to meet successfully with her alleged lovers. And yet, the name of no female abettor appears in the official records. The women testifying against Anne were the witnesses who watched while she suffered her miscarriage.

Meanwhile, Chapuys heard rumors claiming that Henry had not spoken to Anne above ten times during the past ten months, thus hinting at the unlikelihood of marital relations and, therefore, his inability to sire the fetus. The ambassador also learned from Cromwell that Anne miscarried the fetus, a male about three-and one-half-months old, on 29 January, the day of Katherine of Aragon's funeral.[95]

Since coinciding dates held great significance, Chapuys would have been pleased to learn that on the day Katherine was buried, her successor miscarried. Other reports claimed different dates. Edward Hall said, for example, Anne delivered the "child," whose sex was unspecified, in early February.[96] One of the most intriguing facts about Anne's miscarriage is, unlike those of Katherine of Aragon, information about it was released to the public.

Why Cromwell revealed that he was plotting Anne's fall to Chapuys and not to other ambassadors was probably because the royal councilor wished to discover what the ambassador knew about the miscarriage. Besides communicating with Katherine of Aragon, Chapuys was in touch with Mary, who lived in her half-sister Elizabeth's household and had as her governess, Anne Shelton, an aunt of Anne Boleyn. As childbirth was an all-female affair, one of the queen's attendants might have leaked some details concerning the miscarriage to the princess or her maidens. Before February 17, Mary, who sent Chapuys messages daily, was probably the informant alerting him that her governess, Anne Shelton, along with her female relatives, had been interrogating one of the princess's most "familiar" maids as to what her mistress knew about the miscarriage.[97]

On January 29, before Chapuys learned about Anne's misfortune, Henry and Gertrude, Marquess and Marchioness of Exeter, informed him that

Henry was claiming that Anne "seduced and forced him into marriage by means of sortileges and charms" and that he considered their union null and void, and that God was denying him sons.[98] Later, Cromwell probably hoped to distract Chapuys from those rumors, which might have represented Henry's initial response, because plans were underway to squelch the details about the miscarriage and to distance Anne's fall from that event.

The assumption that Cromwell would have revealed to the Imperial ambassador an alleged conspiracy against the king's wife without explicit royal approval is incredible. In November 1533, for example, Cromwell refused to provide Chapuys with information about the future treatment of Princess Mary unless he obtained royal permission, because it had been discussed in the privy council with the greatest possible secrecy.[99]

It was, moreover, a settled practice of kings to obtain the confidence of ambassadors by providing them with "advice," containing "a great deal of false news."[100] Surviving evidence proves that both Henry and Cromwell leaked misleading information to ambassadors. In January 1534, Chapuys heard that Henry was promising to name his nephew, James V, as his successor. In other letters, Chapuys received contradictory reports about Norfolk. In April 1533, Chapuys claimed that all noblemen except Norfolk were on the emperor's side. Less than one year later, in February 1534, Chapuys quoted Norfolk as saying, Henry's friendship for the French displeased him, but then the next month, the ambassador complained about the duke's seizing Mary's best jewels and robes, therefore, dishonoring her and her Habsburg relatives.[101]

The timing of two traditional customs seems to have prevented the crown from beginning the case against Anne until Easter week. After childbirth, mothers waited between 30 and 40 days before emerging from their lying-in rooms for a churching ceremony, which enabled them to reappear in public and resume their social roles. If the miscarriage occurred on January 29 or even somewhat earlier, Anne would not have been available for imprisonment until about the end of February. By then, Lent was near and Henry was in London, celebrating shrovetide. The religious and legal calendars reinforced each other: when Hilary Term ended in January, the regular judicial process at Westminster would not commence again until Easter Term. Twice yearly, during Lenten vacation, which began in 1536 on March 8, and Trinity vacation, two common law judges, a puisne judge and a serjeant rode each of the six assize circuits, ultimately causing "the virtual closure . . . of the common law courts at Westminster."[102]

In February 1536, those members of the legal profession, such as the two chief justices, Sir John FitzJames and John Baldwin, who remained at Westminster, participated in the last session of the Reformation Parliament. As it was not dissolved until April 14, bills of attainder could have been introduced against Anne and the five accused men. The members of the 1536 session were extraordinarily busy, however; they not only

passed the act dissolving the smaller monasteries but also acts on major legal, administrative, and economic matters.[103]

Henry decided to opt for judicial trials rather than parliamentary attainders. He apparently wanted his wife and the five men, who, except for the youthful Smeaton, refused to confess their crimes, to undergo trials in which evidence would be presented documenting their guilt. This process resulted in public verdicts, making it virtually impossible for anyone to prove that Henry sired the miscarried fetus.

Another option for Anne and Rochford, but not for the commoners, would have been a trial in the House of Lords. On April 27, writs were issued for a Parliament, but Henry decided not to wait until it met on June 8. Perhaps, he preferred moving against all the accused at about the same time or perhaps decided that trials for Anne and Rochford seemed more appropriate in the Court of Lord High Steward, which operated only when Parliament was not in session. Of the more than 50 English peers, only 26, all living in or near London, were chosen for Anne's and Rochford's trials at which Norfolk, as Lord High Steward, presided. Ultimately, they unanimously determined both Anne and Rochford were guilty.[104]

In the meantime, no move against Anne occurred. Official events continued as the crown had planned. References were made to her as queen in royal documents; Henry granted her land earmarked for her, and clients sent petitions to her. Court observers recognized that princes often continued to compliment those whom they planned to ruin.[105] Even after Henry began to favor Katherine Howard by April 1540, for example, he publicly honored Anne of Cleves, whom he had married under protest. Her last appearance with him occurred on May Day, but he did not exile her from court until late June.

Since Henry probably believed that he had the proof of Anne Boleyn's guilt, the presumed deformed fetus, his councilors' duty was to identify the men with whom she had sexual relations. Ives's factional theory cannot explain the inclusion in Anne's alleged reformed faction of Mark, a powerless lower-class musician, described as a boy, or of the much older William Brereton, who almost certainly never considered flirting with her. Bernard's theory that she was actually guilty of adultery with three of the five men, furthermore, cannot explain her eclectic male selections. According to Bernard, she seems aggressively to have seduced one older man, Norris, who was supposed to wed her maiden, Mary Shelton; one married but younger man, Weston, whom she suspected of attempting to seduce Shelton; and a lower-class boy musician, Smeaton. It would seem reasonable to suggest that during such a short time, a mature woman might find more appealing only one or two masculine types rather than this odd diversity. The question might also be asked, why would these three men risk their lives for these gratuitous two-night stands at a court filled with spies? Only rumors claimed that they received gifts, and apparently Anne's alleged victims made no attempt to pry rewards from her.

Were they assumed incapable of withholding their consent because she bewitched them?

For her alleged lovers, according to the suggestion that she had a deformed fetus, Cromwell must have chosen men with problematic reputations, whom Anne's ladies could recognize as having had at least some casual contact with her. All ultimately charged were members of the king's privy chamber. The first selected was the youthful Mark. He might have committed sodomy with Rochford, since he possessed a book by Jean le Fevre of Ressons-sur-Matz on the miseries of marriage, formerly owned by Rochford. There was little reason for Rochford to present this expensive volume to a lower-class boy other than that they were intimately involved. Indeed, when the queen found Smeaton in her quarters on the eve of his arrest, she reminded him that as he was an inferior person, he should not attempt to speak to her.[106] Rochford and Mark shared an interest in music; John Bale noted Rochford's authorship of "Rythomos elegantessimos" (Most Elegant Songs) in his catalog of authors. A prevailing prejudice about the "propensity toward music" claimed that it could lead "to concupiscence and abomination."[107]

The name of Thomas Wyatt, who was also arrested, can be found in the book on the miseries of marriage, but, unlike Smeaton and Rochford, there is no indication that he owned it. Separated from his wife, Wyatt admitted to an unchaste life but denied "abomination." He was probably a womanizer, but Cromwell found a reason to have him released.[108]

Sir Francis Bryan's reputation was even more unsavory than Wyatt's. When ambassador to the papal court, it was alleged, he slept with a courtesan to obtain information. Although Cromwell later denounced Bryan as the "vicar of hell," he decided not to hold him after he was interrogated. Bryan seems to have enjoyed a close relationship with the Seymours, even referring to Sir Thomas Seymour as his "cousin" in a letter to Henry.[109]

As a member of the king's privy chamber, Brereton had a closer association with his colleague, Rochford, than with the queen.[110] His downfall probably resulted from his reputation as a moneygrubber. In Catholic and Protestant treatises, the deadly sins were often lumped together. Usury, coupled with avarice or covetousness, was defined as the acceptance of any interest and was designated a heresy for which individuals could be excommunicated.[111] Called an "unnatural dealing," usury was associated with sodomy, fornication, and other "unnatural lusts." In Dante's hell, "sodomites and usurers were punished in the same place," the third ditch of the seventh circle.[112] Thomas Aquinas, among other writers, used reproductive terms to denounce moneylending and the taking of interest: because money was sterile, it could not breed. [113]

Their attitude was validated during the Reformation. In 1549, Hugh Latimer lumped together lechery and avarice, for "covetous men give themselves to all voluptuous living." He explained: "Covetousness follows lechery... They that be given... to the vice of lechery, must have wherewith to maintain it; and that must be gotten by covetousness."[114]

In 1581, George Talbot, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, complained about gossip concerning his "great purchasing and riches" to Robert, first Earl of Leicester, who replied: "This matter has been long spread toward your Lordship,...yet so long as they cannot justly charge you with ill getting...it is a very good slander." But he warned, "Only it may be spoken to harm you some way in her majesty's liberal consideration to you, which I hope shall not."[115]

As Ives has asserted, Brereton, the sixth son of Sir William Brereton of Malpas, was an "over-mighty subject," for whom "court office was immensely profitable." He accumulated enough surplus funds to lend money to other courtiers, including John Dudley, future Duke of Northumberland, and achieved a "brilliant marriage for a sixth son" when he wed Elizabeth, widow of Sir John Savage and daughter of Charles Somerset, Earl of Worcester. Complaints had surfaced about the activities of Brereton and his officers in collecting Cheshire rents.[116]

Sir Richard Page, who, like Wyatt, was also briefly incarcerated, was later denounced as a heavy drinker.[117] Drink was often lauded for promoting conviviality, but it was also attacked for undermining the natural social order and for its strong association with whoredom. Overindulging was considered a "Swinish and abominable sin," causing the drinkers to waste time in idleness or sloth.[118]

Almost certainly Norris was targeted because of Anne's actions. Sometime after April 24, when the commission for *oyer and terminer* was issued, she must have learned that she was under investigation; perhaps information was leaked to her about discussions concerning her in the privy council, which assembled at Greenwich during Easter week, although it normally met at Westminster during term times. Attempting to defend her honor, she must have tried to recall any problematic encounters with courtiers and remembered only her conversation with Weston a year earlier, in 1535. It is extraordinary, even tragic, that it was the most recent, perhaps the only exchange that occurred. She had chastised the young, married Weston for seeking Mary Shelton in her quarters. In a lighthearted manner perhaps to distract Anne from his attempt to seduce her maiden, Weston claimed that both he and Norris, Shelton's intended, admired Anne more than her maiden. Since she defied Weston, no semblance of a courtly love exchange or even a simple flirtation occurred between them.[119] Her intervention seems to have had the effect of discouraging Weston, and possibly Norris, from again coming to her chambers to find her maiden, whose honor she sought to protect.

Having remembered this incident, she asked the unmarried Norris if he were seeking dead men's shoes, meaning that did he hope to marry her when Henry died. This conversation did not reflect the courtly love tradition. Norris was not a young knight obsessing about his love for her, and Anne's only evidence for questioning his motivations was Weston's one-year-old remark. Had she been seeking to flirt with Norris, she would not have remonstrated with him in this manner, since the goal of courtly

lovers, at least as defined by the court-faction theory, was not to marry but to enjoy secret rendezvous that could become sexual in nature. Nor would she have demanded that he swear that she was an honorable person to her almoner, John Skip, since that action would inevitably reveal their alleged secret status as courtly lovers. Under protest, Norris complied, and this incident was almost certainly the reason for his arrest on May 1, the day before her incarceration, and for the claim a conspiracy was afoot to kill the king. Indeed, contemporaries often linked death and adultery; the latter was "presented as leading inevitably to murder."[120]

After her arrest, she responded to questions about Norris's oath. Anne admitted to the Tower constable, William Kingston, asking Norris to swear to her honor. She then confided to him Weston's revelations about his and Norris's feelings for her when he came to her apartment in 1535 to find Mary Shelton. Ives accused Anne of beginning "to babble" and causing Weston's arrest and death.[121] Weston was incarcerated only two or at most three days after Anne, but others, possibly Brereton but certainly Wyatt and Page, were arrested later than he. It is more likely that Norris either explained to Skip or to his interrogators the reason Anne demanded he swear that she was an honorable woman. Surely, paperwork concerning Weston, the attempted seducer of her maiden, was already in place before her revelations.

Another effort to recover her reputation involved her daughter. On April 30, Alexander Alesius attended Cromwell at Greenwich, seeking a promised stipend. Alesius later recalled having seen Anne holding Elizabeth in her arms and pleading with her angry husband. If she had been delivered of a deformed fetus, displaying her daughter to Henry would have made sense. If it were solely because a male child was miscarried, reminding him of Elizabeth's physique would have had no potential for success. In fact, Alesius believed that her fall was due in part to that miscarriage.[122] So intent were early-modern monarchs to prove that their offspring were perfectly formed, that they invited diplomats to view them nude.[123]

Some historians have recently attempted to invalidate Alesius's testimony. In his book on Elizabeth, David Starkey doubted the "pathetic story told much later, of the accused Anne Boleyn holding out their daughter to Henry VIII in mute appeal." Since Mary, who usually resided in Elizabeth's household, was not at court but 20 miles away at Hunsdon, Starkey speculated, "We can assume that Elizabeth had gone there too, after spending the Christmas holidays at court." Starkey admitted that when Elizabeth was at Greenwich with her parents that January, Mary, who was still in disgrace because she would not accept her father as head of the Church of England, was at Eltham, some five miles away.[124] Patrick Collinson treated Starkey's speculation as fact: "She was resident at another royal manor in Hertfordshire . . . when Anne was arrested at Greenwich, which is hard to reconcile with the story that the queen held up her child to Henry as a last despairing gesture."[125] It was usual for royal children to visit court at Easter,

and lacking any firm evidence that Elizabeth was with Mary at Hunsdon, it seems safe to validate Alesius's eyewitness account of her presence with her parents for the holiday. Although written down some years later, it was still a scene, given Anne's fate, he could not easily forget. Nor did he forget asking Cranmer on May 19, when they unexpectedly met at Lambeth, why he was crying. The response of the archbishop, who had served as Anne's confessor, was because on that day the queen was to die.

Two days before her execution, Cranmer had earlier pronounced the king's marriage to her invalid, but records outlining his reasons have not survived. Scholars have identified either Henry's affair with her sister, Mary, or Anne's possible *verba de futuro* vows with Percy, as the cause. Clement VII, however, had issued a dispensation allowing Henry to wed the sister of his mistress, as well as a woman who was previously contracted to marry, as long as the union was not consummated.[126] Furthermore, Percy, then sixth Earl of Northumberland, denied the existence of a pre-contract with Anne. Instead, the king could have taken personally the charges for which she died, the bewitching of men into having sexual relations with her. The medieval church decreed that the freely given consent of the bride and groom was essential to a valid marriage. If Henry assumed that Anne had bewitched him, as well as her accused lovers, he could have concluded that he had not freely sworn the *verba de praesenti* vows and could have directed Cranmer to have his union with her annulled. This decision had a serious dynastic result, since it also involved demoting Elizabeth to illegitimate status.

That Anne died because she gave birth to a deformed fetus, which contemporaries usually deemed the result of its parents' illicit sexual behavior, cannot be proved conclusively, as Henry would have ordered the suppression of all evidence about it. However, deformities of first trimester fetuses are far from uncommon: one-third of all conceptions end in miscarriages, partly because of fetal irregularities. In 1500, furthermore, 1,000 monstrous births were recorded in Germany, and in the 1400s and 1500s Italian chronicles noted the birth of deformed fetuses, which usually died soon after their delivery.[127]

As contemporary lore claimed that fetuses were completely formed the eighteenth day after conception, midwives routinely inspected them and the afterbirth to discover any abnormalities. Alluding to infanticide, one writer claimed those "born deformed in body . . . the first day of their being in the world being often the last in it." Many viewed miscarried conjoined twins as one monstrous individual. In 1343, when Mary, Queen of Aragon, was delivered of a child with two heads and four legs, the court had it buried alive.[128] As late as the eighteenth century, Roy Porter noted, the birth of a "severely malformed child was not just a ghastly trauma for the parents but was also regarded as an ominous social event, a portent, a punishment."[129]

Henry and his councilors did not act as though they believed that Anne was innocent of the charges for which she died. On June 3, a few

days after Henry married Jane Seymour, Sir John Russell informed Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, lord deputy of Calais: "The king has come out of hell into heaven for the gentleness in this [Jane] and the cursedness and the unhappiness in the other." Earlier, Cromwell assured Bishop Gardiner, and Sir John Wallop, ambassadors in France, that Anne was guilty of such despicable acts that even the ladies of her privy chamber could not conceal them. He concluded, "I write no particularities; the things be so abominable that I think the like was never heard."[130] As officials often lied to foreign ambassadors, Cromwell's statement to these English diplomats has more the ring of truth than his assertions to Chapuys about her fall. Indeed, later when Chapuys was in Brussels, Cromwell's agent, Stephen Vaughan, wrote that he had been "wily enough" for the ambassador.[131]

Although Chapuys might have accepted Cromwell's claim of turning against Anne for political reasons, the ambassador believed that she was guilty of adultery and referred to her as a "*putain*" (a whore), as well as a concubine. He also dubbed her the English Messalina or Agrippina, two wives of Claudius I, Roman emperor. Claudius divorced Messalina in AD 48 because she conspired against him and publicly married her lover, Gaius Silius. After Messalina and Silius were killed, Claudius married his niece, Agrippina, and adopted her son Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus (the future Emperor Nero). Probably, Agrippina poisoned Claudius in AD 54.[132]

Among those believing that Anne Boleyn was innocent was Matthew Parker, her chaplain, who, when Elizabeth's Archbishop of Canterbury, claimed that Anne's soul was in "blessed felicity with God." About six days before her arrest, he recalled, she asked him to look after her daughter, a plea he took seriously. He confided to Burghley, if he had not "been so much bound to the mother," he would not have agreed to serve her daughter as archbishop.[133]

After Elizabeth's death some writers began to question Henry's attitude toward his wives. In 1631, John Weever, who noted the body of Katherine Howard lay near Anne Boleyn's at St. Peter ad Vincula at the Tower, criticized his actions:

> Many strong reasons are given, both by English and foreign writers, to confirm that belief, that neither this Queen Katherine, nor Queen Anne, were any way guilty of the breach of matrimony, whereof they were accused, but that King Henry, unconstant . . . in his affections, . . . did cut them off upon false suggestions, soon weary of the old, and ever aiming at new espousals.[134]

Although some early-modern writers defended Anne's reputation, Sander's view, in muted form, has stood the test of time.[135] Like him, some historians believe that she was born earlier than 1507, was the younger sister, and had some abnormalities in her appearance, not, however, Sander's gross ones. Although most recent scholars doubt that she was guilty of sexual misconduct, they have identified her as a courtly lover, too flirtatious for her own good, as it were, thus blaming the victim for her tragic death.

Given the early-modern's inadequate understanding of human sexuality and reproduction, we should give both Henry and Anne the benefit of the doubt. We should believe in the innocence of Anne, who asked the witnesses to her execution to think the best of her. We should also believe that Henry was persuaded she was guilty of adultery; otherwise, he would not have made his multiple cuckoldry a matter of public record. The most obvious way in which she could have been innocent, while he was persuaded that she was guilty is if she had given birth to a deformed fetus. Why else would Parker, who knew her well, believe that her soul resided in heaven?

Indeed, in his letter to Henry in May 1536, shortly after her arrest, Cranmer expressed amazement at the charges against her, admitting that he was "in such a perplexity," for he "never had better opinion in woman" than in her. He also conceded that he did not think that Henry would "have gone so far, except she surely had been culpable," and, if guilty, she should be punished "without mercy."[136] And so she was, but for the wrong transgression.

Chapter 3

Queen Katherine Howard

Historiography

On July 28, 1540, Katherine Howard, a granddaughter of the late Thomas, second Duke of Norfolk, became the fifth wife of Henry VIII. The king mistakenly believed that he was marrying a virgin, as she failed to enlighten him about her sexual liaisons in the household of Agnes, Dowager Duchess of Norfolk. There, Henry Manox, her music teacher, fondled Katherine, and Francis Dereham, a gentleman of the household, had sexual intercourse with her. As queen, she also agreed to meet secretly with Sir Thomas Culpeper, a gentleman of the privy chamber. This chapter will first examine some early-modern and modern conceptions of her behavior with these three men. It will then turn to the facts of her life, providing a cultural context for evaluating her relationships with them and her experiences at court. It will argue that this young woman was a victim of sexual predators.

The early-modern author offering the most information about Katherine was the anonymous Spanish writer at Ghent, who also wrote about Anne Boleyn and Anne, Lady Somerset. While claiming that Katherine loved Culpeper, the chronicler failed to provide his given name or to mention Manox and Dereham. He offered many inaccuracies; the most obvious was identifying Katherine, not Anne of Cleves, as the king's fourth wife.

Referring to Katherine at her marriage as "a mere child," he opined: "She was the handsomest of his wives and the most giddy. The devil put it into this queen's heart to fall in love with a gentleman." After her arrest, her love for him remained strong, and she proclaimed at her execution: "I die a queen, but I would rather die the wife of Culpeper."[1]

George Cavendish, a former member of Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey's household, also depicted a youthful Katherine. In the 75 lines featuring her in *Metrical Visions*, Cavendish repeated youth ten times. She lost her "maidenhead" to Dereham, he explained, and she and Culpeper could not "resist" their "lusts" for each other. Finally, he depicted her as remorseful for her illicit life.[2]

Later, Nicholas Sander contrasted Katherine's disloyalty as a wife to Henry's treatment of the church: "But as the king, himself, was faithful neither to God nor to his first wife, so also his wives were not faithful to him." Culpeper and Dereham "sinned" with her before and after her royal marriage.[3]

Unlike Henry's first two wives, Katherine has not proved to be a popular biographical subject. Agnes Strickland's two chapters on her in the queens series in 1842, Henry Herbert's short chapter on her in his book on Henry and his consorts in 1860, and Hume's study of her in his volume on Henry's wives in 1905 were the initial publications about her. The first separate biography of her by Michael Glenne was not issued until 1948.[4] Two other biographies were made available, Lacey Baldwin Smith's in 1961 and Joanna Denny's in 2005. Several volumes on the wives of Henry have appeared since Hume's version was published, the most recent by David Starkey in 2003.[5]

Strickland, Herbert, and Hume approached Katherine's life with some sensitivity. Strickland viewed her fall as "a grand moral lesson" and speculated that Katherine's "childish fancy for Manox originated in her musical propensities." About Dereham, Srickland remarked, "Her young heart . . . assailed by the passionate importunities of the most devoted of lovers" led her to promise to be his "affianced wife." When Katherine, as queen, met with Culpeper, others "construed" their behavior into a "criminal intimacy between" them, but he initiated their meetings to protest her appointing Dereham to her household. Strickland concluded: "She has been more sternly dealt with by historians than Anne Boleyn, but she met her fate with more calmness, and a far greater degree of pious resignation."[6]

Herbert, who had read Strickland's study, appeared sympathetic to Katherine. Her step-grandmother, was a "gossipy old woman," who placed her with waiting women, the "most depraved of their sex." As for Manox, he was a "musician," a group of people who participated in "all the most disgraceful intrigues of the day." Herbert did not believe that she committed adultery with either Dereham or Culpeper. "From the stones of the Tower yard," he exclaimed, her "blood still cries for vengeance."[7]

When turning to Katherine's life in his study, Hume emphasized her youthfulness. Manox began abusing her, Hume suspected, when she was 13 or less in age. He also thought that she was "very young" during the Dereham affair. Although he believed that her relationship with Culpeper was not adulterous, Hume labeled her a "bad wife," but concluded: "Taking a human view of the whole circumstances of her life and of the personality of the man she married, she is surely more worthy of pity than condemnation."[8]

Although cataloged by the Library of Congress as history, Glenne's work appears more like fiction, since it provides dialogue not always based on the record and lacks citations. About Katherine and Manox, Glenne said: "Although she was too young to understand what was happening to her, she was shown the way of passion and thrilled to dangerous heights." Then she turned to Dereham; he gave her gifts and she consented to be his "affianced wife." When queen, she sent for Culpeper to consummate their love. At her execution, Glenne had her repeat the words of the Spanish Chronicler, "I die a queen, but I would rather die the wife of Culpeper."[9]

Lacey Baldwin Smith commented in his biography of Katherine: "The records reveal neither grand passion nor high ideals," since her "life was little more than a series of petty trivialities and wanton acts punctuated by sordid politics." He stated that Manox enjoyed fondling her, but she found a more exciting lover in Dereham, becoming his "paramour" and at court, she and Culpeper "acted with unbelievable imbecility" when they cuckolded Henry.[10]

Denny surmised that Katherine was flattered by Manox's attentions and "may have encouraged" him. About Dereham, Denny opined: "The thrill of secret meetings and a hidden romance" appealed "to her self-destructive need for affection and excitement." At court, she discovered Culpeper: "What started out as a foolish mutual attraction" became "a conspiracy to defraud the king." In short, Denny accused Katherine of wanting to pass off Culpeper's child as Henry's.[11]

Starkey also claimed that Katherine knew "how to attract men" and began "as is often the way with such girls by attracting" her music master. She kept that relationship "within bounds" but as an "antidote" to him, she had sexual relations with Dereham. At court, she and Culpeper had an "instant powerful attraction" to each other and later, when queen, she met secretly with him. As the "love-sick Juliet," she took "the initiative" with Culpeper, but whatever their intentions, they did not have sexual relations.[12]

The biographers of the separate studies of Katherine believed that she and Culpeper had sexual intercourse, while the authors studying her in association with Henry's other queens decided their relationship stopped short of adultery. These differing conclusions relied on the same evidence: witnesses' responses to interrogators in late 1541 about Katherine's experiences. Apparently, none of these writers had read histories of sexuality and gender. Nor did they consider the relationship of the admirers of Katherine to each other or to the circumstances of court politics. Analyzing her life and those of her close relatives within their social context will help clarify some of the behavior these previous biographers failed adequately to explain.

Queen Katherine Howard's Life

The testimonies in 1541 contain the only surviving information about Katherine before her wedding. Her age and place of birth remain uncertain, although as her father, Lord Edmund Howard, lived at Lambeth, she could have been born there. Since, when questioned, she blamed her youth for her mistakes, she was probably still in her teenage years. Indeed, in his letter to Henry Bullinger in 1541 from London, Richard Hilles claimed that Henry had married "a young girl."[13] Manox testified that the duchess had appointed him as Katherine's music teacher five years earlier. If she were about 13 in 1536, when he became her instructor, she would have been about 18 in 1541 and about 17 in 1540 as Henry's bride. In 1541,

Charles de Marillac, the French ambassador, learned that Dereham violated her from her thirteenth until her eighteenth year. Since the two did not have a five-year affair, this assertion at first reading makes little sense. Marillac was not especially perceptive about women's ages. Earlier, he stated that the 24-year-old Anne of Cleves was about 30, partly because her German manners and clothing offended him.[14] Nevertheless, the ages he cited for Katherine could be correct; he could have heard the ages, 13 and 18, and attached them to the facts that he knew. Learning that she was abused at 13 and not knowing about Manox, Marillac would have identified Dereham as the perpetrator. Since rumors claimed that Dereham and Culpeper were Katherine's lovers after she became queen, Marillac could have assumed that Dereham and she exchanged sexual favors to her eighteenth year in 1541. Katherine's age will be addressed again in the discussions of her experiences with Manox.

Her parents were Edmund and his first wife, Joyce or Jocasta Culpeper, daughter of Sir Henry of Oxenhoath, Kent. Joyce was the widow of Ralph Leigh of Stockwell, Kent, by whom she probably had five children, two boys and three girls.[15] About 1514 or 1515, she married Edmund, a son of the second Duke of Norfolk by his first wife, Elizabeth Tilney. In 1497, Elizabeth, previously the wife of Sir Humphrey Bourchier, died leaving five Howard children who lived to maturity; of them, Edmund was the youngest son, born perhaps in 1478. A few months after his mother's death, his father married her cousin Agnes, daughter of Sir Hugh Tylney. With her, the duke had six more surviving children.[16]

Scattered evidence about Edmund can be found in the public records. In 1511, he fought in jousts celebrating the birth of Henry's and Katherine of Aragon's short-lived son. Two years later, as Henry's standard bearer and knight marshal of the horse, Edmund commanded 1,500 Cheshire and Lancashire men and many Yorkshire men on the right wing of the first line of the English army at Flodden Field. After the battle, Edmund's father knighted him for his bravery. [17]

In addition to military service, he held a series of minor appointments, including memberships on the commission of peace, mostly for Surrey. In 1516 and 1517, he was paid diets of 20s. a day for taking thieves, and in 1519 and 1525, he searched for suspicious persons in various London suburbs.[18]

At his father's death in 1524, Edmund participated in the procession moving his body to Thetford Abbey, Norfolk.[19] Despite dying free of debt, Norfolk did not bequeath sufficient income for his son to live in a nobleman's style. It was because of Edmund's poverty that the exact number of his and Joyce's surviving children is known. In a letter to Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, in 1527, Edmund described the financial distress of him, his wife, and his ten children. Since stepchildren and children were treated as members of one extended family, Edmund would have been referring to the Leigh as well as the Howard offspring. Besides Katherine, he sired at least one other daughter, Margaret, and certainly three sons: Charles, Henry, and George. To Wolsey, he explained that he would have been

willing to "dig and delve" if this employment would not have shamed his noble blood.[20]

Edmund did not state his wife's name in his letter. Perhaps, he was still married to Joyce, but sometime during Katherine's childhood, her mother died. Her father took for his second wife, Dorothy, the widow of Sir William Uvedale of Wickham, who held life estates in Hampshire. When they wed is not known, but this marriage probably resulted in his appointment to the commission of peace for Hampshire in 1531.[21] After her death, he married Margaret, the widow of Nicholas Jennings and the daughter of Sir John Mundy of Markeaton Hall, Derbyshire. The first evidence of Edmund's association with Calais occurred in 1528, when he served as a commissioner for its sewers.[22] The year before this appointment, the king decided to marry Anne Boleyn, a daughter of Edmund's sister, Elizabeth. There is no evidence that Anne helped him gain further office at Calais; possibly, his elder brother, Thomas, the successor of their father as Duke of Norfolk, aided his advancement. Two others could have assisted Edmund: his stepmother or perhaps his uterine half-brother, John Bourchier, second Lord Berners, who served two terms as Lord Deputy of Calais, the last ending in March 1533. Regardless of who recommended him, Henry granted him the comptrollership of the town and marches of Calais on April 1, 1531.[23]

The income from Edmund's office did not enable him to settle with his creditors. In 1532, he thanked Sir Thomas Cromwell for advancing to Henry his suits, seeking relief from his debts. Three years later, Sir Richard Page, stepfather of the future Lady Somerset, complained to Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, the successor of Berners as lord deputy, that Edmund had for 15 years owed him £51. Page petitioned Lisle to intervene for him.[24]

While at Calais, Edmund's children were growing up in England. Where Katherine was living before 1536 is uncertain. In their study of the Howard family released in 1907, Gerald Brenan and Edward Statham claimed that after her mother's death Katherine resided with her maternal aunts: either at Oxenhoath with Margaret, who married Thomas Cotton, or at Teston, near Maidstone, with Elizabeth, wife of Henry Barham.[25] That she might have lived with her maternal relatives seems reasonable. However, Brenan's and Statham's suggestion that when her father moved to Calais, he left her with his stepmother may be incorrect. This speculation will be discussed when introducing her relationship with Manox.

Whether Edmund met with her and his other children during his brief trips to London, in 1534, 1537, and 1538, is unknown. Usually, Lady Norfolk's removal to Lambeth is dated about 1538, but no record indicates that she was, like him, there in the early spring. While in London on this last visit, he discussed the terms for his resignation as Calais's comptroller, the income of which had been insufficient to support his lifestyle. The result of the negotiations, as reported in January 1539 by John Husee, Lisle's London agent, was the comptrollership would be exchanged for lands for

Edmund and his heir. For whatever reason, Henry and his council were unwilling or unable to find another office for him.[26] Edmund, himself, had only about one more year to live. In 1783, William Guthrie, who had researched noble lives in the Herald's Office, reported that Edmund died on March 19, 1540, but the state papers do not document his death.[27]

Meanwhile, by 1536, Katherine was residing at Chesworth, a dower house of her step-grandmother, which stood one mile to the southeast of Horsham in Sussex. She could have begun residing with her in 1531, the year her father removed to Calais. Usually, when aristocratic offspring were young, however, they dwelt in nurseries with similarly aged children. The witnesses interrogated about Katherine's experiences at Horsham did not refer to a nurse or supervisor, except Lady Norfolk. That Katherine lacked a governess seems to indicate that she was about 13 in 1536, when Manox became her music master.

That Katherine began to reside with her step-grandmother at this age was in accordance with contemporary customs. Aristocratic parents sought to place their children in the homes of individuals of higher social rank than they, expecting their assistance in finding appropriate spouses and perhaps career advancement. These youths became their guardians' servants, waiting on them at meals, helping them to dress, attending them to chapel, escorting them on excursions, and performing other errands. According to elite tradition, in order to rule, an individual had first to learn to obey. To govern a household and manage servants, for example, one first had to live as a servant.[28] Thus, Katherine would have moved in with her step-grandmother to learn obedience, to experience how a noble household was managed, and to acquire some educational polish, her music lessons, for example.

Another important consideration for Katherine's age was the duchess's decision to provide the costly music lessons. Not only were instructors required to tutor her but also instruments, the virginals, for example, as well as music books, had to be obtained. These lessons fostered social graces and could help advance her future prospects. Lady Norfolk may have been grooming her for appointment as maiden of honor to Anne Boleyn, who could assist her in marrying appropriately. Until May 1536, those outside the court and most inside it, as well, could not have anticipated the queen's execution.

The decisions of Honor, Viscountess Lisle, concerning the education of her daughter, Anne, by her first husband, Sir John Basset, provide a context for Katherine's instruction. In 1533, as noted in Chapter 2, Lady Lisle sent to France, her daughter, when she was 12 or 13, to stay with a prominent family for the purpose of learning French and plying "her work, the lute and virginals." Lady Lisle's ambition was to prepare Anne to become a maiden of honor, and in 1537, just before Jane Seymour removed to her lying-in room, she accepted Anne as one of her maidens.[29]

With possibly a somewhat similar ambition for her step-granddaughter, the duchess appointed Manox, probably a younger son of her neighbor,

George Manox of Giffords, to teach Katherine to play the virginals. Brenan and Statham described him as a youth, but his exact age is unknown. Undoubtedly, he was a few years older than Katherine. Manox later testified that Barnes, another music master, also instructed Katherine. Before arriving at even a partial understanding of her experiences with her abuser, Manox, it will be useful to address the credibility of witnesses' evidence, the early-modern attitude toward girls' sexuality, and the importance of household hierarchies.

Among those interrogated concerning the Manox affair were, of course, Katherine and the music teacher. In addition, various servants also testified about events at Chesworth and later at Lambeth. Key witnesses were often the servants, whose presence made privacy for the members of their household difficult to achieve. They spied "through cracks in the wainscoting" and "through keyholes"; they even listened "at doors to hear the rhythmic creaking of beds."[30]

During interrogations, royal officials asked questions, sometimes coached the answers, and created a composite confession. The historical "truth" about what actually happened often cannot be determined solely from a reading of the documents, but the behavior considered "illicit and condemned" can be identified. Some respondents deliberately skewed their answers. When cuckolds sued defamers, for example, their witnesses told "stories" in such a way as to shift the blame for the adultery away from the plaintiffs to their wives.[31] In Katherine's case, the testimonies could lead readers to conclude that she personally abetted or even was to blame for the illicit acts. Manox, for example, said she fell in love with him. Compounding the problems for those interrogated about Katherine and Manox is that they were struggling to recall details from as much as five years earlier. They might occasionally have accepted officials' hints about what had transpired, since, like some other witnesses, they might have wished to please their inquisitors by providing them with the facts they were seeking.[32] A few might have feared torture.

Those questioned held similar notions about gender differences. They were socialized to view women, even young girls, as more sexually aggressive than men. In 1518, Ambrogio Leoni, a physician of Venice, complained to Erasmus about young girls seeking to become mothers "at the earliest moment" and were "delighted" to bear children, who were such "weaklings," they could not "long survive."[33] Thomas Becon, sometime chaplain to Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Edward, Duke of Somerset, even identified a specific age: girls at 14 were "desirous to be married…to the end that they may be fruitful."[34] Characterized as morally frail, females thus bore much of the guilt for illicit sex. It was widely believed that they provoked rape and found pleasure in it. Despite the appearance of resistance, they were thought to have possessed "interior consent."[35]

Male authors were perhaps recalling the strength of their sexual needs as boys and transposing them on girls. Unlike males' "libido," females'

"libido builds slowly during adolescence and doesn't reach its peak until her mid-thirties."[36] Although exceptions to such generalizations do occur, when a teenaged girl has sexual relations, it is more the result of political or cultural pressures than biological compulsion.

The social relationships of Katherine to her music master, as well as to the other maidens, are important considerations for understanding the events. In their social hierarchy, seven unequal relationships were recognized: husband over wife, parents over children, master over apprentice, teacher over scholar, priest over layman, prince over subject, and hirer over laborer. Although a duke's granddaughter, Katherine was a servant, subject to her music teacher's commands. He had less authority than that of a grammar school master, who was said to act *in loco parentis*, but he was her instructor. Other advantages were that he was older than she and lived in a society privileging age over youth and viewing females as imperfect males.[37]

Among the maidens in her step-grandmother's household, Katherine held the highest social position. As step-granddaughter to their mistress, she was a Howard, not a Tylney. Her lineage and kinship might well have been the reasons that no maiden seems to have considered informing the duchess about her intimacy with Manox or with Dereham. They must have feared punishment for the messenger of bad news about a Howard. Marjorie McIntosh has recently noted: "sexual activity between servants seems to have occurred especially in large households in which supervision was presumably less immediate."[38]

Manox's abuse began at Horsham and continued after Lady Norfolk removed to Lambeth. It was at Lambeth that her chamberer, Mary Lascelles (later Hall), learned from another maiden, Alice Restwold (later Wilkes), about Manox's secret meetings with Katherine. Lascelles confronted him, reminding him that his social rank would prevent him from marrying a Howard. She recalled his bragging that Katherine offered her maidenhead to him. That she reproached Manox indicates that Lascelles might have initially believed that he was aggressively pursuing his student. Apparently viewing him as her social equal, she felt comfortable questioning him, but she denied informing the duchess or anyone else, except her own brother, about Manox's and Dereham's attentions to Katherine.[39]

Manox maintained that after he and Katherine fell in love with each other, he asked her to meet with him secretly. To arrange their rendezvous, he bribed two girls to carry tokens between him and his student. Crown interrogators were not interested enough in these females to question them, probably because they doubted Manox had sexual intercourse with Katherine. Manox recalled meeting her secretly in the chapel, where he stroked her genitalia, and although she displayed reluctance, she was, according to him, "content" to permit his fondling.[40] In his confession, as Laura Gowing has noted about male testimony in illicit sexual cases generally, his "speech shows no signs of the sense of guilty self-implication"[41] that appears so regularly in women's responses.

Katherine later recalled his "flattering and fair persuasions." What else this controlling abuser said to her to persuade her to meet with him is not documented. Katherine failed to seek intervention from the duchess, perhaps because she feared being blamed and punished. On at least one occasion, Manox reported, when Lady Norfolk found them together, she hit Katherine two or three times and warned the two never again to meet alone together.[42]

In his essay on the sexual abuse of early modern English girls between the ages of eight and fifteen, Martin Ingram related: "Children are as individuals and as a group among the most vulnerable elements in any society." He noted that individuals' responses to official questioning in the criminal cases he studied were contaminated by legal verbiage. His sample was small, because few of these crimes were prosecuted: only the most serious abuse, mostly involving rape or attempted rape, appeared in the records. The evidence indicates that the victims were either reluctant or unable to reveal the abuse to their parents or guardians, sometimes because they feared that they would be blamed, sometimes because the abuser threatened them with violence, and sometimes because they were traumatized.[43] The fact that some expected to be punished for the incidents demonstrates that they were socialized to feel guilty and believe that they were responsible for or deserved their abuse. Indeed, the perpetrators often described their victims as willing.

In 1538, the dowager duchess moved to Norfolk House, her dower house that lay abreast the king's highway and directly opposite the mansion of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[44] The relocation did not lead to Katherine's escape from Manox, who obtained employment nearby. Mary Lascelles-Hall recalled seeing him alone with Katherine in the orchard there.[45] The affair ended sometime after the arrival of Francis Dereham, a distant Howard relative, who was transferred from the third Duke of Norfolk's household to that of the dowager duchess.

Norfolk House, like other noble residences, had a maidens' chamber where the young unmarried girls slept. That Dereham felt comfortable entering their chamber indicates that he probably held the office of gentleman usher, whose duties included notifying his mistress's gentlewomen when they should attend her in the great chamber.[46] He became friends with Edward Waldegrave, another servant who was a cousin of Manox. At first, Dereham set out to seduce Joan Ackworth (later Bulmer). Soon, he learned about Katherine's intimacy with Manox and assumed she would be an easy mark. He began his seduction of her slowly, first giving her presents, some of which she promised to pay for from an expected legacy. Typically, the cunning seducer "gets his way by enticement, persuasion, solicitation, promises, fraud, and deceit."[47]

Their relationship must have begun with Katherine's feeling grateful to Dereham, since his presence seems to have stopped Manox's abuse of her. Incensed about their relationship, Manox coauthored with Barnes an anonymous letter to the duchess, explaining that if she would arise

one-half hour after going to bed and enter the maidens' chamber, she would be displeased by the goings-on there. He left the letter in her chapel pew, and, according to Manox, she berated the girls. Katherine stole the letter, he also explained, and gave it to Dereham, who guessed Manox had written it.[48] Some of the servants later recalled that the duchess had at least once caught Dereham kissing Katherine. The predictable noblewoman, who was some 60 years old, slapped Dereham, beat Katherine, and hit Ackworth, who witnessed the events.[49] Perhaps, discovering them kissing, finally led her to put an end to their affair.

When later questioned about exchanging gifts with Dereham, Katherine admitted giving him a band and sleeves for a shirt and at the beginning of the 1541 royal progress, £10. She confessed also paying him £5 or £6 for some of his gifts when she left for court. The first of these items she recalled was a French fennel made for her by a crooked-back woman skilled in creating artificial flowers. Katherine remembered being afraid to wear it at court until a lady agreed to claim that she had given it to her. He also presented her with some velvet and satin for a "billyment" or ornamental article and some sarcenet for a quilted cap. Katherine denied asking the cap be embroidered with its friar's knots, symbols of love. She apparently did not compensate Dereham for a "heart's ease of silk," an artificial flower given as a New Year's gift or for an old shirt of fine Holland or cambric, formerly possessed by Lady Norfolk's deceased son, Lord Thomas, which was passed on to Dereham. Katherine denied presenting him with jewelry, including a gold ring and a ruby for a ring. Finally, when he departed for Ireland after she moved to court, he left at Norfolk House an indenture and obligation of £100, which would be hers, he stated, if he never returned.[50]

Royal officials were more interested in their possible marital status and their sexual behavior than in the gifts. She recalled that he asked her to marry him many times, but she never promised to have him as her husband. Later, she clarified that when a "commotion in the House" stated that they would wed and "some of his enemies had envy thereat, wherefore he desired me to give him leave to call me wife, and I would call him husband." She was "content" they should do so; "commonly he called" her wife, and "many times," she addressed him as husband. If she identified the enemies, the interrogators did not think the names significant enough to note. This is an important point, however, for Dereham was keeping at bay a hostile Manox, who had with Barnes, written anonymously to the duchess, attempting to stop their affair. Dereham likely persuaded her to pretend that she was married to him by using Manox's and perhaps Barnes's challenges to threaten her with dire consequences if she failed to support him. In cases like these, responsible jurists would normally not just ask, "Did she consent?" Instead, they would inquire whether "her consent was procured by force, either physical or mental." Apparently, she was asked only the first question, although after signing her confession, she volunteered to Cranmer that what Dereham did was "importune

forcement, and in a manner, violence, rather than of her own free consent and will." She also recalled him kissing her many times in front of witnesses, who questioned whether they would be married. He responded: "You may guess twice, and guess worse." She insisted, however, she never promised to marry him.[51]

As to "carnal knowledge," he lay with her "divers times," using her as a "man does his wife." He always wore his doublet, but she also described him as "naked" when his hose was pulled down. Their sexual encounters lasted about three months and ceased about the end of 1538. The evenings in the maidens' chamber sometimes began with his bringing wine, strawberries, apples, and other items for a banquet that could last until 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. He neither made special appointments to see her nor was he invited by her into the chamber. She denied stealing the keys from Lady Norfolk, as Lascelles-Hall claimed, to admit him, but confessed: "for many other causes the doors have been opened, sometime over night, and sometimes early in the morning, as well as at the request of me, as of other." Katherine also denied that she arranged for Dereham to hide in the gallery if the duchess came into the maidens' chamber. He had thought of this expediency.[52]

It is unnecessary here to repeat the witnesses' prurient comments about their affair, because both admitted having sexual intercourse. One statement attributed to Katherine is, however, of special interest. In her interrogation, one of the maidens, Margaret Benet, claimed that she heard Dereham say:

> That although he used the company of a woman a C [100] times yet he would get no child except he listed [in sense of desire pleased him to] and that the queen [Katherine] made answers thereto and likewise that a woman might meddle with a man and yet conceive no child unless she would for herself. [53]

Smith thought Katherine was referring to birth control.[54] To be sure, if she actually made this statement, attributed to her by Dereham, she could have been thinking about some primitive forms of contraception. Those included the woman, after her partner's ejaculation, standing on her feet, jumping hard for seven or eight paces and descending a flight of stairs.[55] Other methods involved making a douche with, for example, "rue and ground lily root combined with castoreum," or drinking herbal portions, containing perhaps sassafras, or invoking magical interventions. She could also have placed vinegar or other ointments on her genitalia. Two well-known preventives, *interruptus coitus*, the most effective means, and oiling the penis would have required Dereham's cooperation.[56] Despite his boast that he "would get no child except he listed," since he wished to marry Katherine, it is likely that he would have disallowed any form of birth control. He might have wanted her to become pregnant to force her family to recognize she was his wife.

Perhaps, Katherine was not referring to contraceptives. Using them would have mostly required purchasing materials, and she seems not to have had enough pocket money to buy even artificial flowers until she went to court. The lack of privacy was also a problem; how could she hide these materials from the others in their common room, and how could she have kept them available for Dereham's unannounced visits?

By the words "unless she would for herself," Katherine could have been referring either to her immature bodily development or to the prevailing view of how pregnancy occurred. Although this is mere speculation, it is possible that her menstrual cycle had not yet begun. Merry Wiesner has recently related the average onset of menarche in England in the 1890s was about 15.5 years of age. Because the diet of nineteenth-century girls was probably worse than that of sixteenth-century girls, Wiesner thought the earlier average age might well have been lower rather than higher. Peter Laslett reported that the mean age at the onset of menarche for Swedish girls was 17.1 in 1850 and 15.7 in 1905. Mean age means, of course, that there were as many girls who began menstruating younger than 17.1 as there were who began menstruating older than that age.[57]

If her menstruation had begun, Katherine could not have known about its role in reproduction. Even medical professionals failed to understand the reasons for the flow. They attributed it "either to a process which purified women's blood or which removed excess blood from their bodies." Since they also believed that it morphed into milk for lactation, they did associate it with childbirth. They recommended women desiring pregnancy to have intercourse before, not after menstruation, when the "flux" might wash away the man's seed.[58] It is unlikely that she meant that she had sought to prevent pregnancy by scheduling their rendezvous on days before the monthly flow began since she could not and did not, according to her confession, control Dereham's arrival times.

Not one of her comments indicates she enjoyed the affair with Dereham. A girl's loss of her maidenhead in a society esteeming virginity could result in emotional as well as painful physical issues. The most popular contemporary view of successful conception required the female partner to enjoy the sexual experience.[59] The legal system upheld this view: the law stipulated that a female who claimed she was forcibly violated but who became pregnant could not be judged a rape victim, since her conception proved she enjoyed the sexual act. Perhaps, Katherine's comment was a coded statement about her feelings for Dereham rather than a reference to birth control. If she did not wish to have sexual relations with him, then she would have considered herself forced to please him and would have found the experience unpleasant. She could believe, therefore, her emotions controlled whether she became pregnant.

In 1541, after hearing her confession, Cranmer believed that she was married to Dereham because after addressing each other as husband and wife, they had sexual relations. The canon law recognized two vows for

marriage. One, *verba de futuro*, which involved swearing to marry sometime in the future, did not constitute a valid union unless followed by sexual intercourse. The other, *verba de presenti* or vow of "present consent," did not require consummation for the union to be considered valid. The law failed to identify the necessary words for *verba de futuro* but judges routinely, like Cranmer, did not attempt to determine definitively what words were exchanged if sexual intercourse occurred after they were sworn. If Katherine, "having no interior consent," found sexual relations with Dereham unpleasant, her feelings would explain why, after her arrest, she adamantly denied she was his wife. The church required the vow be freely given and not coerced.[60] Her denial was consistent with the claim that Dereham forced his attentions upon her.

When Katherine obtained appointment as maiden of honor to Anne of Cleves, Dereham told her that he "would not tarry long in the house." She responded: "he might do as he list." Clarifying she had not been grieved to leave him, she explained to Cranmer: "For all that knew me, and kept my company, knew how glad and desirous I was to come to the court." When Dereham later confronted her at court, he asked her if she was to marry Sir Thomas Culpeper, claiming he heard rumors to that effect. She responded: "What should you trouble me therewith, for you know I will not have you; and if you heard such reports, you heard more than I do know."[61]

Clearly, Lady Norfolk did not govern her household well. Two men she introduced into her home, Manox and Dereham, abused or seduced her step-granddaughter. In 1545, just three years after Katherine's death, Hugh Rhodes, a member of the king's chapel, warned his readers "to take good heed of any new servants that you take into your house and how you put them in authority over young children."[62]

Writers of prescriptive literature, such as Thomas Becon, admonished guardians and parents to "reprove vice sharply" in their servants and prevent their "whoring" and "uncleanness of body." Parents, in Katherine's case a step-grandparent, should not permit their children to associate with "the sinful and ungodly," for these "wicked" people would lead the young ones into iniquity. The "fellowship of the sinful and ungodly," Becon warned, should be "eschewed, as the plague and pestilence."[63]

Why Lady Norfolk failed as Katherine's guardian can, perhaps, be explained by placing her in social context. Outside the immediate members of the English royal family, she was the highest ranking noblewoman. In 1526, the Eltham Ordinances named her the First Lady of the queen's household following Henry's sister, Mary, the French queen. In lists of the recipients of the king's New Year's gifs, her title preceded Elizabeth's, the wife of the third Duke of Norfolk.[64] By 1538, not only was the dowager Lady Norfolk the highest ranking duchess, but she was also godmother of Henry's two daughters. Her own four daughters wed earls or noblemen who would become earls. When he wrote his will, her

husband used the royal plural, and writers, like John Palsgrave in 1530, referred to him as "the right virtuous and excellent prince Thomas, late duke of Norfolk."[65]

It is no wonder that the proud duchess expected her underlings to obey her. Surely, she failed to check on their behavior, not because she condoned the partying, but because it might never have occurred to her that she would be disobeyed, and she also assumed that they were securely locked in their chamber. Even if she had not been concerned enough about her maidens to preserve their reputations, she would have wished to protect her and her family's honor. Although chastity formed a large part of a woman's reputation, other attributes were important, such as her success in managing her household. In societies dominated by honor and shame, a family was dependent on public opinion for its "ranking in the hierarchy of honour and for its marriage partners."[66] Sexual acts, such as adultery and fornication, were considered criminal offences and "threatened the stability and order of family and community."[67]

Although a lady with high social rank, Lady Norfolk endured another social reality. Writers of conduct books expected both male and female servants to obey their mistresses, but they limited how wives could instruct male servants. In 1524, Juan Luis Vives advised a mistress "to give her servants work to do . . . But let her order all things after her husband's will and commandment or at the least in such wise as she thinks her husband will be content."[68] Obviously, as a widow, Lady Norfolk was solely responsible for her household. Vives also warned widows with great houses to make "some well aged man ruler, that is sad and discreet, and of good condition, whose honesty shall be his mistress's worship."[69]

If, after discovering Manox's abuse of Katherine, Lady Norfolk brought Dereham into her household to manage her male servants, it was tantamount to letting the weasel into the chicken coop. In her 60s, she must have been somewhat frail, went to bed early, and seems to have been unaware of Katherine's worsening plight, until the arrogant Dereham became publicly careless. No wonder Katherine looked forward to court life, but as she was to discover, her past misadventures could not be kept hidden for long.

By late autumn 1539, Henry had approved her appointment as maiden of honor to Anne of Cleves. Traditionally, scholars have assumed Katherine's uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, won the position for her. He doubtlessly recommended her, realizing the value of another relative at court, but women might deserve some credit. To become a maiden in 1537, Anne Basset enjoyed the assistance of her mother's niece, Mary, wife of Robert Radcliffe, first Earl of Sussex, and her stepfather's cousin, Eleanor, wife of Thomas Manners, first Earl of Rutland, lord chamberlain to Jane Seymour.[70]

While Jane was queen, women might have had more influence on these appointments than in 1539 when Henry awaited Anne of Cleves's arrival. Even after she reached England, Henry continued to choose her servants.

In February 1540, Anne Basset informed her mother about a conversation with him concerning her sister's possible selection as maiden. He reported that "divers" had spoken to him, but he would not appoint anyone yet, for he wanted someone "fair" and "meet for the room."[71]

Even so, women could have influenced his choices. Katherine's most important female supporter was her step-grandmother. The deposition Lady Norfolk gave in July 1529 surely gratified Henry, since she recalled seeing Arthur, Prince of Wales, and Katherine of Aragon bedded down together on their marriage night.[72] Historians have assumed that Lady Norfolk opposed the divorce, but her testimony supported his allegation that Katherine was not a virgin when she wed Henry. For Leviticus 20:21, which warns a man against taking his brother's wife, to apply to his case, Henry needed to prove that Katherine and Arthur consummated their marriage. Lying-in bed together was presumptive evidence that they had done so.[73]

Lady Norfolk's influence with Henry was well known. In 1534, Cranmer sought her assistance, asking her to cause her "special friends" at court to promote the suit of Thomas Cade, her servant and Cranmer's ally, who wished to hold an office by "sufficient deputy." Cranmer would have promoted Cade's petition, if "he had not been very importune unto his highness for sundry matters concerning" himself.[74] The next year, John Longland, Bishop of Lincoln, lost the right to appoint a cleric to Sherington benefice to Lady Norfolk, whose chaplain, Sir Christopher Rookes, obtained the living. Longland repeatedly informed Sir Thomas Cromwell that the Bishops of Lincoln had been filling this position for 240 years, but ceased protesting after learning that Henry favored Rookes's appointment.[75] Following Anne Boleyn's execution and the discovery in 1537 of the clandestine marriage of Lady Norfolk's son, Thomas, with Henry's niece, Margaret Douglas, the duchess's influence might have waned but so would presumably that of all Howards, at least temporarily.

Other supporters could have been the husbands of both Katherine's half-sister and sister, although no evidence of their assistance has survived. Isabel Leigh was the second wife of Sir Edward Baynton, vice-chamberlain to all Henry's consorts except Katherine of Aragon. Moreover, Margaret Howard was married to Sir Thomas Arundell, the receiver of Anne of Cleves and future chancellor of Katherine Howard.[76] Undoubtedly, that she was a Howard was surely one reason the king considered her appointment. If he personally interviewed the girls, as seems likely from his conversation with Anne Basset, then he found Katherine "fair" enough to serve his queen. Lady Norfolk heard that he had "taken a fancy" to her the first time he saw her.[77]

The financier for her move to court is unclear. The Lisle letters indicate that the arrangements for Anne Basset to serve as maiden were costly. The livery granted the maidens was the wardrobe for ceremonies; it did not include their daily attire. All court residents had to dress according to their office. Maidens were required to wear clothes of rich material, such

as damask and velvet, meeting the standards in Mrs. Pole's "book of reckoning." The girls furnished their own bedding.[78]

Some relative must have purchased these items for Katherine. Perhaps, Norfolk, but in 1538, he estimated the decrease in his substance in money and plate at £2,000, and in 1540, Parliament confirmed his sale to Henry of three manors.[79] Instead, her step-grandmother probably financed Katherine's move to court. Indeed, in 1540, before her royal wedding, Sir Francis Bryan collected five hundred marks from Lady Norfolk, who required a bond for the restitution of the amount if Katherine died before the marriage.[80]

That Katherine wanted to be a maiden is not surprising. Given the status of yeoman ushers, the girls possessed lodgings with provision for one servant, a daily allowance of food at the appropriate table, bouche of court for food (mostly breakfast) for themselves and their servant, wax lights, stabling for one horse, and £10 yearly.[81] For these concessions, she was required to obey the queen and the maidens' mother, Mrs. Stonor, to dress attractively, to greet visitors pleasantly, and to escort the queen in processions, sometimes carrying her train.[82] The queen could require her maidens to perform other duties. Anne Boleyn, for example, commanded them to sew shirts, smocks, and other items for the poor. No evidence suggests that Anne of Cleves assigned her maidens such tasks, thus allowing them time for "vain toys and poetical fancies."[83]

Earlier, in 1537, when Jane Seymour decided to meet Anne Basset before appointing her as her maiden, John Husee advised Lady Lisle to "exhort" Anne "to be sober, sad, wise and discreet and lowly…and to be obedient" to her mistress and "to serve God and to be virtuous." He understood that she knew "the court is full of pride, envy, indignation and mocking, scorning and derision." If Anne misbehaved, it would lead to her ladyship's own "discomfort and discontentation." Whether Lady Norfolk offered Katherine similar advice is unknown, although it seems likely that she did warn her to keep quiet about her sexual past.[84]

It would have been worthwhile for her to alert Katherine to court perils. In 1548 was published Sir Francis Bryan's translation of a treatise by Antonio de Guevara, successively Bishop of Guadix and Mondonedo, about a courtier's life, which had first appeared in 1539.[85] One of the "foremost specimens" of Renaissance anticourtier literature, its author was influenced by classical antiquity's praise of country life. Bryan's translation was based on a French version of Guevara's Spanish book, which described courtiers as confidence tricksters.[86] "Favor and covetousness guides the courtier," explained Guevara, for he flatters royal favorites, while stealing from, lying to, and slandering others. He watches others' activities, where they went, whom they trusted, ever ready to sell their secrets. Old women were also willing to entice maidens into whoredom. "Our world may well be called the dirty world," he concluded.[87]

Other writers complained about courtiers ferreting out secrets. In a 1536 letter, Reginald Pole refused to repeat private information to

Cardinal Gasparo Contrarini because "the very walls have ears and eyes."[88] In his adage "To sell smoke," Erasmus charged courtiers with accepting bribes.[89] Richard Brathwait later claimed that "even a private man committing his secrecy to another, becomes his slave to whom he committed it" and warned that "he endangers the body of the state, whereof he is an especial member, by commending or committing his private intendments to the hazard of rumors."[90]

Katherine, however, viewed her appointment as a deliverance. In December 1539 when she received a maiden's stipend,[91] she must have already moved to Greenwich Palace, anticipating the arrival of the queen, who was stranded at Calais by bad weather. On December 27, the weather cleared enough for her to cross the Channel. She reached Blackheath Common for her official reception on January 3, where she first met her English household, including her maidens.[92]

Katherine's name does not appear in governmental records again until April, but she undoubtedly accompanied Anne during her official appearances. On January 6, Henry and Anne were married; after hearing mass in his closet, they returned to their respective privy chambers, Anne's "ladies trailing along behind her." Following the wedding feast, Anne and her ladies attended evensong. Because the ceremony was held on Epiphany, the usual afternoon celebrations were curtailed, although the day ended with supper, masks, and other festivities.[93]

Anne's ladies were unaware of her marital problems. Publicly, all appeared normal. On February 4, the court traveled up the Thames to Westminster on six barges. Later, Henry and Anne went to Hampton Court to celebrate Easter, returning to Westminster on April 12 for the opening of Parliament. Six days later, Henry dined in Anne's chambers. Their last public functions together were at May Day celebrations. After the games on that day, Henry, Anne and "her ladies, with all the court," attended suppers and banquets at Durham House.[94] It is interesting that at the barriers on May 5 when challengers attacked the defendants on foot, Sir Richard Cromwell overthrew Sir Thomas Culpeper, a defendant.[95]

After Katherine became a maiden, Dereham attended court, perhaps in April or May 1540. As noted above, he seems to have heard a rumor linking Katherine romantically to Culpeper. Later, after his arrest, his friend, Robert Davenport, recalled that when Dereham then learned that the king was beginning to love Katherine, he said he was sure if Henry were dead, she would marry him. His discovery of Henry's interest in her led Dereham to flee to Ireland, where he seems to have become engaged in piracy as well as trade. Katherine displayed no interest in his activities. While still a maiden, probably on her brief return to Norfolk House in late June 1540, she responded negatively to the dowager duchess's query about whether she knew Dereham's whereabouts.[96]

The first evidence of Henry's favoring Katherine was in April, a few days after dining in his wife's chambers. On April 24, he granted Katherine the forfeited goods and chattels of two murderers. This grant, plus one in

May of 23 quilts of quilted sarcenet, and perhaps his attentions to her, led some observers to believe that she was his mistress.[97] In June, Carl Harst, the Cleves ambassador, admitted to William, Duke of Cleves, that he had known for months that Henry was attracted to Katherine. Harst's early discovery of the king's interest in her is noteworthy since Charles de Marillac, the French ambassador, did not report the king's new love until early July. He confided on July 21 that he had heard that she might be pregnant, but could not confirm the rumor because those matters were kept secret.[98]

Meanwhile, on June 20, Anne of Cleves informed Harst that she was aware of Henry's love for Katherine. Surprised by her admission, he dismissed the affair as a "light romance"; two days later, Harst found her in better spirits, perhaps because Katherine had left court. On June 24, St. John the Baptist Day, Harst encountered a sorrowful Anne. The privy council ordered her removal to Richmond Palace, as she soon discovered, because Henry planned to end their unconsummated marriage.[99]

A disputed theory[100] claims that Norfolk joined with Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, to manipulate Henry into choosing a wife who represented a conservative court faction. This theory is supported only by unverifiable rumors. One year after Katherine's royal marriage, Richard Hilles wrote Henry Bullinger, claiming that before June 24, 1540, many Londoners had seen the king crossing the Thames to Lambeth, presumably to commit adultery with her. Rumors also claimed that Winchester provided "feasting and entertainments" for the lovers at his palace. Hilles described Katherine as a "young lady of very diminutive stature."[101] In fact, Henry was undoubtedly visiting her at Norfolk House, her stepgrandmother acting as her chaperon.

Except for unverifiable rumors, according to Glyn Redworth, no contemporary record links Winchester and Norfolk together as leaders of a faction. Redworth noted that the two men belonged to different generations and were not connected by family or close friends.[102] In England, unlike France, for example, most bishops belonged to gentry or middling families, not the nobility. Albeit lord bishops, the Englishmen had different political roles and had less in common socially with secular lords than did their French counterparts. Other evidence suggests that Henry, perhaps concerned about his sexual prowess, chose Katherine because he found the young, auburn-haired girl attractive. When he decided to divorce his first two wives, he had already selected his next consorts from among their maidens. He seems to have repeated that practice in 1540.

In late June, Cranmer learned that Thomas Wakefield, his servant, while preparing the case for the annulment of Henry's marriage to Anne of Cleves, had asked his legal draftsman, Dr. Richard Gwent, whether the king could legally marry Katherine because of her kinship to Anne Boleyn. Gwent explained that the relationship was dispensable. The two men also discussed whether Henry banqueted two nights that week at Lambeth with Katherine. To protect himself and his two servants from

the royal wrath, Cranmer reported their conversation to the privy council, which summoned them for questioning. Wakefield repeated Katherine's recent comforting message to Cranmer, "that you should not care for your businesses, for you should be in better case than ever you were." Diarmaid MacCulloch believed that she chose to reassure Cranmer, because in 1539 he opposed Henry's plans to wed Anne of Cleves with whom he would be unable to carry on even a simple conversation, since she spoke only her native tongue.[103]

MacCulloch's suggestion may be valid, but while Henry was still married to Anne, Cranmer had several discussions with Harst, her brother's ambassador, who described him as an ally. Katherine could have seen them together and might have wanted to assure Cranmer that his association with Harst would not prevent her from favoring him.[104] Given her limited political experience, it is likely that Henry prompted her to send the message, thus indirectly promising Cranmer his continuing favor.

Despite Marillac's failure at London to learn the identity of Henry's new love until late July, the news about Katherine had reached York, where Joan Bulmer née Ackworth resided, by July 12. On that day, she sent Katherine a letter, explaining that she heard that Henry was to marry her. As Bulmer was miserable, she wished to join Katherine at court. When queen, she appointed Bulmer as her chamberer. Katherine would also choose other old acquaintances for her household, a practice probably fostered by concerns that if she turned them away, they would reveal her sexual experiences to someone who might enlighten Henry.

Katherine and Henry were wed at Oatlands on July 28, the day Cromwell, recently ennobled as the first Earl of Essex, and Walter, Lord Hungerford of Heytesbury, were executed. Like the weddings to his other English consorts, it was a private affair. Expensive public ceremonies were reserved for foreign-born wives. On August 8 at Hampton Court, Henry introduced her as queen, and on August 15, morning prayers were said in the churches for him, Katherine, and Prince Edward. Henry also had a gold medallion struck in commemoration of their union. On one side is a rose crowned, in reference to the bride, flanked by the initials K. R.[105]

The question might be asked, how was it that Henry failed to detect that she was not a virgin on their wedding night. This mystery cannot readily be solved, but some contextual information will help inform Henry's failure. He was a large man, well over six-feet tall, while she was a small woman, surely less than five feet in height and without much experience in sexual matters, having had penetrative sex only over a three-month period in late 1538. Popular assumptions about the hymen's loss are often inaccurate. It does not always bleed much or remain intact in girls, otherwise recognized as virgins, sometimes because of accidents disassociated with sexual contact. Early-modern Europeans also relied on other methods to judge virginity. Folklore claimed that maidens had smaller breasts and flatter stomachs and expelled clearer urine than nonvirgins. Modest gestures and downcast eyes signaled a chaste and honest maiden. After her

arrest, Katherine was accused of feigning chaste behavior and of leading Henry by word and gesture to love her.[106]

How much time Henry and Katherine spent together daily is unknown. By December, according to Marillac, who did not include Katherine in the schedule, Henry rose between 5:00 and 6:00 a.m., heard mass at 7:00 a.m., and then rode and hunted until dinner at 10:00 a.m.[107] He ate his meals, except on special occasions, in his privy chamber. After dinner, he must have turned to official business. Sometime in the afternoon or evening, he could have spent some moments with Katherine, but her education had not prepared her for deep religious discussions. She later explained that he routinely sent Sir Thomas Heneage, groom of the stool and chief gentleman of the privy chamber, with a message for her at 6:00 p.m. Since monarchs slept in their own bedchambers, he would not have spent entire nights with her. How often they had marital relations could have depended partly on Church restrictions, which prohibited intercourse when a woman was menstruating and on specific holy days: Fridays and Sundays, most major saints' days, and all of Lent and Advent.[108] Presumably, not all couples obeyed these edicts, but husbands, such as Henry, who wanted to sire children, might well have done so. The prevailing medical and religious wisdom claimed that pregnancy required divine intervention.

Katherine's jointure was not settled until January 12, 1541. She was to obtain the estates of Queen Jane as well as lands from the possessions of attainted persons: Henry Courtenay, first Marquess of Exeter; Lords Essex and Hungerford; and Margaret, Countess of Salisbury. To manage her household and business affairs, she had a council headed by the Earl of Rutland, her lord chamberlain. The councilors included Sir Thomas Dennys, chancellor (later Arundell), John Dudley, future Duke of Northumberland, master of the horse. John Smith was her receiver general; Geffrey Danyell, her surveyor; Thomas Twesell, her auditor; and Thomas Saunders, her solicitor, among other officers. Her household contained many other servants: gentleman ushers, gentleman waiters, sergeant-at-arms, and the chaplains, Dr. Malett and Dr. Oglethorpe. Besides great ladies occasionally in attendance, like Margaret Douglas, the ladies of the privy chamber included Jane, Viscountess Rochford, widow of Anne Boleyn's brother, and Lady Baynton, Katherine's half-sister. Among her chamberers were several women who formerly served her step-grandmother. Her royal household cost Henry some £4,600 annually.[109]

In addition, she possessed a royal barge with 26 rowers and had access to the crown jewels. On New Year's Day 1541, Henry presented her with, among other gems, a square necklace containing 16 diamonds and 60 rubies with an edge of pearls. He also gave her a rope containing two hundred pearls. These belonged to the crown and would have been returned to the royal coffers when Henry died, if she outlived him.[110]

Henry also rewarded some of her relatives. In October 1540, Sir Richard Rich informed her brother-in-law, Arundell, that the king granted annually to her brother, Charles, £100; to her brother, George,

100 marks; and to her half-sister, Lady Baynton, and her children 100 marks.[111] Had Katherine's father lived another few months or so, he might well have obtained enough funds finally to settle his debts.

About a month after their wedding, Henry and his consort departed on his usual summer progress. At Ampthill, Marillac first saw Katherine, whom he described as short and slender and only of moderate beauty. She and her ladies dressed in French fashions, he reported, and the doting king caressed her more than all his other wives. Her motto was "Non autre volonte que la sienne" (no other will than his). In contrast to Marillac's opinion, William Thomas, who held minor royal positions in the 1540s, thought she was "a very beautiful gentlewoman." Then in October, Marillac related to the French government that there was only meager news: Henry and his party were hunting, and Katherine was enjoying the banquets held in her honor. Later, Marillac reported his opinion that Katherine had completely captivated Henry, and Anne of Cleves was no more spoken of than if she were dead.[112]

In November at Windsor, Katherine wrote Edward Lee, Archbishop of York, requesting an advowson of the York archdeaconry for an unnamed chaplain of hers. She reminded him of her unsuccessful attempt to obtain an office for Dr. Malett. In response, the archbishop recalled explaining when she requested a living for Malett that he "never granted advowson saving at the king's commandment, but one, which I have many times sore repented." He condemned people who, after obtaining the right to fill a position when its occupant died, then "hearken and gape every day when he will die." He also recollected that he had earlier promised to Mr. Lowe, her chaplain, the next open position worth some £40 annually. Lowe was not one of her original chaplains but may have replaced Oglethorpe.[113]

Lee's letter is the only explicit evidence of her seeking patronage for her servants. It is possible that she also assisted her page, Anthony Stoughton, in obtaining the hospital of St. John at Warwick in December and her footman, Laurence Lee, in gaining the keepership of the seven woods in Rutland the next June.[114] Although the patronage at her disposal might have been meager, Richard Jonas dedicated to her in 1540 his translation, *The Birth of Mankind, a Study of Childbirth*, from the Latin version of the original German by the late Eucharius Roesslin. Jonas completed this "endeavor for the love of all womanhood, and chiefly for the most bound service the which I owe unto your gracious highness."[115] Whether she was aware of this dedication is unknown.

In the winter of 1540–1541, Katherine may have interacted with two of the king's relatives. In a December dispatch to Mary, Queen of Hungary and regent of the Netherlands, Eustace Chapuys, the Imperial ambassador, referred to a controversy concerning Mary Tudor's servants. Learning that the crown intended to remove two of her maidens, Mary must have asked Chapuys to determine why their employment might be terminated. He heard that Katherine, offended because Mary treated her with less respect than her royal predecessors, had initiated the dismissal process. Chapuys

believed that Mary would be able to conciliate Katherine and retain her maidens. Whether he was correct about Katherine's involvement remains unresolved, for he often cited unverified rumors as facts. Two of his letters in early 1541 to the regent seem to contradict this December report. In January, he revealed that Mary had not yet visited Katherine, although the New Year's gift she sent greatly pleased her. It would seem that Mary's earlier offense could only have been her lack of attendance on Katherine, but she could not appear at court without a royal summons. In February, Chapuys related that Mary was well despite her sorrow over the death of her maiden, whom Henry removed from her household. Whether this maiden was one of the two Chapuys mentioned in December is unknown, but he did not blame Katherine for the incident.[116]

Katherine's second encounter with a relative of Henry's involved a visit of Anne of Cleves to Hampton Court on January 3 in the company of Lord William Howard who met her by chance on the road. Henry held open house during the winter holidays, welcoming ambassadors and other dignitaries, among them in 1541, his adopted sister. Chapuys provided a detailed description of her visit, which was partly corroborated by Marillac. After Anne kneeled before Katherine, Henry entered the chamber, embraced and kissed Anne, and ate supper with them. Afterwards, he retired while Katherine and Anne danced with each other and then with some of his gentlemen. These activities were repeated the next morning. After dinner, Henry departed and later sent to his consort a present, consisting of a ring and two small dogs, which Katherine passed on to Anne, who presently returned to Richmond.[117]

Two other events of interest occurred at Hampton Court. Katherine has sometimes been credited with furnishing a gown, a kirtle, a petticoat, and other clothing pieces for Lady Salisbury, a prisoner in the Tower of London. The initiative for this gift was a privy council order in March, requiring her tailor to sew these items for the prisoner,[118] who was executed in May.

Henry's decision to visit his defenses on the southern coast was, according to Marillac's dispatch on March 3, stymied by a tertian fever. Besides that bad news, an ulcer on his leg, which was kept open to maintain his health, suddenly closed, an alarming occurrence, since when this had happened some years earlier, he had almost died. As a result, he was said to have kept shrovetide more solemnly than usual, without music, and his court resembled more a private home than a king's household. Marillac's news about these matters was only secondhand; he seems to have talked to strangers who were sent away when they attended court on business, perhaps to hide Henry's indisposition.[119]

After moving to Westminster in early March, the king and queen traveled by barge to Greenwich on March 19, planning to celebrate Easter there. As it was Katherine's first passage on the Thames through London as queen, the city's lord mayor, alderman, and craftsmen escorted them in barges decorated with banners. The Tower cannons saluted her, and ships'

guns along the Thames were fired, "a goodly sight," exclaimed Charles Wriothesley, the chronicler.[120]

Two days later, Henry departed for Dover, leaving his consort at Greenwich. While he was absent, Katherine performed the queen's intercessory role. Representing in some sense the Virgin Mary, consorts acted as intercessors for petitioners seeking pardons, thereby offering kings opportunities to show mercy without appearing weak. The privy council noted on March 26 that Katherine successfully requested pardons for Sir Thomas Wyatt and Sir John Wallop, who were charged with various acts of treason. Later, in October, with Henry at Nocton Hall, Lincolnshire, on their northern progress, Katherine successfully asked him to pardon Helen Page alias Clerk of Lyndesey, for felonies committed.[121]

If in December 1540, Katherine and Mary Tudor did have some disagreement, by May they had reconciled. On May 17, according to Chapuys, Henry granted Mary, with Katherine's approval, permission to reside at court. The ambassador noted that at Mary's request, but also at Katherine's intercession, the queen and king visited with Prince Edward. Chapuys had obviously discussed these events with Mary.[122]

On May 26, Chapuys reported that when Henry asked Katherine why she was so sad, she explained that she had learned that he planned to take back Anne of Cleves. He comforted her, claiming that even if he were in a position to wed, he would never select Anne. Chapuys thought he spoke truthfully because he had never returned to an abandoned wife. Actually, Chapuys was merely revealing somewhat stale rumors about Henry's remarriage to Anne, adding to it, a twist about Katherine's pensiveness.[123] There is no reason to believe that Katherine was worried about Anne's presence in England. In fact, Marillac, who had repeatedly denied the rumors about Anne's return, informed Francis I on June 14 that the emperor needed to recall Chapuys, because for the last six months he had hardly left his house, even his bed.[124]

During the spring of 1541, Katherine became entangled in a relationship with Culpeper. A distant cousin, he was the second of three sons of Alexander Culpeper of Bedgebery, Kent, and Constance née Chamberlain. Thomas had an unsavory reputation. In a letter dated May 10, 1542, at Strasbourg, Richard Hilles identified one of the two men executed for adultery with Katherine, as "one of the king's chamberlains," referring to the English office Culpeper held by the name utilized at the Habsburg court. Hilles had heard about two years earlier that Culpeper "violated the wife of a certain park-keeper . . . while his most profligate attendants were holding her at his bidding." After the villagers placed him in custody, Henry pardoned him for the rape and for a "murder committed in his resistance to them." This is an unverifiable rumor that Hilles gleaned from his English correspondents, among them his brother. It could easily have been generated by news about Culpeper's execution, although it is also true that no such rumor was spread about Dereham.[125]

Culpeper's most important asset was his position as gentleman of the king's privy chamber, where Henry ate, slept, and was entertained indoors. Admission to the privy chamber was permitted only to its members, whose charge included keeping the entrance closed to protect Henry's privacy. The gentlemen, well bred, charming, and athletic, helped him dress, carried out various official functions, joined him in sports and hunting, and undertook diplomatic assignments. David Starkey observed in some sense, the royal "unction . . . rubbed" off on them, as their "person stood in a sense for the king's own." Representing him lent them a special aura, as they were a symbolic presence of the king, a semidivine monarch blessed by God in the coronation ceremony. Henry was thought to cure scrofula by his touch and epilepsy and muscle spasms via the cramp rings he blessed.[126]

In the spring 1541, Katherine began secretly to see Culpeper at the behest of Lady Rochford, who promised that he "meant nothing but honesty." In their response to interrogations, her servants later agreed that Lady Rochford persuaded Katherine to see him. Margaret Morton swore that Lady Rochford was the principal reason for the queen's foolish behavior. Doubtlessly, he was bribing Lady Rochford to assist him in obtaining political control of Katherine. His first session with her was on Maundy Thursday, April 14, at Greenwich. As he departed, she gave him a velvet cap decorated with a broach and asked him to conceal it under his cloak.[127]

Culpeper's rendezvous with the queen gave him the means to threaten and manipulate her. Henceforth, he would be able to frighten her into believing that he might reveal her past and present actions to Henry if she refused to see him. Naive and foolish, Katherine placed herself under the control of Lady Rochford, an older, more experienced court resident, and Culpeper, a reckless attendant of her husband. Conduct books warned wives against meeting with men other than their husbands, and when Henry and his councilors learned about their rendezvous, they responded as Antonio de Guevara would have predicted, for the fear of being cuckolded was never far from husbands' minds. Guevara warned that if a husband were not home, another man should not visit his wife. Guevara was referring, of course, to formal visitations not to secret meetings, which he would have even more greatly condemned.[128]

Possibly, Culpeper was emboldened to seek out Katherine, because he learned about her former relationship with Dereham and believed her an easy mark. Culpeper could have discovered Katherine's secret while conversing with one of her servants or even with Lady Rochford, who might have pried the information from one of the former employees in Lady Norfolk's household. Dereham, himself, continued to trouble Katherine. In the spring of 1540, when he visited court and the spring of 1541, when he began to demand a place in her household, he hinted of his special relationship with her. His friend, Davenport, recalled that Dereham claimed many courtiers "despised" him because Katherine favored him. It was probably after she appointed him as usher to her chamber in August 1541 that an incident occurred, demonstrating Dereham's arrogance. While

still sitting at the dinner or supper table one day with the queen's council, after all others had left, Mr. John, the queen's gentleman usher, sent a messenger to Dereham asking if he were a member of the council. Dereham replied: "Go to Mr. John, and tell him I was of the queen's council before he knew her and shall be when she hath forgotten him."[129]

On June 30, the king, queen, and the full court set out for northern England to bring order to the troubled area, where a conspiracy against the government had recently been quashed. Henry also planned to meet his nephew, James V of Scotland, at York. In late July, Marillac joined the progress, which advanced slowly because rains flooded the roads northward, making it difficult for the carts and baggage to proceed. The weather, plus Katherine's indisposition, led some to believe that the progress would be cancelled.[130]

The court continued toward York, however, reaching Lodington, on July 29. On that day, Margaret Morton carried a sealed letter without superscription from Katherine to Lady Rochford, who promised to return an answer the next morning and who sent word, "praying her grace to keep it secret not to lay it abroad."[131]

This may have been the extant, undated letter of Katherine's to Culpeper, which has usually been interpreted as a love letter. Although it contains phrases seemingly supporting that assessment, it is a odd specimen of the romance genre. Another interpretation focuses on the queen's concern about Culpeper's intentions. She could have been trying to placate him to prevent his revealing her secrets to the king, and could have wanted to talk with him to discover whether he would keep a promise he made to her. Here is the text:

> Master Culpeper, I heartily recommend me unto you, praying you to send me word how that you do. It was showed me that you was sick, the which thing troubled me very much till such time that I hear from you praying you to send me word how that you do, for I never longed so much for [a] thing as I do to see you and to speak with you, the which I trust shall be shortly now. The which doth comfortly me very much when I think of it, and when I think again that you shall depart from me again it makes my heart to die to think what fortune I have that I cannot be always in your company. It my trust is always in you that you will be as you have promised me, and in that hope I trust upon still, praying you that you will come when my Lady Rochford is here for then I shall be best at leisure to be at your commandment, thanking you for that you have promised me to be good unto that poor fellow my man which is one of the griefs that I do feel to depart from him for then I do know no one that I dare trust to send to you, and therefore I pray you take him to be with you that I may sometime hear from you one thing. I pray you to give me a horse for my man for I have much ado to get one and therefore I pray send me one by him in so doing I am as I said afor, and thus I take my leave of you, trusting to see you shortly again and I would you were with me now that you might see what pain I take in writing to you.

> yours as long as life endures,
> Katheryn
>
> One thing I had forgotten and that is to instruct my man to tarry here with me still for he says whatsomever you bid him he will do it.[132]

The beginning, "Master Culpeper," which is quite abrupt, is typical for someone writing to a person in service to him/her. Usually, the writer employed only the last name but Culpeper was a knight and a member of the privy chamber and thus deserved a title. In contrast in 1537, Lady Lisle, who was not his employer, began her letter to him with "Good Master Culpeper." In the first part of Katherine's text, because the "risk level" in their association was great, as she was the petitioner, she sympathized about his illness and tried to placate him with politeness. Some phrases such as, "at your commandment," which Culpeper repeated in an earlier message to Lady Lisle, belonged to the elaborate contemporary formula of letter-writing. Katherine assured him that when he departed from her, her heart would "die," and she wished he could see her "pain" in writing the letter. She clarified, however, that she hoped he would keep his promise to her and that it would be convenient for him to see her only when Lady Rochford was present. Katherine's subscription was, according to Smith, "quite enough to cost the queen her head," but almost every contemporary closure began with a variant of "your." Mary Tudor said to Cromwell, "Your loving, assured friend during my life." Elizabeth, Duchess of Norfolk, closed her message to Cromwell with "By yours most bounden during my life." Katherine's closure is notable because she changed the phrase, "during my life," to "as long as life endures," emphasizing her suffering. Death and danger, not love and romance, were on her mind. Loving, embracing, touching, kissing, she wrote none of these amorous words in the letter. Besides the reference to her servant and the problems of obtaining a horse for him, the two items on the fearful queen's agenda were that she desperately wanted to speak with Culpeper and learn whether he would keep his promise to her.[133]

In early August, the court reached Lincoln. Welcomed by John Longland, Bishop of Lincoln, the king and queen entered the cathedral and said prayers while the choir sang *Te Deum*.[134] At Lincoln, perhaps as a result of the Lodington letter, Katherine met secretly with Culpeper. Katherine Tylney reported that the queen spent two nights in Lady Rochford's chamber with either her or Morton in an antechamber. Katherine later recalled that the meetings occurred "in a little gallery at the stairs' head." With Lady Rochford, she waited at the back door for Culpeper at 11:00 p.m. The watchman secured the door, but Culpeper and his man picked the lock. One evening, Katherine did not return to her chamber until 2:00 a.m. If she had hoped that Lady Rochford's presence as her chaperon would protect her honor, she was wrong, for the lady, who later claimed to be asleep at Lincoln and to have seen nothing or heard nothing, also maintained that Culpeper knew Katherine carnally there.[135]

Sometime before August 24 at Hatfield, where Katherine did not meet Culpeper, Morton observed her starring out the window at him. She thought the way Katherine looked at him meant she loved him, but Katherine could have been watching him warily, worrying whether he would reveal to Henry her meetings with him or her past affair with Dereham. Indeed, he had easy, daily access to Henry in the privy chamber.[136]

They had two more rendezvous. At Pontefract in late August, Morton recalled that Katherine was angry with her and another servant, threatening to send them away. Morton thought that if Katherine had dismissed them, Lady Rochford's friends would have replaced them. She also claimed that when Henry's messenger, a Mr. Dane, arrived, he found Katherine's door locked from the inside. Although Morton did not mention a secret visitor, Katherine admitted seeing Culpeper in her bedchamber there. He described her as extremely nervous, fearing that Henry had set watch at the back door. Later, the crown indictment against Culpeper charged her with inciting him to have illicit intercourse with her.[137]

On August 27, while still at Pontefract, Katherine appointed Dereham to her household at the urging of her step-grandmother, probably to secure his silence about their past relationship. On two occasions, Dereham claimed she bribed him to be silent: she gave him £3 and later, just before departing on the northern progress, she offered him £10 with the warning to "take heed what words" he spoke.[138]

The king and queen made their official entry into York on September 18, where, according to Marillac, Henry was furnishing an old abbey on which 1,200 or 1,500 men were working. Expecting James V's arrival, Henry had brought to York his richest tapestry, plate, and clothing for himself and his household to impress his nephew.[139] Sometime at York, where the king and queen heard mass twice daily, Katherine met Culpeper secretly in Lady Rochford's chamber for the last time.[140]

Culpeper recalled her fearful state of mind during their meetings. At which town she commented about Henry as head of the Church of England is unknown. Culpeper remembered her warning him when he went to confession not to mention their discussions for fear that the king, as the supreme head, might learn of them. Perhaps, she worried that a cleric would inform him, rather than Henry might somehow have a pipeline into individual confessions. It is possible, however, given the belief that he could cure diseases, she worried that he possessed other semidivine powers.[141]

On September 27, having decided James would not visit York, Henry turned southward and reached Hampton Court in late October. On November 1, All Saints' Day, Henry took the sacrament and directed Bishop Longland to pray with him and give thanks for his good life with Katherine. Afterwards, by the advice of Edward, future Duke of Somerset, and Thomas, Lord Audley, Cranmer left a letter for Henry in his chapel pew, detailing the revelations of John Lascelles concerning Katherine's sexual experiences with Manox and Dereham. Lascelles

had obtained the information from his sister Mary Hall, a former servant at Norfolk House. In shocked disbelief, Henry launched an investigation. William Fitzwilliam, first Earl of Southampton, interrogated Lascelles, who confirmed the information he gave Cranmer, and then interviewed Mary Hall in Sussex while Sir Thomas Wriothesley interrogated Dereham and Manox. Hall repeated the story that she told her brother, while Dereham and Manox confessed their sexual encounters with Katherine. The distraught king left Hampton Court to confer with the council at Westminster on November 5, never to see Katherine again.[142]

When, two days later, Cranmer, Audley, Norfolk, and Winchester examined Katherine, she denied the allegations but the next day confessed them to Cranmer. During his first visit, he found her in great "lamentation and heaviness" and decided to depart, hoping she would calm down. When he returned, he learned that she had continued in her "vehement rage" during his absence. On this second visit, as she was still "far entered toward a frenzy," he decided, instead of "exaggerating the grievousness of her demerits," as Henry required, to offer mercy: "For a time, she began to be more temperate and quiet, saving that she still sobbed and wept." Then, she "suddenly fell into a new rage, much worse than before." Finally, she spoke:

> Alas, my lord, that I am alive, the fear of death grieved me not so much before, as doth now the remembrance of the king's goodness; for when I remember how gracious and loving a prince I had, I cannot but sorrow; but this sudden mercy, and more than I could have looked for, showed unto me, so unworthy at this time, makes my offences to appear before my eyes much more heinous than they did before . . .

About 6:00 p.m., "she fell into another pang, but not so outrageous as the first," because she remembered it was about that time when Heneage regularly brought her a message from Henry.[143]

Cranmer questioned her only about Manox and Dereham. She admitted that "being but a young girl," she had "suffered Manox . . . sundry times to touch the secret parts of her body which neither became me with honesty to permit nor him to require." "Dereham," she explained, "by many persuasions procured me to his vicious purpose." Having told the whole truth, she hoped that Henry would consider "the subtle persuasions of young men and the ignorance and frailty of young women." So "desirous" had she been to gain Henry's favor that she failed to understand what a great "fault" it was to hide her former doings. Nevertheless, "the sorrow of my offenses was ever before my eyes considering the infinite goodness of your majesty toward me from time to time ever increasing and not diminishing." She acknowledged deserving "extreme punishment." After signing her confession, which was written by Cranmer, she volunteered that she unwillingly had sexual relations with Dereham.[144]

On Saturday, November 11, the privy council informed Cranmer and others about Henry's decision to have her moved to Syon House to be "lodged moderately, as her life has deserved, without a cloth of estate." Katherine was to reside in two rooms with four gentlewoman and two chamberers of her choice except Lady Baynton, her half-sister, had to be one of the gentlewomen, as her husband, along with the king's almoner, Nicholas Heath, Bishop of Rochester, was to govern her household. Directions were given concerning her clothing, which should not be decorated with gems or pearls. On November 12, Audley assembled the king's councilors, spiritual and temporal lords, and learned counsel to reveal to them her "abominable behavior." That same day at Hampton Court, Wriothesley informed Katherine's household of her offences and discharged them.[145]

As Dereham and Morton both mentioned Culpeper, the crown subjected Katherine to another interrogation. Cranmer, Norfolk, the future Lord Somerset, Southampton, Wriothesley, Sussex, Winchester, Sir John Russell, Sir Antony Browne, Sir Anthony and Ralph Sadler signed this confession. She admitted meeting with Culpeper while Lady Rochford was present and remembered admonishing her attendant, who was moving away, to come closer to them. Katherine swore that Culpeper never touched any part of her body except her hand. She confirmed giving him a cap and chain and exchanging some bracelets for a pheasant. Lady Rochford sent some of her cramp rings to him. Lately, Katherine could not recall when, she said to Lady Rochford: "I pray you, bid him desire no more to trouble me or send to me." He responded he would accept no such statement but "still send to me as he might have a messenger at which time she called him little sweet fool." That she repeated "sweet" to the interrogators and coupled it with the noun, "fool," must have meant that she was using the adjective ironically.[146] She told Lady Rochford she did not wish to be bothered with "such light matters."[147]

Despite further questioning, perhaps torture, Dereham and Culpeper did not confess having adulterous relations with Katherine. Following the custom of blaming women for aggressive sexual behavior, Culpeper claimed that Katherine wanted him and had told him that if she had remained a maiden she "would have tried" him. He admitted intending "to do ill with her," a confession sufficient to condemn him since the Act of Treason of 1534 recognized intent to harm the king as treason.[148] Culpeper claimed that Katherine looked for the backdoors and stairs of the residences on the progress, but she said Lady Rochford, who orchestrated the rendezvous, performed these tasks. Lady Rochford had since discovered a kitchen at Greenwich for their meetings.[149]

While Katherine suffered, Margaret Douglas was in trouble again. Thomas Howard, with whom she had a secret betrothal, had died in the Tower. She had since become involved with Katherine's brother, Charles, who was banished from Hampton Court on November 7. As Katherine was not questioned about their affair, she may have been unaware of it.[150]

Katherine's behavior disgraced the entire Howard family. On November 14, Norfolk told Marillac that the investigators presumed that she remained incontinent after her marriage to Henry. The duke also described Katherine as mentally unstable: she was refusing to eat or drink and weeping and crying like a madwoman. All implements or items she might use to harm herself were removed from her quarters. Norfolk tearfully related Henry's grief and the Howards's misfortune caused by his nieces: Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard.[151]

In December, Henry's officers incarcerated some of Norfolk's relatives, including the dowager duchess; her daughter, Katherine, wife of Henry Daubeney, first Earl of Bridgewater; her son, Lord William; and his wife Margaret. Anne Howard, wife of Katherine's brother, Henry, was also arrested. Margaret confessed knowing about the sexual relations of Dereham and Katherine, but her husband, his mother, and sister all denied knowledge of their illicit affair. They probably hoped to protect their family's reputation. The sense of communal honor was "implanted in childhood" in family members who were expected to maintain the reputation of their houses. Females, like Katherine, who lost their chastity or even their reputation for chastity, were an obvious means of ruining a family's honor.[152]

William finally confessed knowing about Katherine's illicit sexual past, but his mother refused to admit that she was aware of their relationship. Perhaps, when Lady Norfolk discovered Dereham kissing Katherine, he denied having had more serious sexual contact with her. Since Margaret was aware of their behavior, however, it is unlikely that her husband, his mother, and his sister knew nothing of it. Probably, Dereham threatened to expose publicly her step-granddaughter's illicit behavior with him, thus destroying the family's reputation, if her ladyship dismissed him from her employment. After learning of his arrest, Lady Norfolk broke open his coffers and retained some 12 or so documents, including Manox's letter to her, warning of the goings-on in the maidens' chamber. Her actions led officials to believe that she knew more about Dereham's experiences with Katherine than she would admit.[153]

After Culpeper and Dereham were convicted of treason for committing adultery with Katherine, the former was beheaded and the latter was hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn on December 10. Katherine and Lady Rochford were spared a public trial. On January 21, a bill of attainder was introduced into the House of Lords, but on January 28 Audley warned against moving too quickly, since Katherine was not a private lady. With Henry's consent, the lords would agree to send a deputation from both houses to her. On January 30, Audley related the privy council's opposition to the Lords' proposal. Both houses passed the bill of attainder and the king's assent was given *in absentia* by letters patent on February 11. It proclaimed Katherine and Lady Rochford guilty of high treason; declared the dowager duchess and Lady Bridgewater guilty of misprision of treason; confirmed the misprision of treason convictions of William, his wife, and

various members of the queen's and the duchess's households; authorized the attainders of the already executed Culpeper and Dereham; stated any future queen failing to reveal her illicit past would be declared guilty of treason; and warned those who remained silent about her former "light" life would be guilty of misprision of treason. Before Henry assented to the bill, Southampton, Cranmer, Charles Brandon, first Duke of Suffolk, and Thomas Thirlby, Bishop of Westminster, met with Katherine. She confirmed her testimony, asked that her relatives not be blamed for her errors, and petitioned Henry to distribute some of her clothes to her maidens.[154]

On February 10, Suffolk and Southampton escorted Katherine by barge from Syon to the Tower. On the morning of February 13, in the presence of the council, some noblemen, and some commoners, according to Marillac who was not present, the physically weak queen was beheaded after being assisted to the scaffold. Marillac's claim about her weakness seems reasonable given Norfolk's earlier comments about her diet and state of mind. Lady Rochford was also beheaded. A letter with an eyewitness account of their executions has survived. Otwell Johnson, a member of the Drapers' Company, described their deaths to his brother, John, a merchant of the Staple at Calais. He believed, he wrote, their souls were in heaven, for they "made the most godly and Christian end," testifying to their faith in God and asking the people "to take example of them for amendment of their ungodly lives, and gladly obey the king in all things." They were buried under the altar of St. Peter ad Vincula, the chapel at the Tower.[155]

By her society's standards, Katherine led a wicked life. Easily dominated by individuals with stronger personalities than hers, at about 13, she was abused by Manox; at about 15, she was seduced by Dereham, who seems to have begun their relationship as her protector; and at about 18, found herself entrapped in a relationship with Culpeper, who was aided by the widow of her first cousin, a woman she assumed she could trust.

None of the accused men took responsibility for his actions. Like other early-modern men, they defined females as more sexually aggressive than males. Manox said that she loved him; Dereham believed that she wanted to marry him; Henry's councilors charged her with misleading the king about her unchaste life; Culpeper claimed that she was "languishing and dying of love for him," but contradicted himself somewhat by admitting that she showed him "little favor."[156]

Katherine did not enjoy a carefree affair with either Dereham or Culpeper. She had happily removed to court, leaving Dereham behind. During the meetings with Culpeper, she was "skittish and jittery," fearing discovery.[157] In her directions to him, she specified that he could only see her in the presence of Lady Rochford, whom she insisted stay nearby while they conversed. That they did not have sexual intercourse and that she never planned to pass off Culpeper's child as the king's seems clear from their confessions.

In the absence of lovemaking, historians are left with the question of why Katherine wanted to see Culpeper. One difficulty in interpreting

their relationship is the lack of knowledge about their secret, lengthy conversations. The interrogators did not ask Katherine about the topic or topics of their three-hour discussion at Lincoln, for example, perhaps because they assumed adultery occurred. Culpeper, himself, said predictably that they talked about their love for each other. That they could have been involved in intense debate about whether he would keep his unexplained promise to her, rather than indulging in sexual relations, probably never occurred to the officials. And yet, just before her arrest, Katherine explained to Lady Rochford that if these conversations "came not out, she feared not for nothing."[158]

The best suggestion about their relationship is that Culpeper was bribing Lady Rochford to obtain access to the queen and then blackmailing Katherine to force her to present him with gifts and to meet with him. He either threatened to inform Henry about their secret rendezvous, or more likely, about her illicit activities with Dereham, the behavior that Katherine admitted to Cranmer was always on her mind. A naive player in court politics, she would probably have viewed Culpeper's threats as plausible, since she knew gentlemen of the privy chamber had daily access to the king, who, in turn, because of his semidivine powers, might even be able to discover information about their discussions through the confessional. She failed to understand that Culpeper would never have revealed her secret past to Henry. Even Cranmer hesitated to do so, finally leaving a letter for him about her sexual experiences. In her short life, she had faced great adversity because of cultural attitudes toward human sexuality. Her male abusers seemed to assume that her reluctance to have sexual relations masked "interior consent." Their decision to take advantage of her youth and her naivety not only led to their executions but also to hers.

Chapter 4

Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset

Historiography

This chapter will first examine early-modern and modern documents and histories characterizing Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset, as a domineering wife, who urged her husband Edward, first Duke of Somerset, the Lord Protector of Edward VI, to commit fratricide. They also accused her of acting as lady protectress and demanding precedence over the dowager queen, Katherine Parr, who had recently wed Thomas, Lord Seymour of Sudeley. In 1891, aware of these denunciations, Edmond Bapst identified Lady Somerset as the haughty poetic wolf created by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. To counter these claims, the unbiased facts about her life will be presented to argue that she did not have great influence over public policy, never disputed with the queen dowager over precedence, and was not Surrey's model for the poetic wolf. It will also provide social and cultural contexts for understanding Lady Somerset's relationship with Katherine Parr and her Seymour husband, examine her extensive activities as a religious patron, and her family life after Somerset's execution.

In 1550, the anonymous Spanish chronicler at Ghent referred to a dispute between Lady Somerset and her former mistress, her new sister-in-law, Queen Katherine, wife of Lord Seymour, Somerset's younger brother. The writer characterized Somerset as "tyrannical," but insisted that his duchess was "prouder" than he and "more presumptuous than Lucifer," because she demanded precedence over Katherine. His wife's desires so ruled Somerset, the chronicler related, that he promoted his brother's union with the dowager queen in order "to exalt" his lady protectress-duchess over her. Allegedly, Lady Somerset not only "thrust" herself into Katherine's place at court matins, but also urged Somerset to have Seymour executed: "My Lord, I tell you that if your brother does not die, he will be your death."[1]

As 12 manuscript copies of this chronicle have survived,[2] it is possible that the Catholic writer, Nicholas Sander, who validated the precedence dispute, obtained one of them. It is more probable, since his book lacks the chronicler's details, that Sander had merely heard rumors concerning the Seymours's troubles. He claimed that the women's quarrel over precedence "passed on to their husbands," and asserted the lord protector, "who

Figure 4.1 Anne Seymour (née Stanhope), Duchess of Somerset (1510–1587), reproduction by the National Portrait Gallery, London, and by permission of the Board of Trustees of the Chevening Estate.

though he ruled the king, was yet ruled by his wife, must put his brother to death that he might satisfy his ambition."[3] Sander's study popularized precedence as the cause of the women's dispute.

In his 1603 manuscript about Elizabeth, first published in 1951, John Clapham adopted Sander's explanation. "It hath been reported," Clapham said, "a disagreement emerged between Lady Somerset and Katherine about

Figure 4.2 Edward Seymour, first Duke of Somerset, engraving by Magdalen de Passe or Willem de Passe, © National Portrait Gallery, London.

precedency, a matter that . . . breeds many quarrels among women . . . This feminine quarrel was the first occasion of the breach between the Protector and . . . his brother."[4]

A member of the household of William Cecil, future Lord Burghley, Clapton could have heard rumors about the precedence issue there. It is more likely that he was repeating Sander's rumors. In his biography of

Elizabeth, published in 1615, which Burghley requested he write, William Camden blamed John Dudley, first Earl of Warwick and future first Duke of Northumberland, who

> had by cunning devises, dissolved the brotherly love between the protector and Thomas Seymour his brother taking occasion from a womanish emulation between the Queen Dowager . . . , and the Duchess of Somerset.[5]

Since Camden was not born until 1551, he could have learned about the women's dispute from Burghley, from John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, which will be reviewed below, or from his own research. A document written in the early 1560s, "A 'Journal' of Matters of State," was cited in a 1584 inventory in the Cecil Papers at Hatfield House documenting the women's hatred. Not published until 2003, it failed to explain the reason for their hostility, but claimed that the duchess and Seymour hated each other so profoundly that he attempted to have her children disinherited and the rejected ones by Somerset's first wife, Katherine Fillol, reinstated as his heirs.[6] Thus, Camden did not repeat Sander's precedence claim as did others who wrote after his work appeared.

Sander's work was probably the major source for John Hayward's 1630 study, claiming Lady Somerset had a "pride" that was "monstrous." She hated Katherine Parr, he continued, because "she had presidency of place before her." Calling their dispute, "woman's quarrels," he explained that Somerset "yielded" to her admonitions and set out to destroy his brother.[7] Hayward was well aware that quarrels over precedence were not only women's affairs. As a master in chancery in 1604, he participated in a debate on the precedence of "doctors and masters of the chancery before sergeants at law."[8]

The first important English publication revealing the estrangement of Somerset and Seymour was John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* of 1563, which failed to mention the women. Foxe blamed the fratricide on Satan:

> the old subtle serpent [Satan] . . . sought to sow matter, first of suspicion, and last of all extreme hatred: In so much, that the protector suffered his brother being falsely accused . . . (as it was afterward proved) . . . to be beheaded.[9]

It is odd that Foxe did not refer to their wives, since he introduced their discord in the 1570 edition, which was about twice the size of the original publication. Since he was in London in 1548, and stayed at the London home of Katherine Brandon, dowager duchess of Suffolk, in 1550, he could have heard about the women's quarrel on those occasions. It is interesting that the second edition of his book appeared two years after the death of Katherine Grey, who married clandestinely Somerset's son, Edward, first Earl of Hertford. Many observers viewed Katherine as Elizabeth's successor. Perhaps, while Hertford's wife was alive, Foxe

hesitated to criticize publicly Lady Somerset, her mother-in-law. It seems inconceivable that he would only have learned of the women's dispute after 1563.

In his 1570 edition, Foxe claimed:

> the Protector suffered his brother being accused (whether truly or falsely the Lord knows) to be condemned and to lose his head... As many there were which reported that the duchess of Somerset had wrought his death: so many more there were, who... thought... that the fall of the one brother would be the ruin of the other.

Later, he explained the origin of the brothers' discord:

> Now it happened (upon what occasion I know not) that there fell a displeasure between the... queen and the duchess... and thereupon also in the behalf of their wives; displeasure and grudge began between the brothers.[10]

Besides blaming the women for their husbands' estrangement, Foxe's 1570 discussion also differs from the earlier one in his treatment of Seymour, whom he no longer declared innocent. His two other editions of this work, which also appeared in Lady Somerset's lifetime, in 1576 and 1583, basically repeated this information.[11]

Although Foxe's books were widely disseminated, it is uncertain whether Lady Somerset knew about his comments, but it is likely, since she was an avid reader of religious works. It seems clear from "Foxe's Martyrs" and other documents that the sisters-in-law were estranged. As shall be seen in the section on Lady Somerset's life, the women did not cause their husbands' disagreements.

Published denunciations of Lady Somerset's character continued after the early seventeenth century. Later authors popularizing these views were John Strype and Agnes Strickland. Strype described Lady Somerset in his study of Thomas Smith in 1698 as an "imperious and ill-natured woman." It was the precedence issue Strickland emphasized in 1842: "Open hostility" broke out between the women after Katherine's marriage to Seymour because Lady Somerset refused "to fulfill her office of bearing up the train of the queen dowager."[12]

In 1869 appeared the first challenge to Sander's charge of Lady Somerset's dueling with Katherine over precedence. In his biography of Seymour, John Maclean reported finding no evidence for this dispute, although both the duke and duchess opposed Seymour's marriage to Katherine. Maclean dated an estrangement between the brothers at least from Edward's accession, "if not earlier." For their differences, he blamed Seymour's "ambitious" pride, Somerset's "arbitrary conduct," and the future Duke of Northumberland's "mischievous" actions.[13] Maclean was likely unaware of the *Spanish Chronicle,* which was not published in English until 1889, or he would surely have addressed its accuracy.

Maclean's views had little impact on subsequent histories.[14]

From the 1960s when many publications addressed the Edwardian period, their authors identified Lady Somerset as arrogant and unpleasant and most assumed that a precedence dispute occurred between Katherine and her. In Mary Dewar's biography of Sir Thomas Smith in 1964, she envisioned Lady Somerset as "the terror" of her husband's household and "a hated meddler." In 1972, William Seymour, a descendant of Somerset's second son by his repudiated first wife, described Lady Somerset as a "proud, domineering woman, with a passion for precedence and an overwhelming interest in personal aggrandizement." He noted that the seventh Duke of Somerset, the last lineal male descendant of the first duke's second wife, died in 1750 and that his successor was a lineal descendant of the first wife's second son: "Katherine Fillol squared the account with Anne Stanhope," he gloated, as though she had anything to do with her husband's repudiation of Fillol after suspecting the paternity of her first son. Biographers of Katherine Parr have consistently been hostile to Lady Somerset. In 1973, Anthony Martienssen raised the precedence issue, claiming that the duchess "tried to push her [Katherine], physically out of her place at the head of their entrances and exits at court."[15] Susan James's 1999 study of Katherine continued the attack on her character. Her husband was "egged on by the myopic arrogance of his wife" to commit political atrocities. His wife had an "implacable hatred of her former mistress [Katherine] and that mistress's new husband."[16]

In 1992 and 2002, two studies deviated somewhat from this tradition. In his work on Seymour's fall, G. W. Bernard validated the women's precedence dispute, but denied that Lady Somerset pushed her husband into "reluctant hostility" with his brother. Bernard maintained that Seymour "had done and said quite enough to have provoked not only his brother, but all his fellow councillors."[17] Stephen Alford's analysis of Edward's reign, 133 years after Maclean's work appeared, identified Sander as the creator of the precedence issue, apparently unaware of the *Spanish Chronicle's* earlier claims. He provided the most positive portrayal of the duchess in book-length studies, but did not analyze the negative references to her in contemporary letters. Noting the loyalty of the "wives of the protector's household" toward her, he concluded that Somerset "lacked the character and personality appropriate and necessary" for the lord protectorship.[18]

Finally, Linda Porter's biography of Katherine Parr, which targets a popular readership, appeared in 2010. Although aware that Alford denied that the women quarreled over precedence, she displayed reluctance to surrender the negative evidence, explaining that the unverifiable claim had "the ring of truth."[19]

The earlier characterizations of Lady Somerset as haughty led Edmond Bapst in 1891 to identify her as the wolf in one of Surrey's poems. An examination of whether she was the wolf's model is interesting, because it raises questions about using anonymous literary references as evidence and indicates some confusion about noblewomen's titles. Surrey's verses, along

with those of Sir Thomas Wyatt and other poets, were first published in *Tottel's Miscellany* in 1557, ten years after the earl's death. The verse with the wolf was entitled, "A Song written by the earl of Surrey by [*sic* to?] a lady that refused to dance with him." When Surrey composed it and whether he or the later editor, Richard Tottel, selected this title remain unknown, but the poet did not refer to a dance in the text.[20]

In the poem, the first line of which is "Each beast can choose his fere according to his mind," a narrator recalled having seen a lion "as white as snow which seemed well to lead the race." When the "noble" lion bowed before a white wolf, who was "fierce and froward," he was told that he "shalt not play" with her and "should seek out some meeter fere." To this rebuff, the lion reacted with rage, extolling the virtues of his race and then exclaiming:

> Since that a Lion's heart is for a Wolf no prey,
> With Bloody mouth of simple sheep, go slake your thirst, I say.[21]

Although the poem has a narrator, Surrey has been identified as the lion. In his edition of Surrey's work in 1815, George Nott entitled this piece, "Surrey renounces all affection for the Fair Geraldine." Nott claimed that the wolf was Geraldine, whom Surrey's poetry immortalized, because the FitzGerald family to which she belonged displayed a wolf on its crest and because her contemporaries referred to the Irish as wolfish.[22]

Nott dismissed as irrelevant the lines in Michael Drayton's "Heroical Epistle of Surrey to Geraldine," published in 1598, which referred to "beauteous Stanhope," the "glory" of the royal court. In its gloss, Drayton, who was born in 1563, remarked that in Surrey's elegy, the lion was the poet-earl and the wolf was "beauteous Stanhope." Why and how Drayton came to these conclusions remain unknown. It is possible that Surrey's son, Henry Howard, future first Earl of Northampton, to whom Drayton dedicated in 1597 another of his epistles, "Queen Katherine to Owen Tudor," was his informant, but Howard's relationship to Drayton had an ambiguous factor, since the dedication to him was omitted in the 1598 edition of that epistle.[23]

Perhaps, Drayton was aware of a Stanhope acrostic in one of Wyatt's epigrams also printed by Tottel. Indeed, shortly after mentioning "Beauteous Stanhope," Drayton referred to Wyatt as "a most excellent poet, as his poems extant do witness."[24] The first line of Wyatt's epigram is "Accused though I be without desert." In Tottel's version, the first letter of the first four descending lines did not spell out a first name, but the first letter of the fifth through twelfth descending lines did spell out "Stanhope." In his study of Wyatt's manuscripts, as related in Chapter 2, R. A. Rebholz discovered that Tottel edited the beginning of the second and third lines of Wyatt's manuscript, deliberately preventing the identification of the acrostic given name, Anne, in the first letter of the first four descending lines. Perhaps, Tottel obscured the name to protect the honor

of an Anne Stanhope, whose identity is still unclear. Drayton must have read the Tottel version of Wyatt's epigram, correctly identified Stanhope in the last eight lines, unaware that the first four lines had originally spelled Anne, and incorporated the last name as "beauteous Stanhope" in his epistle. Since he probably read both the lion and Stanhope poems in *Tottel's Miscellany,* Drayton could well have assumed that the two contemporary authors wrote about the same woman. Wyatt made no reference to Stanhope's appearance or her character while assuring her that he would never be false or "untrue" to her. Drayton might also have noted that in Surrey's verse about the lion, he claimed that his blood was not "untrue." A tradition of identifying Wyatt with Surrey as the outstanding poets of Henry VIII's reign seems to have emerged after Tottel's publication. Without citing either Bapst's or Drayton's comments, Rebholz claimed that Wyatt's friend was Anne Stanhope, née Rawson, wife of Sir Michael Stanhope, the future Lady Somerset's half-brother.[25]

Much of this poetry cannot be precisely dated. Since Wyatt died in 1542, his verses might have been written mostly before those of the younger Surrey, who was executed for treason in 1547. Rebholz could have been correct about which woman was featured in Wyatt's acrostic, but the poet surely knew other Anne Stanhopes. In 1524, he assumed the office of clerk of the king's jewels and could have met at court two Anne Stanhopes. One, the future Lady Somerset, served as Katherine of Aragon's maiden of honor. Her stepfather, Richard Page, like Wyatt, was imprisoned in the Tower in 1536. Another one was Anne Rawson, who married Michael Stanhope. Her mother Beatrice had been one of Katherine's maidens. Michael, like Wyatt, assisted in suppressing the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536. By November 1537, Michael had wed Rawson, some two years after his half-sister Anne Stanhope married the future Duke of Somerset, who in 1536 was ennobled as first Viscount Beauchamp of Hache, Somerset, and in 1537, the first Earl of Hertford. If Wyatt wrote his epigram before 1535, he might well have been referring to the future Lady Somerset but certainly not to Anne Rawson, as yet unmarried to Stanhope, but if he wrote it after 1535, he could not have had in mind Anne Seymour, née Stanhope, shortly to become Lady Beauchamp and then Lady Hertford. However, it is unknown if Wyatt knew Rawson after her marriage to Michael Stanhope. He was away on diplomatic assignments from early 1537 to early 1540, but he was occasionally in the kingdom and could have become acquainted with her as Anne Stanhope.[26] Another candidate is Anne Stanhope née Strelly, wife of Michael Stanhope's older brother, Richard, who had died by 1529, but, unlike the other two, no indirect political evidence links Wyatt to her. When widowed, she married Sir John Markham of Cotham, Nottinghamshire.[27]

To summarize, if Wyatt wrote his epigram in the 1520s, either Anne Stanhope, later Lady Somerset, or Anne Stanhope née Strelly could have been the woman he had in mind. If he wrote it later than 1537, then only Anne Stanhope, née Rawson of these three women is the possible

candidate. But perhaps the Anne Stanhope he honored has not yet been identified. Two other poetic possibilities exist. One Stanhope could have been Surrey's wolf and a different Stanhope could have been Wyatt's friend. Finally, as noted earlier, Drayton might merely have been guessing that Wyatt's Stanhope was also the unnamed wolf in Surrey's poem simply because he read both in the Tottel edition.

In 1986 and 1999, William Sessions validated Bapst's identification of Lady Somerset as Surrey's wolf. After the execution of Katherine Howard, Surrey's first cousin, Sessions explained, the poet would have wanted to effect a rapprochement between his conservative family and the more reform-minded Seymours. Subsequently, at a reconciliation party possibly held at Lambeth, which "Surrey may have hosted in August 1542, the young woman touched on the rawest of nerves . . . " This "young woman," Sessions surmised, challenged the Howard code of honor.[28]

One difficulty with Sessions's assertions is that when he wrote his works on Surrey, reference books claimed that Lady Somerset was born in 1497; thus, she would not have been a "young woman" in 1542. Sessions actually created a scene between a wolf-woman, who was thought to be 45 years old, and a lion-man, who was probably about 25. Only in 2004 was it determined that she was born circa 1510. By Tudor standards, at the age of 32, she would not have been considered a "young woman."[29]

Surrey was in London during the summer of 1542, but no evidence of his hosting a party has survived. It is unclear why Sessions did not select a real historical event for his interpretation of the poem's characters.[30] Why create an imaginary party to validate an exchange between a lion-man and a wolf-woman? A final problem with this scenario is that all the evidence that the future Lady Somerset was haughty, which can be dated, occurred during the reign of Edward VI after Surrey's death.

Jessie Childs confirmed in her 2007 biography of Surrey, the association of the lion with Surrey and the wolf with the future duchess. Claiming it was a "thinly veiled attack" on the Seymours, she cited the *Spanish Chronicle* and John Hayward as evidence for Anne Seymour's "fierce and froward" temperament. Acknowledging Surrey was only "thought" to have composed the poem in 1542, Childs, nevertheless, analyzed it as though he had done so. She suggested that it might be characterized as a "kind of protective self-satire." It "camouflages" the author's "insecurity," for the poet seemed to have been protesting too much the family's honor, since one male cousin had died in the Tower for an illicit royal marriage, two female cousins were executed for adultery, and several relatives were imprisoned for high crimes. To a certain extent, Childs claimed, a reader can see "hypocrisy" in it.[31]

In his 1938 biography of Surrey, Edwin Casady had warned against attempting "without convincing external evidence" to read into these verses the "True Confessions" of the writer. Citing the poet-lion's comments about the exploits of other members of his race that seemingly hinted of Howards' experiences, Casady suggested that Surrey might have meant the

lion to represent the Howards rather than himself and the wolf to symbolize their Seymour enemies rather than a specific woman.[32] This claim has the advantage of separating the poem from an imaginary party and an invented exchange between two historical figures. And it does not require validating the title of 1557, with the word "dance," as Surrey's choice, although it might have been.

Analyses of the poem usually associate the lion with the ancient nobility, the Howards, while its wolf belonged to a new family, the Stanhopes. Like Surrey, however, Anne Somerset née Stanhope was of royal descent and could trace her maternal ancestry back to Edward III. In reality, her Stanhope paternal half-brothers and their wives more closely fit the new aristocratic characterization than did she.

Other evidence cited to prove that she was Surrey's wolf were the wolf on the Stanhope badge and the name of the Seymours's manor, Wulfhall. Many have mistakenly assumed that the Wulf in Wulfhall referred to an actual wolf, but the house was listed in Doomsday Book as Ulf's Hall, meaning it belonged to someone named Ulf.[33] Even if Wulfhall were named after a wolf, moreover, it was not a Stanhope possession and should not be used as evidence to associate the woman with a wolf whom Drayton identified as "beauteous Stanhope." That leaves the wolf on the Stanhope badge as Lady Somerset née Stanhope's only personal link with the poetic animal.

There is little reason for scholars to claim that Drayton meant to name Lady Somerset as the wolf when he referred to "beauteous Stanhope." It is even possible that he did not know to which female Stanhope Wyatt was referring. If Surrey's son, Henry, who might have been able to inform Drayton about the wolf's identity, ever mentioned her presence at Henry VIII's court, he most likely would have addressed her anachronistically as Lady Somerset. Drayton, himself, seems never to have referred to the Seymours in his writings.[34]

If Wyatt's Stanhope were the wife of Michael or his brother Richard, she is a more likely candidate for the wolf than Lady Somerset, but no proof exists their contemporaries, except possibly for Drayton, ever referred to any of the three as "beauteous." Certainly, Foxe did not praise Lady Somerset's beauty as he did Katherine Parr's.

Of the two women who married Stanhope men, Michael's wife seems a more likely candidate for Surrey's poetry. After marrying Anne Rawson, Michael began to hold royal office: he became esquire of the body to Henry in 1540, held various other positions during his reign, and was allied with his Seymour relatives. After Edward's accession, Michael was advanced to the position of chief gentleman of the king's privy chamber, and in 1552, as an ally of Somerset, he was also executed.[35]

Richard Stanhope had died by the time the Seymours could have assisted him with a career at court, and his widow Anne, remarried to Markham, only lived until 1554. Thus, when Tottel altered Wyatt's poem in 1557 to make it impossible to read Anne in the first descending four

lines, he probably did this to protect the honor of a lady. The only Anne Stanhope of the three identified here, who was alive and still addressed by that name, was the widow of Michael Stanhope. That fact is not conclusive proof, however, for some readers would have been aware of the maiden name of Lady Somerset, who was widowed in 1552 and who was shortly to remarry.

After her husband's execution, Anne Stanhope née Rawson, who had given birth to seven sons and four daughters, never remarried. While Somerset's heir, remained out of favor with Queen Elizabeth, the Stanhopes advanced politically. One example of their success is the career of John Stanhope, whom Elizabeth selected as vice-chamberlain of her household and appointed to the privy council. James I later ennobled him as Baron Stanhope of Harrington.[36]

Meanwhile, in 1588, one year after Lady Somerset's death, her sister-in-law, Anne Stanhope, died. Her eldest son, Edward, informed Burghley that his mother would be buried in a manner appropriate to her status. The badge of the Stanhopes displayed a wolf, but Edward's crest on this message pictured a tower, with a demi-lyon, crowned and holding between his paws a fireball. Its presence on the document signals how using heraldry for historical evidence can be more misleading than helpful.[37]

The identification of Lady Somerset as the wolf rests mostly on faulty premises. Thanks to Foxe's repetition of rumors and the claims of Sander and other writers, she has also been wrongfully accused of singularly causing her allegedly mild husband, the "good duke," to commit fratricide. The next section of this chapter provides a balanced interpretation that takes into account her society's gender relations and culture.

Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset's Life

Anne, Lady Somerset, was born in about 1510 to Sir Edward Stanhope of Rampton, Nottinghamshire, and his second wife, Elizabeth Bourchier, daughter of Fulk, Lord Fitzwarin. Her maternal relatives included her uncle, John Bourchier, first Earl of Bath, and her great-great grandmother, Lady Anne, countess of Eu, daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, fifth son of Edward III. By her father's first wife, Avelina, daughter of Sir Gervase Clifton of Nottinghamshire, she had two half-brothers, Richard and Michael. Sometime after her father's death in 1511, her mother married Sir Richard Page, a gentleman of Henry VIII's privy chamber.[38]

While serving as maiden of honor to Katherine of Aragon, Anne probably met Edward, who was born in 1500 to Sir John Seymour of Wulfhall, Wiltshire, and Margery, daughter of Sir Henry Wentworth of Nettlestead, Suffolk. Knighted in 1523, he subsequently became an esquire of the king's household and an esquire of the body. By 1531, he had repudiated his wife, Katherine Fillol, probably because he suspected the paternity of the elder of her two sons. A statute in 1540 settled his lands upon his second wife's issue.

Before March 9, 1535, Anne wed Edward and in October, Henry and Anne Boleyn visited them at Elvetham, Hampshire. In 1536, when Henry was favoring Jane Seymour, his queen's maiden, he named her brother, Edward, a gentleman of his privy chamber. Seymour and his wife acted as Jane's chaperones at Greenwich Palace. Among those arrested on suspicion of having illicit relations with Anne Boleyn was Lady Seymour's stepfather, Richard Page, whose connections to the Seymours probably facilitated his release from prison. On May 30, a few days after Anne Boleyn's execution, Henry wed Jane, and on June 5, ennobled her brother as Viscount Beauchamp of Hache, Somerset. Three days after the October 15, 1537, christening of Jane's son, Edward, Henry advanced Beauchamp to the earldom of Hertford.[39]

Following Jane's death from childbirth, Lady Hertford continued to enjoy a prominent court life. In 1539, Henry visited Wulfhall and the next January, the Hertfords participated in the Greenwich reception of Anne of Cleves. Later, while attending Katherine Howard, Lady Hertford joined others welcoming the divorced Anne of Cleves to Hampton Court Palace. She was at court again in 1542, perhaps attending Princess Mary, since the two enjoyed a close friendship. They sometimes played cards together, and Mary usually sent her "Nann" gifts on New Year's Day. In April 1538, Mary also forwarded a christening present to her namesake daughter, Anne.[40]

In 1543, after witnessing Henry's marriage to Katherine Parr, Lady Hertford remained at court. The next year, when her husband was overseeing the Scottish Borders at Newcastle, she petitioned Katherine, via Princess Mary, for his return. On June 3, Mary acknowledged delivering her letter to Katherine, who promised Hertford would soon be recalled. Seven days later, Henry summoned him to London and dismissed him from the border service. In 1546, the heretic, Anne Askew, confessed that a servant who sent her gifts from court claimed that ten shillings were from Lady Hertford. During Edward VI's reign, her ladyship's Protestant views would become more evident.[41]

Between 1537 and 1550, she gave birth to ten children: Edward, who was christened in February 1537 but died in infancy; Anne in April 1538; a second Edward in May 1539, whose godfathers were Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk, and Charles Brandon, first Duke of Suffolk; Henry in 1540; Margaret in 1540; Jane in 1541; Mary, exact year unknown, and then Katherine in 1544. After Edward's accession, she gave birth in July 1548 to a third Edward, the king's godson, and in 1550 to Elizabeth.[42]

The Hertfords provided classical instruction for their three oldest daughters, Anne, Margaret, and Jane, probably a politically motivated decision because it associated their education with that of the king's daughters. When their father served as Edward's lord protector, rumors claimed that he planned to match Jane with the young king. The girls acquired a superb command of Latin, studied Greek, and received instruction in French from their tutor, Nicholas Denisot.[43]

Religious leaders complimented the girls' talents and sent regards to their parents. In 1549, Jane thanked Paul Fagius and Martin Bucer for their "benevolence and friendship" and assured them that her mother was gratified by their "salutations." In addition, John Calvin wrote her sister Anne, asking her to intercede with her mother, "the most illustrious princess," who had sent him a ring as a "token of her good will."[44]

In 1550, Thomas Becon, their father's chaplain, dedicated *The Governance of Virtue* to Jane. Becon praised Somerset as "a prince of noble renown," who with her mother, "a lady of notable godliness and of singular pity toward the poor members of Christ," trained their children "in good literature and in the knowledge of God's most holy laws." This personal testimony of Becon's belies the rumor reported in 1549 by Francis Van der Delft, the Imperial ambassador, that Somerset's wife caused him to accept reformed religious practices. [45] In the 1550 dedication to Jane, Becon also related that a few weeks earlier he had dedicated *The Flower of Godly Prayers* to her mother.[46]

As Henry prepared for his death, which occurred in January 1547, he named in his will 16 executors/privy councilors, including Hertford, to rule for his nine-year-old son, together with 12 assistant executors. Although Henry intended the executors/privy councilors to govern as a group, Hertford, supported by another executor, Sir William Paget, won his colleagues' appointment as lord protector, and a patent dated March 12 granted him the powers of a king's lord protector. In February, he gained the dukedom of Somerset and his younger brother, Thomas, an assistant executor and the lord high admiral, was ennobled as Lord Seymour of Sudeley.[47]

According to documents dated in 1547–1548, those most concerned about precedence were the Seymour brothers not their wives. In May 1547, Van der Delft invited Somerset and Edward to be his son's godfathers and Mary Tudor to be his godmother. At the rite, the proxy appointed by Mary, still secluded in mourning for her father, was Anne, Lady Russell; John Dudley, first Earl of Warwick, served as proxy for Somerset, who, in turn, acted for the youthful king, thus preventing anyone from taking precedence over him. Van der Delft repeated these details to Mary, Queen of Hungary and regent of the Netherlands, to make her understand Somerset's determination "to take the first place on every occasion."[48]

This behavior probably irritated Somerset's brother. After the October 1548 birth of Mary, his and Katherine Parr's daughter, he was overheard claiming, it would be "strange to some," seeing Mary, when she grew up, "taking her place above the Duchess of Somerset, as a queen's daughter."[49] As his statement implicitly indicates, no office of lady protectress existed. During official ceremonies, Lady Somerset would have been placed among the other duchesses, while Katherine as queen dowager would have held first place.[50] Prevailing etiquette did not demote royal widows when they wed men of lesser rank than their deceased husbands.

Animosity did exist between the sisters-in-law, however. In February 1548, Odet de Selve, the French ambassador, reported rumors of a dispute at Greenwich between the protector and his brother because of their wives. De Selve thought the rumors might have been true when he learned that Katherine and Seymour were absent from a subsequent court entertainment, although the duchess and others were present.[51] Perhaps these rumors led the anonymous Spanish chronicler to embellish his account with speculation about a precedence issue.

In January 1549, Seymour's servant, W. Wightman, gave testimony about the women's discord. Wightman recalled his conversations, which occurred after Katherine's death, with Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, a member of the late queen's household. Throckmorton commented: if Seymour

> be either wise or politic, he will become a new manner of man both in heart and service, for he must remember that if ever any grudge were borne towards him by my Lady of Somerset, it was as most men guess for the queen's cause, who now being taken away by death, it will undoubtedly follow (unless the fault be in himself) that she will bear him as good heart as ever she did in her life.[52]

Throckmorton characterized Seymour as extremely greedy and predicted that he would try to marry one of Edward's sisters.

Foxe, of course, believed that the dispute passed from the women to the brothers. In his statements about Henry's reign, Foxe described Katherine as an exemplary Christian queen. When Henry suspected that she was attempting to use their religious discussions to instruct him, he authorized his councilors to arrest her for heresy. Hearing of their intrigue, Katherine humbly submitted to Henry, who rescinded his order for her arrest.[53]

In his subsequent discussions of a submissive queen and a haughty duchess, Foxe ignored the problematic union of Katherine and Seymour. Lady Somerset objected to their marriage, but so did her husband. In his journal, Edward wrote tersely, the "lord protector was much offended" by it.[54] Katherine wed Seymour clandestinely, some three to four months after Henry's death without obtaining the council's approval, as law required, and flaunting protocol dictating a widow mourn one year to honor her husband. In contrast to her stepmother's actions in May, Mary Tudor, still appropriately grieving for her father, appointed a proxy to perform her duties as godmother for Van der Delft's infant. By remarrying so soon after the king's death, Katherine demonstrated public disrespect for him. Another crucial consideration was that if she were carrying Henry's child or if she quickly became pregnant with Seymour's, her remarriage would have raised questions about who sired her infant. Clearly, queens consort were expected to "set an example of chaste marriage and widowhood." Another important issue, from the Somersets' perspective, was that the

inappropriate timing of this marriage besmirched the honor of their family and lineage, both horizontally and hierarchically.[55]

Foxe's description of Somerset as the "good duke" cannot be validated. The record indicates that he was not a mild, self-effacing individual. Greedy for power, status, and financial rewards, he demonstrated an inability to work with the council.[56] On Christmas Day, 1548, Paget wrote a "detailed critique" of his unsuccessful governance, claiming that Somerset's leniency alienated the landed classes and that this alienation explained the realm's financial woes. After recommending that Somerset seek advice from financial experts, Paget denounced the troubled diplomacy that led to wars with Scotland and France.[57] Paget did not blame the problems on Lady Somerset or, indeed, even mention her.

While Paget was increasingly disaffected with Somerset's policies, Seymour conspired against his brother, partly because he believed that he should have been appointed governor of the king's person. After marrying Katherine, who had custody of Elizabeth Tudor, Seymour attempted to win her half-sister, Mary's support for his union. In addition, he brought Jane Grey into his household, promising her father, Henry, future Duke of Suffolk, to match her with Edward. Thus, Seymour gained control of two royal claimants. According to Henry's will, if Edward died without legitimate heirs, Elizabeth was second in the succession after her sister, Mary, and Jane was the eldest daughter of Frances, future Duchess of Suffolk, who was third in line to the throne. Seymour also attempted to manipulate Edward by bribing John Fowler of the privy chamber to provide him with extra spending money.[58]

Shortly after Somerset became lord protector, Katherine Parr began complaining about his decisions. In a 1547 letter from her at Chelsea to Seymour at court, she claimed that Somerset "deferred" answering her requests, a "lesson" he learned from his wife, "for it is her custom to promise many comings to her friends and to perform none. I trust in greater matters she is more circumspect." In a later message to Katherine, Seymour related Lady Somerset, who would soon attend court, had agreed to see her. He asked Katherine to "pray" Lady Somerset to act as his "good lady," and if she were amenable, he would make similar pleas for Katherine. Their estrangement from the duchess was not deep enough to prevent them from requesting her aid. Katherine could have been seeking assistance in her dispute with Somerset over his leasing of her dower property, Fausterne Park, Wiltshire, to Sir Henry Longe, who refused her access to it. When her petition to Somerset failed, Katherine inquired of Seymour, "What cause have they to fear having such a wife?" It would seem Katherine's animosity arose from the unwillingness or, for all the record shows, the inability of Lady Somerset, her former attendant, to win favorable treatment for her from the lord protector rather than from any deliberate act of hers. Katherine expressed disdain for her sister-in-law, who, she thought, was not doing enough to aid her former mistress, who had once assisted her, but it was Somerset whom Katherine chiefly accused of mistreating her.[59]

Scholars have usually treated Katherine sympathetically, partly because of Foxe's revelations about her problems with Henry, but often they have ignored her political ambitions. In early 1543, shortly after the death of her husband, John Neville, Lord Latimer, Katherine was considering marriage to the two single men, who were the closest relatives to Edward, the king's heir: Henry, himself, and Seymour. When Henry died, she quickly wed Seymour and supported his intrigues against his brother.

In her biography of Katherine, Susan James claimed that Lady Somerset was "a woman cordially loathed by most of her acquaintances."[60] At least one important Englishwoman in 1547 would have disputed that analysis. In April, Mary Tudor wrote the duchess, beginning her letter, "My good Gossip" and ending it with "Your loving friend during my life." She requested assistance for two individuals, one of them, Richard Wood, her mother's servant when the duchess was her maiden of honor. Reminding Lady Somerset that this was an "old suit," Mary asked her to renew it with "my lord your husband, for I consider that it is in manner impossible for him to remember all such matters, having such a heap of business as he hath." She thanked "my good Nann" for her assistance in "all my suits hitherto." Mary sought access to the lord protector through his wife, but her tone did not indicate that she thought the duchess dictated his decisions.[61]

Another petitioner, Dorothy Wingfield, communicated with Lady Somerset in 1547, asking her to "please move" her husband for her suit concerning the lands of a Suffolk priory.[62] Many petitioners must have sought her assistance as the lord protector's wife.

On at least one occasion, she refused to aid a petitioner. Information about her refusal is in a letter written on January 17, 1549, to Sir John Thynne, steward of Somerset's household, by Sir Ralph Fane, a soldier at Berwick. At the Battle of Pinkie in 1547, Fane captured George Gordon, fourth Earl of Huntly, who later escaped from prison. Fane informed Thynne that his wife, Elizabeth Fane, had written him from London revealing Lady Somerset's unwillingness to support Fane's "excuse" for Huntly's escape. She declined to befriend Fane after learning that he informed the lord protector that she was revealing secrets to some confidants, especially Jane Fitzwilliam, wife of Sir William, a gentleman of the privy chamber. Lady Somerset claimed that the duke was so angry about her alleged disclosures, "she had never so much displeasure of her husband" since they were married. Fane admitted only to warning Somerset that Lady Fitzwilliam was attempting to learn his secrets.[63]

Scholars have cited other references as proof that Lady Somerset was a imperious woman. None was dated before Seymour's arrest on January 17, 1549, the same day Fane's above letter was written. The first of these correspondents was Sir John Cheke, the king's tutor, whom Seymour sought to entangle in his plot, for Cheke had reluctantly agreed to pass £20 from Seymour to Edward. In January 1549, fearing that he would be implicated in Seymour's intrigues, Cheke wrote to Lady Somerset. He explained that her "singular favor" was one of his "chief comforts" and expressed thanks

for her "favorable" but "undeserved . . . goodness" making it possible for him to "pass the whole course of my danger, and feel the less storm of causeless hap." The "danger" to which he alluded was the fallout from Seymour's arrest.[64]

He also apologized for the "misbehavior" of his wife, Mary Hill, whom he wed in 1547. According to his biographer, Alan Bryson, their married life was initially "turbulent." He was a "demanding husband" and his wife seems to have been incapable of managing domestic affairs well. Cheke pleaded with Lady Somerset to permit "her grace's gentleness to overcome his wife's faults," for she was not only young and inexperienced but also pregnant. He did not identify her offense, but four days before Cheke wrote this letter, Wightman, Seymour's servant, recalled Lady Cheke's secretly leaving Lady Somerset at Syon House to condole with Seymour when he returned to Chelsea after Katherine's death. Bryson believed that Cheke was attempting to "solidify his identification as one of her husband's adherents," thus disassociating himself and his wife from Seymour.[65]

After these January 1549 letters, the next reference to Lady Somerset in extant correspondence was Paget's message on March 21, 1549, the day following Seymour's execution. Because of a failed suit, Paget expressed concerns that Somerset had "conceived some displeasure" toward him. Seeing that two petitioners were pressing Somerset for a suit, Paget dropped his request. He had since learned that the competing suitor was Lady Somerset, news that went "to his heart like a dagger." Next to Somerset, he placed his greatest "trust" in her grace, loving them both. With relief, he recently heard from her, denying that she discussed this issue with her husband. He prayed Somerset continue his good lord.[66]

No statement written in England in early 1549 accused Lady Somerset of urging her husband to assent to Seymour's execution. Both foreign divines in London and Oxford and John Hooper, future Bishop of Gloucester and a client of the lord protector, failed to blame her influence in announcing Seymour's death.[67] It is also true that in January 1549, the month of Seymour's imprisonment, as noted in Fane's letter, Somerset was greatly displeased with his wife because of her alleged gossiping with Lady Fitzwilliam.

Of contemporary sources only the entirely unreliable anonymous *Spanish Chronicle* claimed that Seymour could have been spared if not for her urging.[68] Five other contemporary or near-contemporary statements blamed Warwick and his allies, at least partially, for Seymour's death and the kingdom's problems. In 1549, Antonio de Guaras, a Spanish merchant in London who spoke good English, believed that Somerset was executed by Warwick's "contrivance" and identified him as the "instrument" dividing the brothers.[69] Mary Tudor told Van der Delft in January 1550, Warwick was the "most unstable man in England" and accused the plotters against Somerset of "envy and ambition." Thomas Watertoune's ballad celebrating Mary's accession was published in 1553. In it, he referred to that traitor, Sir Edmund Dudley's son, (Warwick) who with others caused the

"deare uncles" of Edward to be slain and attempted to prevent Mary from becoming queen. [70]

George Cavendish, a former servant of Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, wrote *Metrical Visions* in the 1550s about court events. In his compositions on Seymour and Somerset, he did not refer to Lady Somerset. He had Seymour complain that Warwick conspired to bring him, an "innocent," down[71] and had Somerset admit, as he was responsible for his brother's fate, he deserved divine punishment.[72]

Another author, writing early in Elizabeth's reign, blamed Seymour's troubles on his ambitious nature and on the plotting of Warwick, who "maintained the hatred" between the brothers.[73] In fact, in 1549, the entire council agreed to condemn Seymour. After the bill of attainder was passed, 14 councilors, including Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Somerset, signed the death warrant.

In 1549 and 1550, Hugh Latimer, a former client of Seymour, preached several sermons before Edward condemning his ambitions. In March, nine days after his execution, Latimer accused him of having sent "papers" from the Tower to Mary and Elizabeth, asking them to "conspire" against Somerset. Latimer continued: "Whether he be saved, or no, I leave it to God. But surely he was a wicked man; the realm is well rid of him." In April, he described Seymour as "covetous," "ambitious," "seditious," and a "condemner" of common prayer.[74]

At issue was Seymour's disdain for the familial hierarchy. Eldest brothers enjoyed a privileged status their siblings were expected to honor. During a Lenten sermon in 1550, Latimer related it was usually younger brothers who caused "contention." Latimer added:

> The brother that helps his brother is a sure and well-fenced city, . . . a strong tower . . . But if the one go about to pull down the other, then they are weak both of them; and when one pulls down his fellow, they must needs down both of them; here is no stay to hold them up.[75]

That brothers should support each other permeated contemporary culture. For example, William Vaughan later dedicated a book to his brother with the comment, "For what is more agreeable to nature, than that one brother should to his power reciprocally aid another?"[76]

After Somerset's imprisonment, seven months following Seymour's death, he seems to have reached the same conclusion as Latimer and Vaughan. As a Tower prisoner herself in 1554, Elizabeth referred to her conversation with Somerset in a letter to Queen Mary. Fearing that her half-sister would take her life, Elizabeth claimed that Somerset swore to her, perhaps in January 1551 at court, "if his brother had been suffered to speak with him, he had never suffered."[77]

Meanwhile, familial problems arose because of Seymour's execution. After Katherine's death in 1548, her infant, Mary, was placed in

Somerset's care, but her father's dying request was for Katherine Brandon, Dowager Duchess of Suffolk, to raise his child. A former attendant of Katherine Parr, Lady Suffolk continued to be her good friend after her marriage to Seymour. She seems to have been less precise about mourning customs than was Lady Somerset or Mary Tudor, since a christening was held at her home only three months following her husband's death in 1545.[78]

In July, after Mary Seymour was released to Lady Suffolk at Grimsthorpe, Lincolnshire, she complained to William Cecil, a member of Somerset's household, about the delay in obtaining a pension for Mary and her attendants despite having written to Lady Somerset for it. That the government was dealing with two rebellions could have been one of the reasons the promise was overlooked. In August, Lady Suffolk wrote again to Cecil about her financial needs. Funds probably did arrive, for she ceased complaining.[79] Mary died when she was two years old.

As troubles mounted in 1549 with the Western rebels' unsuccessful siege of Exeter in June and the outbreak of Robert Kett's Norfolk Rebellion in July, Paget became increasingly critical of Somerset's policies and his arrogant treatment of councilors disagreeing with him. In August, Van der Delft told Paget that he was personally responsible for the kingdom's ills, since he had been the "principal instrument in empowering the Lord Protector." Although privately, Paget had criticized Somerset's policies, he tried to protect his honor with a lame excuse about his "bad wife." The ambassador responded that this was a "confession of his unworthiness, since he allowed himself to be ruled by his wife." Nothing more was said about her, and Paget agreed to inform Somerset of the ambassador's sentiments. In fact, Paget's statement was a somewhat desperate ploy to distract Van der Delft from criticizing Somerset, who, if he had known about it, would have felt personally insulted, since contemporaries "mocked henpecked husbands and cuckolds, and often equated the two."[80]

Sir Thomas Smith, the king's secretary and clerk of the privy council, began his political career as Somerset's secretary and seems to have greatly respected Lady Somerset. In 1548, he assured Thynne that if his wife could do Lady Somerset "any service, she shall wait as her duty is." He also informed Cecil that he planned to seek Lady Somerset's help for a client of his.[81] In June or July, 1549, however, he wrote to Lady Somerset, denying rumors circulating about him. Some writers have viewed Smith's letter as proof of her haughtiness.[82] Had he "had the time" to deny to her "by words" those rumors "without any trouble or grief" to her, he would have sought permission to do so. With "confidence" in her "goodness," he was emboldened to denounce them in writing to her, whom he served with all his "heart." He denied he was haughty, an extortionist, covetous, or a "neuter in religion," but admitted that his wife wore dowdy clothing. He had remonstrated with her and assured the duchess that his wife had enough funds to dress "more court like." He ended the letter with: "I do not doubt, but the truth appearing, I shall find your grace my good lady and mistress,

and me much quieted of that wherewith I have been long grieved."[83] His letter did not indicate that she, herself, had believed the rumors.

As Smith's wife was not properly clothed, that criticism was entirely appropriate. Individuals "sought honor and reputation because these were the hallmarks of nobility." Their speech, dress, manners, and accomplishments were the standards by which their peers judged them.[84] This was particularly true at courts, where protocol required all residents to dress according to their office. Thomas Throckmorton, a nephew of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, reported his uncle's similar experience, but the person criticizing his wife's dress was the young king, himself:

> When to the King my wife was shown, new brought
> To Court (who for the nonce was meanly clad):
> He told her, That I was an husband naught,
> Because he saw her courtly robes so bad.[85]

In the autumn of 1549, Somerset lost the protectorate. That September when the factional conspiracy against him, led by Warwick, was gaining momentum, he and the duchess were hunting at Odiham, Hampshire. Leaving her behind, he returned to court on October 1.[86] She joined him briefly at Windsor, where he had escorted Edward on October 6, refusing demands to relinquish the protectorate. On October 8, two important letters commented on the crisis. Lady Somerset sent a message to Paget, seeking help to prove her lord's innocence and admitting that she could not understand what her husband had done to cause the "tumults." As she was recently with Somerset at Windsor, she must have known that he suspected Paget of supporting Warwick's faction. In desperation, perhaps, she hoped to change his mind.[87]

Van der Delft's letter on October 8 referred to unverifiable rumors that when Somerset sent her weeping from Windsor, the peasants and the courtiers blamed her for his troubles. Another similar rumor can be found in a tract attributed to Thomas Wriothesley, since 1547 the first Earl of Southampton. He was Somerset's great political and personal enemy and was active in the council's intrigues against him that October. Doubly criticizing the Lord Protector, the tract claimed that he deserved a "shameful" death for his incompetent governance and that his wife ruled him. Whether Lady Somerset was aware of these defamatory claims is unknown; she retreated to Beddington, Surrey, with her sister-in-law, Anne, wife of Michael Stanhope, who was imprisoned with Somerset. On October 18, Richard Whally, a receiver of the Court of Augmentations, arrived at Beddington to comfort the duchess.[88]

Meanwhile, Somerset surrendered and was lodged in the Tower. In December, Sir Richard Scudamore, an agent of Sir Philip Hoby, ambassador at the Imperial court, reported that Lady Somerset went to Warwick's place but succeeded only in speaking with his wife. She still had influential friends, for some great ladies, whom Scudamore did not name, visited her at

Somerset House after dining with Edward and Elizabeth at Westminster. On Christmas Day, Scudamore noted, Lady Somerset was allowed to see her husband in the Tower "to his no little comfort." In January, Scudamore tried to speak with her twice but she was secluded in her chamber and was "acrased," meaning perhaps "distracted or unbalanced." In February, Somerset joined her at Somerset House and in April, resumed his position on the council, but Warwick controlled the government although without the office of lord protector.[89]

Once Somerset returned to the council, petitioners began to seek his favor, among them, Katherine, Lady Suffolk. In letters to Cecil she denounced Somerset's handling of a dispute involving her cousin, William Naunton, and blamed Lady Somerset for her relative's continuing problems. She commented: "I could blame my lady for my lord's fault, but I think he has been warned too late to fall again into that trap." This statement was vague enough to cover any of his dealings during the protectorate, including Lady Suffolk's difficulties in winning funds for Mary Seymour. In November, after her cousin's suit was settled to her satisfaction, Lady Suffolk's tone changed drastically. She asked Cecil for his "forgiveness for all my coarseness in this matter. I must write to the duke and duchess of Somerset to thank them for their gentleness."[90] Stephen Alford explained about her behavior: she "worked through Cecil and Edward and Anne Seymour to procure preferment for her cousin."[91]

Like the queen dowager earlier, Lady Suffolk behaved in a haughty manner. At or near the top of the social hierarchy, both assumed that they deserved to have their petitions approved by the lord protector, only recently advanced to his dukedom. While Lady Somerset did attempt to influence her husband and while, as a duchess, she seems also to have been fully aware of her own social standing and worth, it is clear suitors were insulting her, although they were actually angry with her husband's behavior and their lack of success. They were denouncing her for not doing enough to aid them.[92]

Lady Suffolk could, in fact, have been one of the individuals protesting Latimer's strong language about Seymour. Latimer, the duchess's client, was to preach before her at Grimsthorpe in 1552. Meanwhile, in a sermon at court, he responded to those criticizing his harsh sermon about Seymour, explaining that he would preach "every word of it again." Then he continued: some individuals were claiming "that my Lady of Somerset's Grace hired me to it . . . I never talked with Her Grace touching that man . . . , nor never gave she me anything . . . for any such purpose."[93]

Meanwhile, Somerset attempted to reconcile with Warwick. On June 3, 1550, at Sheen, Somerset's eldest daughter, Anne, married Warwick's heir, John, Viscount Lisle. Perhaps because he suffered from a lingering illness, Warwick did not attend the wedding. The new Imperial ambassador, Jehan Scheyfve, believed that the ceremony, which he inaccurately placed at Syon, was arranged by the couple's mothers. More reliable evidence indicates that Somerset sought the match. Scheyfve's information about the

wedding's entertainment was also incorrect. Francis de Vendôme, Vidame of Chartres, did not provide the banquet, as the ambassador claimed.[94]

Afterward, Scheyfve repeated more gossip, some of which was inaccurate: In November 1550, that he heard Somerset and Warwick were quarreling and, in March 1551, that Warwick wanted to marry his daughter to Lady Suffolk's young son, Henry, second Duke of Suffolk, whom Lady Somerset likewise wanted for one of her daughters. Lady Suffolk refused these offers and clarified to Cecil the nature of those conversations. She claimed that Warwick "for better show of his friendship, wanted the duke of Somerset to have her son for his daughter."[95]

In October 1551, following his ennoblement as the Duke of Northumberland, Warwick and his allies moved against Somerset, confirming some of Schevyfe's rumors. On November 16, he had Somerset arrested and by November 18, had the duchess, her half-brother, Michael, and several of Somerset's faction confined in the Tower. Subsequently, Somerset was convicted of conspiring to assassinate some of the councilors and was executed on January 22, 1552. Also charged with this felony, Stanhope was beheaded in February.

It is unclear why Northumberland ordered Lady Somerset incarcerated. Perhaps, he hoped that she would provide information confirming Somerset's conspiracy, or perhaps he feared that she might try rallying her husband's faction to move against him. Following Somerset's first imprisonment, Northumberland could recall, she attempted to meet with him, and received visits from some great ladies. Scheyfve also related the rumor circulating before her arrest that she predicted the world might soon change and her powerless husband would be able to reward those who wished him well.[96] One of Somerset's servants, William Crane, testified that she was aware of her husband's intrigues. Apparently, Somerset directed Crane to inform her that he had decided not to "meddle with the apprehension of any of the council and bade her bid M. Stanhope to meddle no more" in the business.[97] She remained imprisoned until after Mary's accession in 1553.

Before turning to her life following Somerset's death, an examination of book dedications between 1548 and 1551 will provide insights into her patronage. Eight different works by five authors honored her. More publications were dedicated to her than to any other woman in early Tudor England. Two were original creations and the others were mainly translations of books that could be used to uphold Protestant doctrine. The exception was John Old's edition, published twice in 1549, of Erasmus's paraphrases on the New Testament, a project initially sponsored by Katherine Parr. Old dedicated it to Lady Somerset because she found a vicarage for him at the suit of his friend, Latimer.[98]

By dedicating publications to people, authors often hoped to gain rewards for their efforts. It cannot always be assumed that they were personally aware of the religious beliefs of those they honored. That certainly was not true of Old or some of the others seeking Lady Somerset's

patronage. In 1548, Nicholas Lesse, a London resident and friend of John Bale, future Bishop of Ossory, published the first book dedicated to her. He labeled himself her "faithful and daily orator" in his translation of Francis Lambert's *Wyll of Man*. She probably rewarded him, for two years later, he dedicated to her his translation of St. Augustine's *Predestination of Saints*.[99]

Walter Lynne dedicated three books to her in 1549–1551, also identifying himself as her "daily orator." In the first he said that she was "known to be (amongst the noble women of this realm) the most gracious patroness and supporter both of good learning and also of godly men." One year later, he dedicated a *Concordance* to her after learning that her "chief and daily study" was the scriptures. Since this "instrument," written by Heinrich Bullinger, would assist her in locating biblical topics, he believed that with her "customary gentleness" she would accept his "good will therein." It was reprinted in 1563. In his third dedication to her in January 1551, Lynne confirmed her great desire to have God's truth preached and claimed that she was "the most worthy example of all noble women, whose Godly study all Christian hearts do rejoice in."[100]

Two final authors belonged to the Somerset household. Little is known about William Samuel, who identified himself in an abridgement of the statutes in 1551 as Somerset's servant and called her "my gracious lady and mistress."[101] The other was Thomas Becon, who saluted her in *The Flower of Godly Prayers* in 1550. It had appeared in at least five editions by 1570.[102]

Besides these publications, two manuscripts were dedicated to her. In her English translation of a Greek homily of Basil the Great, Mildred Cecil, William's wife, honored Lady Somerset, addressing her as "very noble and virtuous" and claiming that she was "her right good lady and mistress." She signed off the dedication as "Your Graces in service."[103]

The second manuscript was by Edward Courtenay, future Duke of Devon and a Yorkist pretender to the throne. Imprisoned in the Tower since 1538, he translated *IL Beneficio di Cristo (c.1542).* He probably honored her with this work because its "Christocentric piety and ambiguous position on justification" led Catholic authorities to question the orthodoxy of its authors, the *spirituali*, who were Catholic evangelical reformers.[104] Addressing her as the "right virtuous lady and gracious princess, Anne, duchess of Somerset," Courtenay explained that her "pitiful and merciful goodness spread itself everywhere and had pierced these huge walls." He hoped that by her help he might be delivered from prison.[105]

That the praise for her support of Protestant clergymen was based on her activities and behavior is confirmed by two other occurrences. In February 1551, when the reformer, Martin Bucer, died at Cambridge, Lady Somerset obtained most of the books in his library, and at Easter 1553, Bishop Hooper visited her at the Tower.[106]

As a prisoner for two years, Lady Somerset lived reasonably well. Her widowed mother, Lady Page, was often with her. She was also attended by two gentlewomen and a man for whom no allowance was given to

Sir Arthur Darcy, lieutenant of the Tower. Two or three other gentlemen also served her. An inventory indicates that she consumed mutton and wild game, as well as bread, beer, and wine. At the beginning of 1553, £100 assigned to her out of the profits of her late husband's estates were sent to the lieutenant for her use.[107]

Shortly after Lady Somerset's incarceration, Elizabeth, Lady Cromwell, Somerset's sister, agreed to care for four of their children, Jane, Mary, Katherine, and the youngest, Elizabeth, who had previously resided with another of his sisters, Dorothy, wife of Sir Clement Smith. Although Lady Cromwell received £50 per annum for each girl, she considered them a financial burden and, requested that at about Christmas, when her nieces had been with her one full year, other housing arrangements be made for them. The allotment for each child was subsequently raised to one hundred marks. Meanwhile, Somerset's heir, Edward, and his two sons, Henry and the other Edward, resided with William Paulet, Marquess of Winchester, the lord treasurer.[108]

Following Northumberland's failed attempt to place Jane Grey on the throne in 1553, Mary Tudor took charge of the kingdom. One of her early acts, on August 11, was to grant Lady Somerset her freedom. Once released, she began recouping her financial losses and petitioning for the arrears of her jointure. Deliberations continued until mid-1568 when the crown agreed to provide her £700 annually until the entire deficit of £10,000 was paid. Meantime, Lady Somerset maintained her friendship with Cecil, who visited her in February 1557 and January 1558.[109]

In March 1558, Mary granted the duchess for life the manor of Hanworth, a former dower possession of Katherine Parr. In 1631, John Weever referred to it as one of the five "princely" houses in Middlesex county.[110] Possibly, Lady Somerset sought this estate because she planned to remarry. Like some other noble widows, for example, Katherine, Dowager Duchess of Suffolk, and her stepdaughter, Frances Grey, Dowager Duchess of Suffolk, Lady Somerset decided to take a second husband.

A prevailing opinion about widows was they needed male relatives to help them manage their households. In 1595, after the death of Henry Hastings, third Earl of Huntington, for example, Sir Roland White informed the earl's nephew, Sir Robert Sidney, employed at Flushing, that Katherine, Lady Huntington, was upset because her husband died greatly in debt, leaving her with a "bare jointure" and no one to assist her with her finances. White believed that if Sidney were in England, she would seek his help. Grieving widows were also especially powerless to threats to themselves or their property. Another problem was some widows, like Agnes, Lady Norfolk, had difficulty controlling male servants.[111]

Sir Henry Wotton later observed that the "greatest ladies marry their servants." Lady Somerset did wed one of her husband's servants, a younger man of lesser social rank, Francis Newdigate, esquire. The date of the ceremony is unknown but they were wed by January 15, 1559. Also imprisoned in the Tower in 1552, Newdigate had served Somerset as a gentleman usher,

experience making him a prime candidate for Lady Somerset's second husband. His familiarity with the family's business affairs had not only provided him opportunities to gain his late master's confidence but also to develop a working relationship with his wife. Studies of medieval widows indicate that these Tudor dowager duchesses were following a tradition that can be found in this earlier period. When peeresses remarried, they tended to choose men of lesser status.[112]

Born in 1519, Francis was the fifth son of John Newdigate, esquire, of Harefield, Middlesex, and Anne, daughter of Nicholas Hilton of Cambridge. In 1559, after their marriage, Elizabeth granted her the lease of Chelsea Place. In 1559 and 1563, Newdigate represented the boroughs of Great Bedwyn and Chippendale, respectively, probably through his wife's influence. As a member of Parliament, he acted for her and her family's interests. In 1563, for example, he charged Gabriel Pleydell with forgery in connection with a lawsuit over the duchess's lease of Monkton Farleigh.[113] To keep the queen aware of her needs, Lady Somerset exchanged New Year's gifts with her in 1562; a year later Elizabeth leased her the manor of Coleshill for life.[114]

Meanwhile, in April 1561, Lady Somerset informed Cecil, the royal secretary, she was content for her son, whom Elizabeth restored to his father's earldom, to travel abroad. Regretting his willfulness, she hoped that he could be matched with a noble lady at Elizabeth's pleasure. Lady Somerset was unaware that Hertford had secretly married the queen's maiden of honor, Katherine Grey, in November 1560. The marriage was controversial because many Protestants viewed her as Elizabeth's successor. In August after hearing a "brute" that her son was wed to the pregnant Katherine, then a Tower prisoner, Lady Somerset assured Cecil that she had been unaware of the marriage.[115]

The next month, when Hertford returned from abroad, he was also incarcerated in the Tower, where on November 24, Katherine gave birth to their son, Edward. As Hertford's witness, his sister, Jane, died of consumption in March and the officiating priest disappeared, no witness could verify the wedding. Elizabeth was offended because she had the right to authorize the marriages of royal claimants and probably considered their union politically threatening. In 1562, an ecclesiastical commission pronounced the marriage invalid. Still in the Tower, Hertford regained access to his wife, who was delivered of another boy, Thomas, in February 1563. Because of a plague outbreak in August, Katherine and her younger son were sent to live with her uncle, Lord John Grey of Pyrgo, Essex, while Hertford and his older son were released to his mother's custody.[116]

Subsequently, Hertford, but not his older son, was removed from Hanworth. When Katherine died in January 1568, her younger son was also placed with Lady Somerset, but Hertford remained under house arrest at various places until 1571.[117] This treatment led his mother, who had visited court in March 1564, to petition Elizabeth, Cecil, and Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester, for her son's release in January 1566. She wished

"God to make [her] highness mother of some sweet prince to the end" she "might the better conceive what mother's cares and affections can mean." Later, Lady Somerset again wrote to Cecil about her son's confinement.[118] Ultimately, when freed, Hertford married twice more, secretly by 1582, Frances Howard, daughter of William, first Lord Howard of Effingham, a maiden of honor to Elizabeth, and in 1601, Frances Prannel, the widowed daughter of Thomas, Viscount Howard of Bindon, but he sired no more children.

Lady Somerset cared for Hertford's sons and lived long enough to see Edward, who despite his illegitimacy was addressed as Viscount Beauchamp, secretly married to his cousin, Honora Rogers, the daughter of Sir Richard Rogers of Dorset, and the sister of Mary Seymour's husband Andrew Rogers.[119] His match with Honora, a resident of Lady Somerset's home, not only infuriated his father but also his grandmother. Ultimately, just before Lady Somerset's death, Lady Beauchamp gave birth to another Edward. The appearance of the first of Beauchamp's three sons may have reconciled the duchess, for she left him and his wife a legacy in her will.[120]

One year after the death in 1554 of John Dudley, Viscount Lisle and second Earl of Warwick, husband to Lady Somerset's eldest daughter Anne, she wed Sir Edward Unton of Farringdon, Berkshire. During the next ten years, she gave birth to seven children, five sons and two daughters, the most notable of whom was Henry, a future ambassador born about 1558. Three of the countess's sons died young, and by 1566, she suffered from mental illness.[121]

Of Lady Somerset's remaining daughters, only two married, since Margaret, who died probably before 1563, and Katherine remained single. As noted earlier, Mary wed Andrew Rogers, esquire, and after his death, Sir Henry Peyton; her sister, Elizabeth, became the second wife of Sir Richard Knightly. Only one of Lady Somerset's two other sons, Henry, who married Lady Jane, daughter of Thomas Percy, seventh Earl of Northumberland, survived her, since Edward, the king's namesake godson, died in 1574.[122]

In the 1570s and 1580s, occasional references can be found to the duchess. In 1570, the queen granted her and Newdigate titles to seven manors. That same year, Edward Crane, identifying himself as her servant, dedicated to her his translation of a book on faith by Stephanus Bodonius.[123] The next year, Newdigate took his seat as one of the knights of the shire for Middlesex, his last legislative office.[124] In September, he wrote Cecil about his wife's interests in Combe Nevell Manor; to the letter she added a postscript, requesting some of his wine and signing off as his "loving friend." Three years later, in 1574, she complained to Cecil, then Lord Burghley, about the negative remarks Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, wrote to Newdigate and requested Burghley to "stay this defacement to the world." In December 1576, again writing to Burghley, she thanked him for responding favorably to Newdigate's petition for an office for her client.[125] The next September, Sir Francis Walsingham noted in his journal that

Elizabeth dined at the duchess's house, presumably Hanworth.[126] Records indicate that she exchanged NewYear's gifts with Elizabeth in 1578 and dined again with her at court in August 1580.[127]

Earlier that year, on May 31, 1580, Newdigate's will was drawn up. He left to his wife all his personal and real property, the latter of which was to be valued at £380. His properties included his house in Canon Row, Westminster, purchased from Lord Hunsdon, the Bull Inn at Isleworth, Littleton Manor, Middlesex, and Little Ashstead, Surrey. Admitting that he received all his "preferments" by his marriage, he appointed his wife his executrix. Just before dying on January 26, 1582, he gave his consent for her to obtain Great Ashford, Surrey, his last acquisition.[128]

Lady Somerset seems to have missed Newdigate's support. In July, she sent two letters to Burghley, explaining that she had assigned the manor of Asted to her son, Henry, with the provision that if he had no male heirs, it would go to Hertford's younger son, Thomas, and his male heirs. Without her consent, he consigned it to another individual, a Mr. Pagitt. She requested Burghley summon Henry and Pagitt and see that her "meaning may take effect."[129]

Meanwhile, her family monitored her health. In June 1582, her servant informed Hertford about a serious cough. Her grandsons, Beauchamp and Thomas, also read to her some Latin letters, which they translated into English. Three years later, Mary told Hertford their mother, who had exchanged New Year's gifts with the queen, was at court and in good health. Apparently, an earlier dispute between them had been resolved. In 1582, Mary had pleaded with Burghley to intercede for her with the duchess, because so many rumors about her behind her back had been leaked to her mother that when she was last at Hanworth, she was not permitted to speak with her.[130]

In 1586, the last book dedicated to Lady Somerset appeared, a translation by an 11-year-old child, Ephraim Pagitt, of sermons on the book of Ruth by Ludwig Lavater. He thanked her and three other ladies "for the comfort" he and his siblings, who were "poor children," received from them "in our necessities."[131]

On July 14 of that year William Clarke, her preacher, drew up her will, which was witnessed by her two physicians, Thomas Penny and Thomas Muffit. She noted that despite "the many years wherewith God hath blessed" her and the "sickness" from which she suffered, she was in "perfect mind" and thanked "God in Christ Jesus that he hath long ago called [her] to the knowledge and love of the Gospel." She left various bequests to four of her children, omitting, probably because of her derangement, her daughter Anne. Since Katherine, her last unmarried daughter, received no legacy, she had undoubtedly died some time earlier. Besides Hertford's two sons, Lady Somerset mentioned her goddaughter, Anne Knightly, and her brother Richard Knightly.[132] The duchess also remembered two children of her deceased half-brother, Michael Stanhope: John, whose career she assisted, and Michael. Although she wrote to Burghley in 1581, seeking the

position of master of requests for the eldest Stanhope nephew, Edward, she did not remember him in her will.[133]

When Elizabeth dispatched Sir Thomas Gorge to Lady Somerset on April 7 to persuade her to name her son, Henry, her executor, she agreed to do so orally and sent a ring to confirm the promise. Nevertheless, she did not change the will in which she entrusted Hertford with that duty. She was probably still distressed at how Henry treated her wishes about Asted Manor. It is also possible that she disapproved of his marriage to Jane Percy, whose Catholic father was executed for treason in 1572. The duchess left no bequest to this daughter-in-law.[134]

On Good Friday of 1587, Lady Somerset's physician, Dr. Muffit, noting how weak she was, warned it was time for her to "set all things in order." She died on April 16, Easter Sunday, and Elizabeth had her buried in the chapel of St. Nicholas at Westminster Abbey. Subsequently, her goods and moveables were assessed at £9,829 19s. 8d.[135]

Unquestionably, Lady Somerset held strong religious convictions, since she was extensively involved in religious patronage. She adhered to a deep family loyalty and strict code of honor that led her to defend her husband and son and to denounce Seymour's marriage to Katherine Parr. Lady Somerset's reputation as an aggressively proud woman, who greatly influenced the governmental policies of the lord protector is largely a myth. She did seem, however, to have some influence on his patronage, thereby alienating both Katherine Parr and, at least temporarily, Katherine, Duchess of Suffolk, but pleasing Mary Tudor and various clerics and writers. Katherine Parr's anger was mostly caused by her awareness of the Somersets's hostility to her clandestine marriage and by the duke's decisions about her suits. While Lady Somerset deplored the marriage, it would be unfair to blame her for urging her brother-in-law's death. Even Foxe stopped short of validating the rumors implicating her. When Somerset confessed to Elizabeth that if he had met with his brother, he would not have permitted his execution, he failed to involve his wife in that event, taking full responsibility for it, himself. This was a sentiment also expressed by Nicholas Throckmorton's nephew:

> But learn, and mark the cause. This Duke did bring
> His only brother to destruction;
> Wherefore our God, who hated much that thing,
> Did justly send on him confusion.[136]

Chapter 5

Lettice, Countess of Leicester and Essex

Historiography

The most derogatory contemporary statements about Lettice, Countess of Leicester and Essex, appeared in an anonymous book, often referred to as *Leicester's Commonwealth*, in 1584. Widely disseminated in England, it not only disparaged the character of Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester, Elizabeth I's favorite, but also most of the women with whom he had close relationships, including Lady Essex, who became his second wife. Probably written by several coauthors, but especially Charles Arundell, it claimed that when Walter Devereux, first Earl of Essex, was in Ireland, his countess gave birth to Leicester's child and later aborted his fetus; Leicester had Essex poisoned so that he could marry her; Sir Francis Knollys, her father, disbelieving that Leicester had wed her secretly, forced them to go through a second ceremony at Wanstead, Essex; and the countess "raged" against Elizabeth.[1]

As though this book was insufficient disparagement, some writers have interpreted comments of Humphrey Tyndall, the minister who married Lady Essex and Leicester, about her wedding dress to declare that she was pregnant at the ceremony. After examining these defamations, this chapter will present the facts of her life to indicate how erroneous they were. It will also offer information about her years as a widow following the execution of her third husband, Sir Christopher Blount.

Leicester's Commonwealth related a discussion between a scholar and a gentleman with a Catholic lawyer about Leicester. They described him as Elizabeth's lecherous, greedy, and ambitious favorite, who controlled the court, the council, the chamber and, with the assistance of his allies, the realm. This descendant of traitors enjoyed power not because he was a skilled administrator, but because he was Elizabeth's favorite.[2]

Royal officials interpreted it as an attack on Elizabeth, although its authors ignored rumors about her sexual intimacy with Leicester. These polemicists were attempting to appropriate for Catholics the claim of Protestant clerics that women rulers should heed the advice of their wise male councilors, meaning, of course, wise Protestant males. Like most contemporaries, they believed that one or more of Elizabeth's advisors controlled her governmental decisions. Consequently, they recommended

Figure 5.1 FPm9, Lettice Knollys, Portrait of Lettice Dudley, Countess of Leicester by Nicholas Hilliard, by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

that she heed their counsel on two issues. Citing examples of former princes who placed their lives in peril by supporting "wicked" subjects, they urged her to withdraw her favor from Leicester and let justice be done.[3]

They also advised Elizabeth to recognize Mary, Queen of Scots, as her successor. Instead of the Scottish line, they presumed that Leicester

Figure 5.2 Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester by an unknown artist, National Portrait Gallery.

would support the premier Yorkist claimant, Henry Hastings, third Earl of Huntington, his brother-in-law who was married to Katherine Dudley. He promoted Huntington as her successor not only because his strategy to gain the kingship by marrying Elizabeth failed, but also because his brother-in-law's accession would ensure the continuation of his political influence.[4]

These authors were probably English exiles residing in Paris, seeking the liberation of the imprisoned Scottish queen and championing her claims to the English throne. When in 1583, the crown discovered the Throckmorton Plot, the goal of which was to free Mary, Arundell joined her exiled allies abroad, including Charles Paget and Thomas Morgan. Her correspondence with them reflected some of the issues in *Leicester's Commonwealth.* She objected to Elizabeth's appointment of Huntington as her temporary cocustodian in 1569. Viewing him as her prime competitor for the throne, she feared the Puritan earl, as her cocustodian, might seek her death. She ultimately identified Leicester and his colleague, Sir Francis Walsingham, as the ones wanting her transferred from George Talbot, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury's care to Huntington's.[5]

In January 1585 letters to the Scottish queen, Paget and Morgan repeated rumors that Leicester blamed Mary for the publication of *Leicester's Commonwealth.* The following year, Morgan denounced Leicester as a "tyrant," and Mary's agent in Spain, as noted earlier, Francis Englefield, lauded the attack on him: "Instead, therefore of the sword which we cannot obtain, we must fight with paper and pens, which cannot be taken from us."[6]

Writers have assumed that this gossip about Leicester's and Lady Essex's adultery was based on a modicum of truth. They reached this conclusion partly because he confessed to siring an illegitimate son with Douglas, Lady Sheffield, and partly because he wed Lady Essex. The problem with citing Leicester's alliance with Lady Essex as proof of their earlier adulterous affairs is that it validates gossipers' habits of repeating fabricated tales to defame prominent individuals, especially courtiers. William Cecil, first Lord Burghley's daughter, Anne, was one of their victims. After her husband, Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, returned from abroad in 1576, he disowned his daughter, born in July 1575, because of his "extreme sensitivity to baseless court gossip." The queen, Burghley, and others disbelieved Oxford's "aspersions" about his daughter's paternity, which greatly distressed his wife and her father.[7] Another victim was Elizabeth, widow of Sir William Hatton, who married Sir Edward Coke in 1598. Partly because he was 26 years older than she, their marriage generated gossip claiming that she was pregnant at their wedding. The defamation has been described as part of a campaign to discredit Attorney General Coke, who competed with Sir Francis Bacon for royal office and for this bride.[8]

Leicester's Commonwealth contains obvious inaccuracies. No modern scholar has validated its central premise that the earl controlled Elizabeth and her kingdom, which not only ignored that she ruled as well as reigned, but also that Burghley made important governmental contributions.[9] The book's rumors should be accepted as facts only if they can be verified by independent, objective documentation. Although its authors had some knowledge about the court, including disputes over whether Elizabeth should marry Francis, Duke of Anjou and Alençon, most of

their information would have been based largely on rumors, like much of the evidence ambassadors collected.

In his 2006 study of favoritism literature, Curtis Perry claimed that *Leicester's Commonwealth*, described as a "cultural fantasy," inaugurated a literary genre concerning favorites that painted them in "larger and mythic or ideological terms." Hostile commentators presented him and others as cowardly parvenus without abilities in crown business and as sexually charged creatures, poisoning their enemies and dabbling in sorcery. These concepts emerged out of a "profound ambivalence about the legitimacy of personal intimacy as a political mechanism" and actually functioned as a criticism of personal monarchy. Thus, attacking Leicester gave Elizabeth's critics opportunities to voice dissatisfaction with her. This "libel," Perry also related, was one of the "most effective and influential pieces of political slander ever written." The writers constructed a "set of stereotypes" that shaped attitudes about favorites for 60 years.[10]

Ultimately, this "libel" is important because it saved for posterity some of the rumors about Leicester, his two wives, Amy Robsart and Lady Essex, and his former mistress, Lady Sheffield. While early-modern men were expected to enjoy more sexual freedom than women, the intent of the book's extreme accusations against him was to fuel the contemporary bias against men with "doubtful sexual reputations" serving in public office.[11]

In August 1584, the earl probably was unaware of *Leicester's Commonwealth* when he defended himself against other slanders. He denied to his colleague, William Davison, a diplomat and future privy councilor, that he had made "hard" speeches against James VI of Scotland. Explaining his "bringing up has been too long about princes to misuse anything toward them," he wished gossips would not "condemn a poor nobleman who has enemies, as others have" or "think so basely" of him, but "in these dangerous days who can escape lewd and lying tongues."[12]

Books published after this "libel" appeared were somewhat influenced by its defamations. In 1615, decades after Essex's death, William Camden judged that the speed with which Leicester dropped Lady Sheffield and publicly loved the widowed Lady Essex increased suspicions that he had injured her late husband by his "cunning court tricks." Although Camden did not accuse Leicester and Lady Essex of adultery, he believed that they were married twice. About Lady Sheffield, Camden was ambiguous: "whether she was his wife or paramour, I will not say."[13]

Like many in England, Camden refrained from publicly besmirching the honor of "great ladies." Indeed, in the star chamber case in 1605, when Lady Sheffield's son by Leicester attempted to prove his legitimacy, some noblemen protested the testimony that denigrated the reputations of "ladies of honor," such as his mother, who was falsely charged in *Leicester's Commonwealth* with giving birth to a second illegitimate child by Leicester. The witnesses repeating these claims, the protesters thought, ought to be punished.[14] The French writer, Pierre de Bourdeille, Seigneur

de Brantôme, had earlier written an essay in *The Lives of Gallant Ladies* about why the honor of ladies, especially of "great ladies," should not be besmirched.[15]

Besides validating the rumors in *Leicester's Commonwealth*, modern writers have also utilized legal depositions to charge Leicester and Lady Essex with adultery. On March 13, 1581, two months before the birth of the countess's only child by Leicester, he arranged for witnesses to be deposed concerning their wedding in 1578. Because he had recognized Lady Sheffield's child as his illegitimate son, Leicester acted to ensure the legitimacy of his unborn infant. Humphrey Tyndall, the officiating priest at the ceremony, and other witnesses were questioned in London at Leicester House in front of Edward Barker, notary public, about the wedding, which the earl had hoped to keep secret from Elizabeth, anticipating her negative reaction.[16]

Tyndall's most intriguing comment for many was his description of the bride's gown as loose-fitting, leading them to conclude that she wore a maternity dress. The first to make this claim was probably Elizabeth Jenkins in 1961. Assuming Tudor women, like mid-twentieth century ones, wore distinctive loose-fitting maternity dresses, Jenkins supposed Lady Essex and he had been lovers since 1575, and in 1578, upon discovering her pregnancy, he married her secretly at Wanstead. Many writers have validated Jenkins's speculation; a sampling of their comments are as follows. In his 1980 biography of Leicester, Alan Kendall agreed that she was pregnant, but was unsure they had been lovers since 1575. Leicester's next biographer, Derek Wilson, speculated in 1981 that their three-year affair resulted in her being pregnant at their wedding. Adopting the assertion in *Leicester's Commonwealth* about two marriages, Wilson explained that they had a hasty ceremony in the spring of 1578 and a later one in September. In 2007, Sally Varlow even asserted in her biography of Penelope, Lady Essex's daughter, that under the countess's "loose gown," she was carrying Leicester's child. Simon Adams had earlier commented somewhat cautiously on this controversy in his 2004 entry on Lady Leicester in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Somewhat uncertain about the meaning of "loose dress," he concluded: a "pregnancy in 1578 cannot be ruled out entirely, but no reference to one survives."[17] As will be seen later in this chapter, a pregnancy can be ruled out.

Lettice, Countess of Leicester and Essex's Life

The above alleged scandals lay far in the future when Lettice was born at Rotherfields Greys, Oxfordshire, on November 6, 1543, the third of 16 children of Francis Knollys and Katherine Carey, who named their daughter after her paternal grandmother. Her maternal grandparents were Lady Mary Rochford, the younger sister of Anne Boleyn, and William Carey. Their daughter, Katherine Carey, was born sometime before the birth in 1526 of her brother Henry Carey, future first Lord Hunsdon. In late 1539,

Katherine won appointment as maiden of honor to Anne of Cleves and the following April, wed Francis Knollys, the future vice-chamberlain of Elizabeth's household and privy councilor. Their eldest child, Henry, was born on April 12, 1541.[18]

The next information about Lettice, a redheaded beauty, dates from Elizabeth's reign. In 1559, Lettice began serving as her maiden of honor, and in 1560, before September, married Walter Devereux, Viscount Hereford and future first Earl of Essex, whose seat, Chartley, stood a few miles north of Stafford. During the next few years, they traveled to court, and in 1562, 1564, and 1567, Lady Hereford exchanged New Year's gifts with Elizabeth.[19] In early 1563, Lady Hereford gave birth to Penelope, her eldest child, who was christened on February 3. Penelope was probably born at Chartley, as were her siblings: Dorothy, perhaps September 17, 1564, Robert on November 10, 1565, and Walter possibly on October 31, 1569.[20] A third brother, Francis, died young.

In September 1565, when Elizabeth was considering marriage to Archduke Charles of Austria, Diego Guzman de Silva, the Spanish ambassador, heard that Sir Nicholas Throckmorton had informed Leicester that he could discover how deeply Elizabeth cared for him by flirting with one of her ladies and then requesting permission to return home. Allegedly following this counsel, Leicester flirted with her cousin, Lady Hereford, described by de Silva as "one of the best looking ladies of the court." To obtain rustication, Leicester protested Elizabeth's favoring of Sir Thomas Heneage. The queen was said to have upbraided him for the flirtation and for his request to depart, and the dispute ended with both in tears.[21]

This was almost certainly a baseless rumor. De Silva, who knew little English, had already validated several falsehoods. He believed the incredible tale that Leicester supported Spanish interests and would, if he married Elizabeth, return the kingdom to Catholicism.[22] De Silva also accepted Leicester's assertion that the future Lord Burghley not only opposed Elizabeth's marriage to the archduke but also to any man.[23] The usual protocol involved one councilor, in this case, Leicester, leaking false information to the Spanish ambassador in order to keep tabs on the news he was collecting. Bernardino de Mendoza, the last Spanish resident in Elizabethan England, obtained material from Sir James Croft, the royal controller, as well as Lord Henry Howard, brother of the late Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and sometimes Burghley.[24]

Moreover, in September 1565, Lady Hereford was seven month's pregnant with Leicester's future godson, Robert. As it is unlikely, under those circumstances, she was residing at court, then why would she have been chosen for this tale, which was surely Leicester's invention and not Throckmorton's? She and her husband probably conversed with Leicester at the July wedding of her brother, Henry, to Margaret, heiress of Sir Ambrose Cave, at Durham House, a crown property accommodating courtiers and functioning as Leicester's Westminster residence in the late 1560s. Elizabeth also witnessed this ceremony.[25] Surely, having information

leaked to de Silva about the beautiful lady with whom Leicester was allegedly flirting, was one of the earl's little jokes on the ambassador. De Silva obviously was unaware that she was expecting and probably never actually saw her. Possibly, Leicester found pregnant women attractive but, like most of his contemporaries, he identified this condition, however welcome, as a "sickness."[26]

After the Scottish queen reached England in 1568, Lady Hereford's close relatives were required to prove their loyalty to Elizabeth. Francis Knollys served as Mary's guardian reluctantly, partly because his wife was ill. Only days before Elizabeth permitted him to return home in January 1569, she died and was buried at Westminster Abbey. Later that year, the Northern Rising, aimed at returning England to Catholicism, freeing Mary, and seeking her marriage to Norfolk, led Elizabeth to request Hereford's assistance. In September, she instructed Huntington and Hereford to aid Shrewsbury in securing Mary from possible attempts to free her. After they secured her at Tutbury Castle, Hereford joined the army raised to subdue the uprising.[27] In January 1572, because of Norfolk's involvement in the Ridolfi Plot, which sought Mary's release and her marriage to him, the crown tried him for treason. Hereford, joined by his wife at Durham House, participated in the trial. Convicted of treason, he was later executed.

In May 1572, Elizabeth advanced Hereford to the earldom of Essex. Until July 1573, he remained at court or at Durham House, negotiating his appointment as governor of Ulster and funding for a colony there. It was to be a private enterprise: Essex mortgaged one-third of his property to Elizabeth for a loan of £10,000 at 10 percent interest and set sail from Liverpool in August 1573, accompanied by four of his wife's brothers, who joined the mission although their father questioned its viability.[28]

Essex's activities, including the massacre of some three hundred or four hundred Irish at Rathlin Island in 1575, cost Elizabeth over £130,000 and left him deeply in debt. In early 1574, when he learned that Elizabeth was contemplating his recall, he protested this action to Burghley, blaming her councilors who bore him ill-will. Essex was probably thinking of Leicester, since he sent him a letter of reconciliation in October and forwarded a copy of it to Burghley. In March 1575, fearing that Elizabeth would soon summon him home, Essex assured her that he preferred remaining as a private individual in Ulster.[29] Indeed, some advisors, including Walsingham, Leicester, and Sir Henry Sidney, who was married to his sister, Mary Dudley, and soon to be appointed lord Deputy of Ireland, were criticizing Essex's methods. Two months after Essex's plea to remain in Ulster, Leicester charged that he was not using enough force to defeat the "savages," there.[30]

After returning home in November 1575, Essex became involved in a dispute with Leicester, almost certainly over Irish policies. Camden later claimed that Essex "openly threatened Leicester, whom he suspected to

have done him injuries."[31] A month after Essex's return, a Spanish merchant, Antonio de Guaras, repeated gossip circulating in London streets, claiming that Lady Essex had given birth to two of Leicester's children during her husband's absence. No evidence corroborating these rumors exists. The timing of the births, while possible, would have been tricky, since pregnancies, especially early-modern ones, do not usually begin and end in accordance with calendar requirements. The first infant, if full term, could not have been born before May 1574, if that soon, but certainly before August when Sir George and Abigail Digby accompanied her to Buxton Baths.[32] The second infant had to be born before July 1575, when Lady Essex went to Kenilworth for Elizabeth's summer progress, which included an August visit to Chartley, where in her husband's absence, she served as the queen's hostess.

The authors of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, aware that she traveled with the Digbys, referred to them as "bawds" for the "like occupations" Leicester "exercised." While members of the Digby family were associated with Leicester in Warwickshire, the earl shared some of his clients with other patrons. George had actually become a ward of Lady Essex's father in 1559 when he was nine years old,[33] and after Leicester's death, Digby's heir, Robert, married Lady Essex's niece, continuing his family's association with her ladyship's family.

If Lady Essex were not Leicester's mistress and the Digbys were not his "bawds," then what fueled these rumors? It is significant that de Guaras did not report the gossip until December, after Essex's return home, when an actual dispute between the earls occurred. It is possible, but unlikely, that Lady Essex's July visit to Leicester's Kenilworth Castle was the source for the later scandal concerning their relationship. In July, de Guaras was aware of Elizabeth's visit to the castle. If Lady Essex and Leicester were suspected of committing adultery there, however, surely the others present, including apparently Lady Sheffield, recently returned to court, would have been gossiping about them in July, not in December, when it was stale news.[34]

A problem with associating this gossip with her Kenilworth visit is the significance of Leicester's role as Elizabeth's host. Some scholars have deemed it as his last attempt to win her consent to marry him, while others view it as the beginning of a new phase of his life. Recently, Elizabeth Goldring argued that the festivities and the artwork at Kenilworth, which greatly exceeded those provided by other hosts, support the conclusion that he still hoped to wed Elizabeth. The dramatic interludes performed at the castle "thematized the earl's special relationship with her on the subject of marriage, itself." The four large individual portraits of Elizabeth and Leicester, which he commissioned, were "unique" in their large-scale images of their subjects and provided "a vivid means of articulating" his close relationship with her. In one she was wearing a doublet he gave her, and the four portraits faced the same direction rather than each other, the "convention of Renaissance marriage portraiture."[35]

In his June 1575 letter to Burghley while on progress with Elizabeth, possibly at Grafton, Leicester's attention was mostly focused on her health and well-being. She had been ill but had recovered and planned to kill some bucks with her bow. He wished that Burghley would be able to visit at Kenilworth, as she would soon begin her journey there. She "well" liked her present lodgings, according to Leicester, who hoped at Kenilworth, she would "like all things no worse than she had done" there, or even better. Only about one-fourth of this letter discussed other royal business.[36]

In analyses of Leicester's relationship with Lady Essex, not enough attention has focused on his other actual and purported activities between 1573 and 1575. His acknowledged affair with the widowed Lady Sheffield might have begun as early as 1571. Gossip at court in May 1573 claimed that Lady Sheffield and her sister, Frances Howard, were both in love with him.[37] On August 7, 1574, Lady Sheffield gave birth to her son, Robert, whom Leicester recognized as his. In December of that same year, de Guaras reported that Leicester was seeking a husband for his and Elizabeth's secret daughter.[38] No serious scholar validates the rumors about Elizabeth's giving birth to his several children on her progresses; that he was her favorite, however, caused many to define their relationship narrowly in sexual terms.

If all the above rumors and facts about the years, 1573–1575, were true, then Leicester was having affairs with three women, the queen, Lady Essex, and Lady Sheffield, and attracting yet another woman, Frances Howard. With two of these women, Lady Essex and Lady Sheffield, he allegedly sired at least three children, two of them in 1574, but only one of whom, Lady Sheffield's son, was recognized as his. That year, he was also supposedly seeking a marriage for one of his children with Elizabeth. It is interesting that *Leicester's Commonwealth,* which, of course, ignored the rumors about his intimacy with Elizabeth, contradicted this gossip about the earl's other alleged illegitimate children. It claimed that Lady Essex, before marrying him, gave birth to only one child, a daughter, but also aborted a fetus, and Lady Sheffield, who publicly denied the accusation in 1605, had a daughter, in addition to the son that Leicester recognized.[39]

The significance of the verifiable associations of Lady Essex with Leicester during 1573–1576 is not easy to assess. As he was her son's godfather, some exchanges between the two families would have been expected. Early-modern Christians took extremely seriously their service as godparents, even naming their godchildren after them. Thus, Leicester called Essex's heir, Robert, after himself, rather than Walter, after his father.[40] Besides Lady Essex's presence at Kenilworth in 1575, she received several presents of game from its chase. The first reference to her in the Kenilworth Game Records dates from 1573 when she obtained a hind, while more than fourteen other people also received game. In 1574, when Leicester sent deer to more than thirty-three individuals, he dispatched three of the nineteen killed bucks to her, then three of nine bucks killed, and later one more buck. During the next year, 1575, when diplomatic rumors claimed that he was her lover, he sent her one buck and later one doe out of ten killed,

while also providing gifts of game to at least thirty-six other recipients. She did not personally hunt at Kenilworth until sometime in 1576, the year of Essex's death. Probably with bow and arrows, she killed a black buck and then later with hounds one buck. She seems also to have received one hind and two bucks that year, when more than twenty-two others also obtained gifts of game.[41]

While not doubting that Lady Essex found Leicester attractive, since she did marry him in 1578, the opportunity to obtain deer from Kenilworth and to hunt in its chase must not be understated. In her husband's absence, when he would have been unable to provide game for his family's needs, Leicester could well have wished to send some deer, an important part of the aristocratic diet, to his godson and his mother. After Elizabeth granted this castle to him in 1563, he spent enormous sums of money improving the residence and embellishing the "superb and extensive natural landscape" of its 789 acres. The chase at the north and west of the castle was stocked with red deer and other game. It was where Leicester normally spent his summer vacations. In 1568, Sir Henry Sidney, wrote his brother-in-law, he could not forebear visiting Kenilworth, which lay en route to his destination, and exclaimed, "I was never more in love with an old house, nor never knew work could better be bestowed, than that which you have done."[42]

Modern scholars differ about whether Leicester wanted Essex to return to Ireland in 1576. It is an important issue, since his absence from England, would have made it easier for him to continue his alleged affair with Lady Essex. Recently, J. J. N. McGurk claimed that Leicester favored Essex's absence, but Simon Adams disagreed, arguing that he tried to prevent Essex from resuming his Ulster operations.[43]

Both English and Irish records seem to support Adams's conclusion. Besides Essex's statements about desiring to remain in Ulster, various crown officials wanted him to continue his duties there. Both Sir Nicholas White, master of the rolls in Ireland, and Sir Thomas Smith, a royal secretary and former Irish colonizer, supported his return to Ulster. Smith assured Burghley that the council believed that Essex demonstrated "great wisdom, courage, and boldness" in that enterprise. Even if in the unlikely event, Leicester did urge his return to Ireland, his voice would have been only one of many recommending that course of action. Meanwhile, Irish annalists gave Sidney, the lord Deputy of Ireland since September 1575, credit for "banishing" Essex from their land.[44]

Since Sidney was Leicester's political ally, as well as brother-in-law, it is more likely that the late 1575 dispute between Leicester and Essex was over Irish policy and not the former's alleged affair with Lady Essex. As a privy councilor, Leicester had long been interested in Irish matters and had supported the founding of colonies there. It was Essex's methods that Leicester, like Sidney, criticized. In his memoirs, Sidney condemned Essex's "violent" acts and wasteful expenditures and denounced Elizabeth's policy of authorizing a private subject to colonize the island.[45]

Chapter 4's discussions of the disputes of Katherine Parr and Katherine, Duchess of Suffolk, with Edward, Duke of Somerset, revealed how antagonists attacked their enemies by insulting their wives.[46] In 1575, when the rumors about Leicester and Lady Essex were circulating, both earls, disagreeing about Irish policies, possessed enemies eager to besmirch their reputations. By claiming a sexual relationship between Leicester and Essex's wife, gossipers named the former a lecherous aggressor unfit for public office and the latter a cuckolded husband unable to control his household. These were devastating public insults to the men as well as to Lady Essex.

After reaching England, Essex immediately began negotiations to resume his Irish mission. If he heard about the gossip concerning his wife and Leicester, he must have disbelieved it, since he continued to press for his return to Ulster. He was well aware that malicious rumors had circulated about him and Leicester. In his letter of reconciliation to Leicester in 1574, Essex had said, "henceforth, howsoever reports come, you will suspend judgment, as I will do of you."[47]

In December 1575, Essex escorted his wife to court for the New Year's celebrations. It is unknown whether she remained with him all the time during the next few months, as he moved back and forth between Durham House and the court, eager to obtain Elizabeth's ratification of his Irish policies. After she granted him the office of earl Marshal of Ireland, he returned to Chartley to settle his affairs and then sailed for Ireland.[48] His countess did not accompany him home; on July 6, Gilbert Talbot wrote his father, Shrewsbury, from court that Lady Essex and two others planned to visit Buxton Baths, but he could not "learn of any others that come from hence."[49] She had taken the waters there in 1574.

On September 22, 1576, at Dublin, some two months after reaching Ireland, Essex died of dysentery and on November 26, was buried at Carmarthen, Wales. A suspicion that he was poisoned was raised, as was usual in the case of sudden deaths, but Sidney found no evidence to support the charge. Before dying, Essex even expressed doubts that he was suffering from poison, and the attending physicians failed to make this diagnosis, since they did not administer an antidote for poison. Their belief was confirmed by Nicholas White, an admirer of Essex who was "much about him in the later end of his sickness." White "beheld in him [Essex] such true tokens of nobility, conjoined with a most Godly and virtuous mind…as is rare to be seen." Obviously, *Leicester's Commonwealth* merely repeated unverified rumors about Leicester's causing Essex to be poisoned so that he could marry his widow. Two years were to elapse before their wedding took place.[50]

Before his death, Essex expressed concerns to Elizabeth and Burghley that his two daughters' combined dowries of £4,000 had reduced too greatly the amount available for funding his son's earldom. In his will, dated June 14, he left to his "right well beloved wife" all the "plate, jewels and household stuff" in her possession and selected several manors for her

jointure. He also appointed her father one of the feoffees of his will.[51] Since his was an heraldic funeral, the chief mourner and other important mourners in the services had to be the same sex as the deceased, leaving no place for the public grieving of his wife, who was granted £40 for black clothing for her and her household servants.[52] Had Essex's young heir, who was not quite 11 years old, possessed a stronger constitution, he could have served, but did not, as principal mourner at his father's Carmarthen funeral.

Essex's death left his widow many financial problems about which she corresponded with Burghley, who, as master of the wards, controlled the family's minor heir, Robert, and his inheritance, including Chartley. No evidence suggests that she wrote letters to her supposed lover, Leicester, requesting he advance her suits with Burghley. Often suitors asked several friends to support their petitions. In 1587, for example, William Herle requested Leicester send an "earnest letter" for him to Burghley, since his "recommendation" would greatly further his cause with his lordship. Herle also requested Leicester to ask Lady Leicester to urge her son, Essex, to petition Burghley for him.[53]

Having obtained permission from Burghley to remain at Chartley until Christmas 1576 with her children, Lady Essex then traveled to several homes with her young daughters, Penelope and Dorothy. They resided at Rotherfield Greys, her father's house, in January and February 1577. While there, she complained to Burghley about the inadequacies of her jointure, which lacked Chartley, and filed an unsuccessful suit to obtain one-third of her husband's lands rather than the jointure. As a compromise, she gained a life interest in Bennington, an estate on the borders of Hertfordshire and Essex. Her requests were not merely for herself, since she also thanked Burghley for favoring an impost on wines for her son and had earlier promoted the continuation of a £10 stipend that her husband granted to their daughters' tutor.[54]

After visiting her father, Lady Essex and her daughters traveled to Coleshill, Warwickshire, the Digbys' home, some ten miles from Kenilworth, where Lady Essex killed, probably with bows and arrows, at least three stags and perhaps two bucks in the chase. She seems also to have obtained four bucks. Later, a buck was sent on her behalf to another recipient. In October, she moved with Penelope and Dorothy to Hackney, a hamlet near London, and then to Bridget Russell, Countess of Bedford's where they remained for the New Year's celebration. Since the customary widow's mourning was over, Lady Essex visited court and exchanged gifts with Elizabeth. It is possible that Leicester confirmed an interest in his future wife during these celebrations. Lady Essex permitted Essex's company of players to use her name, and they performed for Elizabeth on Shrove Tuesday. Meanwhile, as her daughters were wards of Huntington, they moved north to his York headquarters.[55]

Lady Essex's subsequent marriage to Leicester has led some authors to validate the rumors about their earlier alleged affair. In 1578, when he was actually her suitor, he gave her only one buck, perhaps because his godson

and her other children were no longer living with her. She seems, however, to have sent three bucks killed by others to two friends. It is also interesting that no gossip circulated about them in the months before their wedding.[56]

On Sunday, September 21, 1578, between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m., Leicester and Lady Essex were married in the gallery at Wanstead by Tyndall. Others present were her father, Francis; her brother, Richard; her husband's brother, Ambrose Dudley, third Earl of Warwick; the husband of Mary Sidney, Leicester's niece, Henry Herbert, second Earl of Pembroke; and Roger, second Lord North.[57] As noted earlier, writers have cited the March 13, 1581, depositions concerning this wedding to defame the countess's honor.

Because Tyndall testified that the bride's gown was loose-fitting, some have assumed that she was pregnant, but, in fact, she was not. It was customary, then as now, to pay close attention to the bride's wedding outfit. Possibly, Tyndall remembered it because Lady Essex appeared especially beautiful in the fashionable gown chosen for the occasion. As related in the earlier discussion of Camden's comments, it would have been exceedingly inappropriate for this minister, Leicester's chaplain, to raise voluntarily questions about the sexual honor of a noble lady, this countess or any other, in a formal legal proceeding.[58]

A more realistic explanation about her outfit gains support from two women's issues: how expectant mothers prepared clothes for their expanding stomachs and what kind of dresses contemporaries described as loose. Tudor women did not possess separate maternity clothes. To accommodate their weight gain, expectant mothers added extra pieces, called stomachers, to their dresses, which consisted of component parts. After childbirth, they removed these pieces.[59] The loose-bodied garments, which became stylish in Elizabeth's reign, were not designed especially for pregnant women, although certainly they could wear them. The queen, for example, possessed a number of dresses described in her inventories as loose-fitting.[60] In 1597, the French ambassador, Andre Hurault, Sieur de Maisse, reported that she wore a black taffeta dress, like a robe with open sleeves, over a white petticoat and chemise. The countess's wedding dress could easily have been designed in the style of Elizabeth's garment.[61]

If Lady Leicester's clothing had signaled a pregnancy, which even the clergyman noticed, then everyone at court, when Elizabeth arrived shortly thereafter on her progress, would have been aware of Lady Essex's condition. Given the earl's hope for secrecy, it is unlikely that his bride was pregnant enough to need a special garment to accommodate her increased waistline, and it is interesting that he chose to hold the ceremony at Wanstead, just before Elizabeth's scheduled visit there.[62]

Another of Tyndall's comments has also been cited as proof of Leicester's illicit relations with her.[63] The earl, Tyndall recalled, had admitted that he had remained single out of respect for the queen, but "for the better quieting of his own conscience" he decided to wed the "honourable" Lady

Essex. The day before the ceremony, Leicester surely would not have besmirched his chosen bride's honor by hinting of an intimate relationship. It is equally unlikely the deponent, called to confirm the legitimacy of the child she was carrying, would mention it. Then, what could have been on the earl's conscience? It is significant that he linked his disquiet feelings about forgoing marriage to concerns about Elizabeth. He had long been torn between pleasing the elusive woman he courted, and selecting a more compliant female with whom he could sire an heir to continue the Dudley lineage. In 1578, when Elizabeth was 45 years old, he finally accepted that she would never marry him. He needed an heir because his older brother, Warwick, also lacked legitimate sons. Their heir was their sister, Mary's elder son, Philip Sidney. Simon Adams has observed that Leicester, although not born in Warwickshire, called it his "country" and intended to "plant himself." there.[64] To this end, he obtained Kenilworth, which symbolized his descent from the Beauchamp earls of Warwick. Planting himself in Warwickshire included continuing the Dudley name through his descendants. In 1578, his obligation to his family trumped his loyalty to Elizabeth, and he assuaged his conscience by marrying Lady Essex with the hope of continuing his family through the male line.

Assuming this analysis is correct, then why did he select a woman, who was 34 years old? Some contextual circumstances might help explain his choice. Surely, he was personally attracted to her, but other issues might have been as important. As noted earlier, early-modern Christians took extremely seriously their service as godparents.[65] With the senior Essex dead, Leicester might have felt obligated to assist his heir's career when Burghley's wardship ended. Leicester could have fulfilled this duty without marrying Lady Essex, but a stepfather's overseeing the young man's entrance at court could have been more effective than a godfather's. Furthermore, as Leicester, himself, continued to attend court regularly, he would have been more often an absentee husband than a stay-at-home master. More energy and time might have been required than he could provide for his wife's training and supervision if he married a young woman without experience in managing a household alone, as Lady Essex had demonstrated successfully, even hosting Elizabeth's visit at Chartley in her husband's absence.

In his 1581 deposition concerning their wedding, North also recalled Leicester's explaining that he selected the countess because he had been seeking a "goodly" gentlewoman to marry. His testimony seems to indicate that he believed Leicester's reference to her as a "goodly" gentlewoman was reasonable. Her good or honorable reputation might have been the reason why two suitors sought her assistance. As early as 1570, Roger Edwardes, who admitted that he did not know her, dedicated a book on the Psalms to her because he believed that her patronage would make it more "acceptable among the virtuous sort of ladies and gentlewomen."[66] In 1579, Thomas Wagstaff, vicar of Lewknor, addressing her as Lady Essex, asked her to remind Leicester of his desire for the prebend of Westminster.[67]

Lady Essex's marriage to Leicester may well have been a love match, but her letters written after Essex's death indicate that she encountered financial difficulties and needed assistance with her business affairs. An alliance with the queen's favorite was also advantageous for her children, especially Robert, who "began his initiation in high politics firmly under the wing of Leicester," his stepfather.[68] As a widow, she had more personal contact with her daughters than her sons, but remained deeply concerned about Essex's career. In 1585, for example, when he had been absent in the provinces for about one year, she urged his return to London, charging him with "undutifulness as a son." Finally, he obeyed, blaming his youth for his "remissive" behavior.[69] His friend, Sir Henry Wotton, later recalled that Essex initially developed a "stiff aversion . . . from applying himself to the Earl of Leicester," but this "humor was mollified in time," a change Wotton credited to his mother.[70]

Leicester hoped to keep the wedding a secret from Elizabeth,[71] and his bride likewise attempted to suppress news about the ceremony. As Lady Essex, she exchanged New Year's gifts with the queen in 1579 and signed off on a letter to Burghley in 1580.[72] Even so, news about the marriage spread. In November, two months after the wedding, Thomas Radcliffe, third Earl of Sussex, revealed it to Michel de Castelnau, Seigneur de Mauvissière, the French ambassador. The following March, Leicester entertained at Wanstead, Jean de Simier, an agent of the Duke of Anjou. Simier has been identified, perhaps incorrectly, as Elizabeth's informant. In July, Mary, Queen of Scots, reported hearing about the wedding of two of Elizabeth's favorites, Sir Christopher Hatton, who actually remained single, and Leicester. Mary surmised that her English cousin agreed to marriage negotiations with Anjou after discovering her favorites' alliances.[73]

Leicester's marriage did not cause an estrangement with Elizabeth until November 1579, over a year after the wedding took place. That month, he complained to Burghley about her "bitterness," acknowledging that he had carried himself as a "bondman" toward her while he still had "hope." Simon Adams speculated, probably correctly, that Elizabeth took offence upon discovering that he had sired an illegitimate child with Lady Sheffield.[74] Perhaps, when Lady Sheffield advised Elizabeth of her wish to marry Sir Edward Stafford, she also revealed the affair with Leicester. The wedding to Stafford occurred in November, about the time Leicester wrote to Burghley. Elizabeth was conservative about marriage issues, anticipated being consulted about her attendants' alliances, and might have expected Leicester to wed Lady Sheffield to provide his child with legitimate status.

Why Leicester did not marry his son's mother can never be fully understood. since he left no explanation for his decision. In a letter to Lady Sheffield, he reminded her from the "first occasion of his coming to her," he had explained the nature of their relationship and had later asked her not to press him to change it.[75] Since his contemporaries believed that conception occurred only after God's personal intervention, he could have

viewed his son's birth as divine punishment for their illicit union. It is possible that his socialization made him balk at marrying a woman so careless of her honor. Like contemporary men generally, Leicester accepted a double standard for men's and women's sexual behavior. Acquaintances, such as Henry Parker, eleventh Lord Morley, warned, if an individual married with "stock" that "be not virtuous, the fruit can never prove well." In exile in 1570 because of his Catholicism, he asked his wife to seek help from Leicester in finding a virtuous match for their daughter.[76]

After her wedding, rather than "rage" against Elizabeth, Lady Leicester quietly divided her time between Wanstead, her Bennington property, and perhaps not until 1581, Leicester House in London. She also visited her father's home, Rotherfield Greys, where she resided in February and October 1580. During the latter month, she apologized to Burghley for preventing her younger brother, Francis, from attending him. Her unexplained "necessity" caused Francis's delay in performing his duty and with his lordship's "license," she hoped to have her brother still continue with her.[77]

Little evidence has survived concerning her relationship with Leicester, often at court from the spring of 1580, when he reconciled with Elizabeth. Gossip, supported by Mauvissière, who dined with the couple in London in 1583, claimed that the countess had great influence over her husband. The earl's disbursement books from 1584 to 1585 record some of their travels around England.[78] The queen occasionally interrupted his plans to be with his wife. In 1585, for example, he asked Walsingham to inform her that he would not be able to leave court and join her in London for at least a few more days.[79] It is interesting that Lady Sheffield's brother, Charles, second Lord Howard of Effingham, later wrote to Leicester, adding a note to his letter: "My good Lord, let me be humbly commended unto my honorable good Lady, God send you both long to live and love together."[80] It was unusual for Leicester's correspondents to mention his wife.

Rumors occasionally claimed that Lady Leicester was pregnant, as in February 1580 and again in 1582. Meanwhile, on June 6, 1581, at Leicester House, she gave birth to Robert, Lord Denbigh, who was treated as an "infant prince." At least three portraits of him were painted, including one with his mother. His cradle at Leicester House was "draped in crimson velvet, with trains of velvet taffeta," and his chair was upholstered in "green and carnation cloth of tinsel."[81]

When he died on July 19, 1584, his "grief-stricken" father left court to comfort his "sorrowful wife." After Denbigh's funeral at Wanstead on August 1, he was buried on the south side of Beauchamp Chapel, St. Mary's, Warwick, under a splendid altar-tomb with a life-size effigy. The inscription lauds him as a "noble imp," charts his paternal ancestry but does not refer to his mother. It notes, however, he died in the twenty-sixth year of the "happy reign of the most virtuous, and godly Princess Queen Elizabeth."[82] Since the heralds conducted Denbigh's funeral, his parents withdrew to mourn privately. En route to Rotherfield Greys, they stopped

at Theobalds, Burghley's home, from which on July 31, Leicester informed his host about frightening but not killing his stags. He also admitted that his countess was "hardly dealt with" and only God "must help it with her Majesty."[83]

His role as stepfather of Lettice's children was most obvious concerning Essex, whom he introduced to court life. They apparently developed a close relationship, which would surely have been impossible if Essex suspected that Leicester had arranged to have his father poisoned. In July 1587, Essex promised Leicester then in the Netherlands, to "watch with the best diligence" he could to see his "enemies" did not "take advantage of his absence." Essex signed off, "Your son, most ready to do you service."[84]

Leicester had less interaction with Walter Devereux, his other stepson, who married Margaret Dakins, and his two stepdaughters, Penelope and Dorothy. According to gossip repeated by Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, however, Leicester had been attempting to match Dorothy with James VI. [85] In his June 11, 1583, dispatch, Mendoza reported that the outraged Elizabeth asked "Stuart" (actually Colonel William Stewart) in an audience with ad-hoc Scottish ambassadors, if the rumor about James's possible English marriage were true. Despite his denial, she responded that she would rather lose her kingdom than permit James to wed the daughter of that "she-wolf." If Leicester continued tying to negotiate that match, she threatened to reveal publicly that his wife had cuckolded him.[86] This is an absurd rumor concerning Devereux and Dudley ambitions; even Dorothy's older sister Penelope married a mere baron, Robert, third Lord Rich.

Mendoza noted inaccurate dates about the Scottish mission. He dated the diplomats' arrival on May 14, but they met with Elizabeth on May 6, three days after reaching London. Although they departed for Scotland on May 27, Mendoza claimed that they were still in London on June 4.[87]

It is relevant concerning his inability to collect correct news that he began the June 11 dispatch with an anecdote, offering a different view of Leicester's relationship with Elizabeth than the rumor about Dorothy's marriage. Mendoza heard that Elizabeth consented to provide the Scotsmen with £3,000 in pensions and £6,000 in loans in the form of bills of exchange but only after Leicester, Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, and Walsingham demanded these concessions.[88] Actually, the negotiations had ended quite differently, since Elizabeth disapproved of rebels like William Ruthven, first Earl of Gowrie, who had dispatched the ambassadors to England. In 1582, Gowrie abducted James and was still holding him under house arrest. Walsingham and Robert Bowes, the English ambassador there, wanted to assist the Protestant Gowrie because he had compelled James's beloved Catholic cousin, Esme Stuart, first Duke of Lennox, to return to France. Since the Scottish embassy actually returned without English finances, the unpaid guard around James slowly disappeared, and in June, he escaped to St. Andrews Castle.[89]

Scottish reports indicate that James's marriage was raised only because Elizabeth sought his consent to seek her advice when he decided to select a consort. No verifiable evidence indicates that Leicester attempted to negotiate his stepdaughters' marriages. Huntington arranged Penelope's match with Rich in 1581, and Dorothy, recently appointed Elizabeth's maiden of honor, eloped with Sir Thomas Perrot in July after the Scots's departure.[90] The most reliable documentation concerning Leicester's interest in her marriage is his 1582 will in which he proposed she wed his nephew, Philip Sidney.[91]

As Leicester was one of Elizabeth's favorites, some contemporaries feared that he might try to marry his relatives into the royal family. They were aware that not only had his brother, Guildford, wed Jane Grey in 1553, but also Elizabeth had nominated Leicester as a possible husband for the Scottish queen in 1564. Further suspicions about his ambitions must have been fueled by his union with Lady Essex, Elizabeth's cousin. Other gossipers claimed that he wanted to match his son, Denbigh, with Arbella Stewart, a descendant of Henry VII and, therefore, a claimant to the English throne.[92]

Elizabeth resented her cousin's marriage to Leicester, but she also was concerned about following noble protocol and likely would have refrained from demeaning any English noblewoman as a "she-wolf" during official audiences. Sir Henry Wotton also recalled the second Earl of Essex's nicknaming one lady the "Spider of the Court," whom Wotton refused to identify in writing "for her sex sake."[93]

The rumor about Elizabeth's threat to besmirch Leicester's honor was also absurd. Given social customs, this claim was almost as critical of her as Leicester, since writers admonished virgins never to discuss or even think about sexual matters. In 1597, the French ambassador, Sieur de Maisse, claimed that Elizabeth called Henry IV's mistress, Gabrielle d'Estrées, Duchess of Beaufort, a lady "whom she knew not how to name." She repeatedly identified Gabrielle as an angel but said "there has never been a female." He believed that Elizabeth's modesty kept her from labeling "an angel" as Henry's mistress.[94] Moreover, her public references to Leicester's marital problems could have generated more gossip about their relationship.

According to Mendoza, Elizabeth reached an independent resolution in condemning Dorothy's marriage, unlike her pressured decision to provide funds for Gowrie. She allegedly accepted her male councilors' advise about Scottish financial policy, but reacted emotionally about Leicester's royal ambitions for Dorothy. These contradictory claims originated in contemporaries' attitudes toward women's nature. Men expected queens regnant to lack personal initiative on official business but expected them to react emotionally about personal issues.[95] Allegedly, Leicester succeeded in forcing her decision about Scottish policy but not about her resentment at his marriage to Lady Essex, the mother of Dorothy.

Despite these doubts about the validity of Mendoza's gossip, many authors have repeated his report about Elizabeth's denouncing the countess as a "she-wolf." In 1945, Milton Waldman entitled a chapter "That She-Wolf." The most recent validation of it is in Sally Varlow's 2007 biography of Lady Rich.[96]

Some two years after Mendoza repeated these rumors, in November 1585, Elizabeth named Leicester as general of the English Forces to assist the Netherlands's rebellion against Spanish control. Elizabeth had delayed the appointment after discovering that his wife had joined him on his August holiday at Kenilworth. That the queen deemed this visit especially offensive could have meant that she recalled with pleasure, even nostalgia, her entertainment there in 1575. This holiday was probably the first that Lady Leicester enjoyed at Kenilworth since her marriage. Certainly, the inventory in June 1583 showed little evidence of her presence. Only one portrait of her was listed and no item with her initials, like that of her husband's, was noted.[97]

Before appointing him, Elizabeth informed Leicester that she was considering someone else for the office, because he would take "too great a troupe with him." He forwarded her letter to Walsingham, commenting that "she doth take every occasion by my marriage to withdraw any good from me." After he sailed for the Netherlands, according to William Davison, "it was put into her Majesty's head" that his wife planned to join him there. Davison admitted that this "tempestuous news" greatly troubled Lady Leicester, whom he comforted with his explanation about how he "proceeded" with Elizabeth. The rumor was false, since Leicester had drawn up a commission, authorizing his wife to handle his business affairs during his absence.[98] He remained abroad until late 1586, when summoned home for the trial of the Scottish queen.[99]

Early the next year, he left for Wanstead and later crossed back to the Netherlands, staying there until December. In July, after his second tour began, Essex revealed to Edward Dyer, that at Northhall, Hertfordshire, the home of Warwick, when Elizabeth arrived, she insisted Essex's sister, probably Dorothy, remain in her chamber. Essex protested that she was disgracing him and his house to please Sir Walter Raleigh. As their dispute intensified, Elizabeth spoke "bitterly against my mother," further dishonoring his family. In private conversations, the queen, who probably still feared that Lady Leicester might join her husband in the Netherlands, was quite capable of plain-speaking. Essex sent away his sister and departed shortly thereafter. He ended his letter with if you show this to anyone, "let it be to my mother and Mr. Secretary," probably Walsingham.[100]

In 1588, the Spanish Armada sailed toward the Netherlands to collect troops for an invasion of England. In response, Leicester established a fortified camp at Tilbury, Essex, and arranged Elizabeth's visit there. After the Spanish defeat, he left for Kenilworth with his wife. On August 29 at Rycote, he sent Elizabeth a message in which he referred to his illness. On September 4, he died probably of malaria at Cornbury House,

Oxfordshire, where he had halted on his journey. On October 10, Essex, his chief mourner, Huntington, and many others attended his funeral at Warwick, which cost £4,000. He was buried in Beauchamp Chapel, as he wished. On its north side, his widow granted £40 to purchase black for herself and her servants, had a monument erected "of four Corinthian pillars, supporting an entablature, under which is an arch." His effigy with an earl's coronet, plated armor, and mantle lies under the arch beside her effigy, which wears the coronet and robes of a countess.[101]

Leicester named his widow the executrix of his wills, dated January 30, 1582, and August 1587, which were probated on September 6. He selected Warwick, Christopher Hatton, and Howard of Effingham, "most noble friend," as overseers. In the first will, he settled upon her a substantial jointure that was augmented by the assignment to her of Drayton Basset, some two miles from Tamworth on the Staffordshire-Warwickshire border. Together, the jointures from her two husbands provided her with £3,000 annually. In addition, she owned £6,000 worth of plate and household stuff.[102] In bequeathing this property to his "dear wife," he claimed that he had "always found her a faithful, loving and a very obedient, careful wife."[103]

The financial problems created by his death caused his widow much grief.[104] Although leaving her a generous settlement, he died, by one account, some £86,203 in debt.[105] His demise led worried debtors to contact her. Probably in December 1588, for example, Lady Elizabeth Sutton, sister-in-law of Edward Sutton, fifth Lord Dudley, wrote asking to be reimbursed for the visit of the countess, Denbigh, and her friends. Since her son died in 1584, the debt was over four years in arrears.[106]

Shortly after Leicester's burial, she began corresponding with Burghley about her crown debts. A letter to him in November was sent from Leicester House. It described her attempt to release a costly ship to Elizabeth as part of an agreement for selling her interests in the Fine Office. To her dismay, Elizabeth had accepted the office but not the ship.[107]

She also sought assistance from neighbors and friends. The aid of Richard Bagot, deputy lieutenant of Staffordshire, was required to evict a squatter, claiming to be the owner of Drayton Basset. Later, she responded to Thomas Robinson's legal challenges over control of the manor, which remained unsettled until 1608.[108] Furthermore, she was involved in litigation in the court of chancery over whether one of her jointure manors belonged to Kenilworth. Leicester left the castle to his illegitimate son, who charged her with removing some of its muniments and cutting down some of its timber.[109]

In little more than a decade, Lady Leicester lost four of her loved ones: in 1584, Denbigh; in 1588, Leicester; in 1591, her son, Walter, at the siege of Rouen where Essex commanded a body of English troops assisting Henry IV; and finally in 1596, her father. Ultimately, the long-lived countess mourned the loss of other relatives, for she survived her elder son, her two daughters, and the man who became her third husband,

Sir Christopher Blount, second son of Thomas Blount and Margaret or Marjery Poley of Kidderminster. The countess, like some other noble Tudor widows, for example, Anne, Duchess of Somerset, followed a tradition that emerged in the medieval period of noble widows marrying younger men of lesser social status.

Although she may well have found Blount personally attractive, it was surely also to obtain aid in handling the many problems created by her late husband's entangled affairs that she remarried in July 1589. As Blount, who was some 13 years younger than she, served as Leicester's master of the horse, he was somewhat familiar with his lordship's dealings.[110] She may have thought that he could help her control the male servants handling her finances. One, Thomas Fowler, for example, departed for Scotland with some £8,000 collected from his late master's debtors.[111] Blount's background was somewhat checkered. Born into a Catholic family, he studied with William, Cardinal Allen, at Louvain, but after converting to Protestantism, he seems to have served as Walsingham's spy. In 1585, he contacted Thomas Morgan, imprisoned in the Bastille, who described him as a "tall gentleman and valiant." Blount persuaded Morgan that he fervently sought the Scottish queen's release from captivity.[112]

In February and March 1590 at Leicester House, Lady Leicester sent three letters to Burghley. On February 20, she asked for justice in a suit that Warwick had apparently furthered against her in the court of arches. A fortnight later, she complained about Elizabeth's officers showing her a "book of charge, claiming an exorbitant amount owed the crown." She felt "strongly oppressed" because they allowed her only five or six days to confirm the figure. Her solicitors needed a "competent time" to judge its validity. Nine days later, she pleaded for "compassion" because of her late husband's debts.[113]

Continuing disputes with the crown led to the loss of some estates. The government seized Wanstead, releasing it to her after the assignment of other property to guarantee her debts. For their repayment, she sold some property and provided the crown with £300 annually out of her jointure. After another sequestration and recovery, she conveyed in 1593 to her son, Essex, Wanstead and Leicester House, the latter renamed Essex House.[114]

In 1590, before Essex obtained Wanstead, he corresponded with her about the estate and other financial issues. In March, he admitted desiring to acquire Wanstead but did not want her to "lose one penny profit or hour of pleasure" she might have there. He promised to visit her the next day if Elizabeth would release him. Then in July, he discussed a dispute between their officers. As he had corrected an amount required by his men, he thought she should reduce the £200 her agents demanded to £150. He referred these matters to her "best and kindest judgment."[115]

Meanwhile, the death in early 1590 of Warwick created more legal problems for her. His widow, Anne, Lady Warwick, was concerned when she

learned about Lady Leicester's and Blount's attempts to recover the lease of some Gloucestershire lands, which the crown had seized although they formed part of her jointure. Already disputing with them over other property in that county and elsewhere, Lady Warwick explained to Burghley that she opposed their suit because it would prejudice her "courses." Thus, her appeal to royal favor, as one of the queen's ladies, tended to hinder Lady Leicester's chances in that endeavor.[116]

Initially, Lady Leicester and Blount may have resided mainly at Bennington, occasionally visiting London, as in early 1590 when she wrote the above letters to Burghley and again in 1591, when Essex's namesake son, Robert, was born. Her remarriage did not ease her financial distress.[117] Blount began selling her jewels and continued to do so almost every year until his death. A pearl chain, a diamond table, and a ruby, for example, went to Essex for £3,000. [118] In addition, Blount sold some of her property rights, a lease in Kent for £8,000 or £9,000 and a 50-year lease for Grafton pasture worth £400 above the rent. Following his death in 1601, she accused him of having transferred the deeds of some of her lands to his name.[119]

Blount had a close association with Essex, who furthered his stepfather's parliamentary career through his Staffordshire client, Richard Bagot. In 1593 and 1597, Blount sat in Parliament for that county. When, in 1597, he was returned as only the junior member for Staffordshire, Lady Leicester complained to Essex about his failure to gain senior status.[120]

She still held the position of an unpaid extraordinary gentlewoman of the privy chamber, but if she hoped that after Leicester's death and her remarriage, Elizabeth would invite her to court, she was mistaken. One advantage of resuming this office was that the crown funded some of the expenses of the queen's ladies. If they could identify themselves as her attendants, they, like Lady Warwick, possessed certain advantages in law suits. By 1595, having previously been in residence at Bennington and, thereafter, occasionally at Longleat, Blount and she lived primarily at Drayton Basset. They apparently hoped that this self-imposed rustication would cause Elizabeth to relent and summon her. After the relocation, Lady Leicester occasionally visited London, staying at Essex House, as in November 1595, with her daughter, Lady Rich, when she discussed the price of some new hangings with Roland White.[121]

Twenty letters she wrote between 1595 and 1599 have survived: an undated one to her husband and 19 to her son. They reveal not only her deep concerns for Essex's well-being but also evidence of her relationship to Blount. She referred to her husband as her "friend" and encouraged Essex to rely on him, since he was a careful "steward" of her son's business affairs. In the letter to Blount, which was sent while he was in London with Essex, she asked him to assist its bearer with his suit and closed with "resting ever your most faithful wife and best mistress." Calling him her friend and ending her letter without the word "loving," contrasted sharply with her closures in letters to Essex, as for example in 1596, "your mother

infinitely loving you."[122] Some of the letters, which seem to have been written at Drayton Basset, will be cited below.

In February 1596, she requested Essex write a "few idle lines" to her, since he had been "somewhat sparing" of his "pen" and reminded him that her "friend" would give "obedient service" at his "commandment." An undated letter to Essex related his "countrymen here desire to have" Blunt appointed his "lieutenant,"[123] probably a reminder of his interest in joining his stepson's campaigns. Blount did, in fact, accompany Essex on the successful Cadiz expedition in June 1596.

In May 1597, she sent Essex two messages: In one she told her "Sweet Robin" that they had entertained his guest, and her friend had taken good care of his business affairs, as his officers could relate. She informed him in the second one that her friend was coming to him, and she "willingly" accompanied him with her "kind" salutations. A third in which she referred to how busy Essex was may belong to this year. Perhaps, the business in which he was employed was working for a mission against Spain, for the Islands Voyage took place in 1597.[124]

Another undated letter probably referred to the inauspicious beginning of that mission. When the fleet, with Essex and Blount aboard, sailed in July 1597, gales forced its return to Plymouth. She hoped that Elizabeth would delay the voyage, "the time being so far passed, and sea travel in winter as troublesome and dangerous." The fleet sailed again in August, which, of course, was not a winter month, but she could have feared that it might still be at sea when stormy weather arrived. Elizabeth recalled the fleet in mid-October because of its abject failures. Lady Leicester expressed joy about its return, admitting her "womanish heart could not be without some fear and doubt" for him and her "best friend," while they were "in danger of winds and enemies." She continued: "You may see what power you have over me . . . ; for nothing could get him from me, yourself excepted." She also hoped that she and her "friend" might come to London, if Essex thought it "good, that it be to any purpose or likelihood to obtain that favor, without which to live there . . . with the greater disgrace and put ourselves to more charge, than is for our ease."[125]

The favor she sought was access to Elizabeth. In December 1597, she reported to Essex, her "friend" would journey to London for business at term time. She might accompany him should Essex think he could "obtain some favor" for them. "Otherwise," she admitted, "country-life is fittest for disgraced persons." The weather was so bad that if he thought she should come to town, he must send her some coach horses, as hers were not capable of drawing her coach through the "mire."[126]

After Lady Leicester reached London in January 1598, she sought an audience with Elizabeth. The only hope for rehabilitation at court was a meeting with her, which proved difficult to arrange.[127] Until March, Lady Leicester resided at Essex House in the company of, among others, her two daughters, and Essex and his wife, Frances Walsingham, widow of Philip Sidney, whom he had married by 1590. In February, they were

present at a supper prepared by Essex's steward, Sir Gelly Meyrick. The entertainment consisting of two plays kept them up until 1:00 a.m. On Shrove Monday, she sent a jewel worth £300 to Elizabeth, who had promised to visit with her that day at her brother, Sir William Knollys's house, but despite Essex's pleas, Elizabeth refused to keep the appointment. On March 2, the queen finally received her at court. Having greeted her and permitted her to kiss her hand and her breast and embrace her, Elizabeth returned the kiss, but denied her a second visit. She subsequently withdrew to Drayton Basset.[128]

An undated letter seems to belong to 1598, since she referred in it to Irish matters. In July, disagreements over Irish policies reached heated levels. Viewing Elizabeth's refusal to appoint an individual he nominated for the post of lord deputy as evidence that she favored his competitions' opinions over his, Essex defiantly turned his back on her. When the angry queen boxed one of his ears, he placed his hand on his sword, leading Charles, Lord Howard of Effingham, quickly to move between them. Outraged, Essex withdrew from court. Lady Leicester admitted in her letter that she knew of his absence and assured him, "If it be for Ireland," she did not "doubt" he was "wise and politic enough to countermine" his "enemies, whose devilish practices" could in no way "hurt but for one." Entreating him "to have ever God" and his "own honor before" his "eyes," she promised to "presently be with him" if he "would have it so."[129]

Following the defeat of an English army at Yellow Ford in August 1598 by Hugh O'Neill, second Earl of Tyrone, Elizabeth cautiously decided to send Essex with an army to suppress this latest rebellion. In April 1599, Blount arrived there with his stepson, recently named the lord lieutenant. After suffering a serious injury, Blount became reconciled to Catholicism.[130] Lady Leicester's undated letter referring to the "infinite troubles" of her "Sweet Robin" could have concerned his failed Irish strategies. She cautioned him to "be wise as valiant," since she wanted him to return safe to her "endless comfort" with her dear "friend." She hoped with his permission her "friend" should "henceforth cease from these thankless services."[131]

When Essex returned without the queen's permission, she ordered him imprisoned. In late 1599, Lady Leicester moved to Essex House and forwarded a New Year's gift to Elizabeth before going to Westminster to plead for his release. Lacking permission to visit Essex, she and some friends went in February 1600 to a building overlooking the garden at York House where he walked and succeeded in saluting him from a window. Later, when still at Essex House, with, among others, her daughters and daughter-in-law, she sent to court a gown worth £100, which Lady Mary Scudamore presented to Elizabeth. The queen neither accepted it nor refused it and remarked about Lady Leicester, "It was not fit for her to desire what she did: which was to come to her Majesty's presence, to kiss her hands." If an individual accepted a gift, especially if it were a personal item like clothing, she would signify a special reciprocal relationship

with the presenter, a status Elizabeth was avoiding. In March, the queen ordered the earl's relatives to leave Essex House after deciding to have him detained there. On March 25, his mother was allowed a two-hour visit with her son, who was freed the following summer.[132] Before his release, Lady Leicester even requested the assistance of his adversary, Sir Robert Cecil, who denied that he "of inferior rank" could intercede with Elizabeth for her.[133]

In the 1590s, Essex's problems with the queen had increasingly been exacerbated by factional divisions at court. He led a faction of clients committed to his and their political advancement and to the aggressive Protestant diplomatic ventures he supported. Opposed to his party was the Cecil faction led by Burghley's son Robert from at least 1598, the year of his lordship's death. Essex's overseas exploits should be evaluated in the context of his competition with Cecil for influence over crown policies. Finally, frustrated by his lack of success, Essex conspired to remove the Cecil faction from power. In January 1601, he summoned to London, Blount, who took with him some of his wife's best jewels, possibly to help finance his stepson's unsuccessful insurrection on February 8. Blount was wounded in the head, arrested, and tried for treason. After hearing the guilty verdict, he explained that he had enjoyed "2,000 pounds sterling a year, besides other wealth, by an honorable lady whom you all know I married," thus protecting her honor by not stating her name at that disgraceful public moment. Asserting he left all this "voluntarily" to go on missions with Essex, Blount said he might again serve on campaigns if his life were spared, since he had never meant any injury to the realm. His plea for mercy failed, and on March 18, 1601, he was beheaded on Tower Hill, after confessing his conversion to Catholicism. Essex had been executed on February 25.[134]

Lady Leicester lived for 33 years after their deaths but not without controversies over her jointure and the legality of her second marriage. She even had to sort out issues with her daughter-in-law over Chartley and Essex House.[135] From James I, she received more favorable treatment than from Elizabeth, since in July 1603, he waived the payment of almost £4,000 of Leicester's debts.[136]

Two months earlier, in May 1603, Sir Robert Dudley obtained a license from John, Archbishop Whitgift, to examine witnesses in the court of arches concerning the validity of his mother, Lady Sheffield's marriage to Leicester. The hearing opened in September at the consistory court of the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield where Dudley sued "one Buswell" for calling him a bastard. He hoped to place information about Lady Sheffield's marriage on record by means of ex parte testimony, but news leaked out and the case was returned to the court of arches. Before it could be heard, the countess entered a bill against Dudley in the court of star chamber, claiming that he was attempting to defame her and seize her jointure lands. At issue was not the legality of her marriage but of his methods.[137]

On February 10, 1604, Edward Coke, attorney general, exhibited a bill of complaint against Dudley; his wife Alice, daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh, whom he married in 1596; his mother; and those who testified that they witnessed his father's and mother's marriage. In the initial hearing, Coke referred to "that noble and virtuous lady, Lettice, now countess of Leicester." In June, the case was begun but was adjourned until Easter term, 1605. Ultimately, the court held as incredible the testimonies of Dudley's some 90 witnesses concerning Lady Sheffield's alleged marriage to Leicester, partly because none could produce supporting documentation. Claims were made that Dudley bribed the witnesses and coerced his mother.[138]

For Lady Leicester's evidence, Coke utilized the 1581 depositions about her wedding and called 57 witnesses, who swore that Leicester never viewed his son as legitimate, referring to him as his "base" son in his will. She enjoyed the assistance of Warwick's and Leicester's nephew and heir Robert Sidney, ennobled as Baron Sidney of Penshurst in 1603. He had in the 1590s promised to protect her jointure lands in exchange for her assigning them to him at her death. Indeed, John Hawarde, a reporter of the trial, treated it as though it were a contest between Sidney and Dudley for Warwick's and Leicester's estates, which Robert Sidney, the second son of their sister Mary had inherited.[139] Since he was Queen Anne's lord chamberlain, Sidney enjoyed royal favor and was ennobled by James as Viscount Lisle, a Dudley title, during the trial. Later, in 1618, James advanced him to the earldom of Leicester.

According to Hawarde, in his judgment against Dudley on May 10, 1605, Cecil, recently ennobled as the Earl of Salisbury,

> much commended the worth and honor of the countess, how well she lived with him [Leicester] all his time, notwithstanding all his humors, how for her marriage with him she was long disgraced with the queen, being one of her maids of honor and descended of royal blood.

The records were ordered sealed, denying Dudley an opportunity to reopen the case.[140]

This was not the last Dudley challenge. In 1628, his wife, Alice, whom he abandoned in 1605 when he went abroad, brought a suit against Lady Leicester for two manors, the rights to which Dudley had transferred to her and their four surviving daughters. The suit claimed that Lady Leicester conspired with the Sidneys to cheat Dudley's daughters of their property. This litigation did not end until l655, long after Lady Leicester's death, when they won their suit. Meanwhile, in 1644, deciding that Lady Sheffield was Leicester's wife, Charles I ennobled her abandoned daughter-in-law as Duchess Dudley for life. He may have been reacting to the activities of Lady Leicester's grandson, Robert, third Earl of Essex, one of the original, but unsuccessful, parliamentary generals in the first English Civil War.[141]

During her widowhood, Lady Leicester devoted much time, as pious widows often did, to religious causes. In 1608, Thomas Draxe, rector of Coventry and Colwich, Staffordshire, dedicated a work to her, praising her for being "like Mary," making "choice of the better part," having a "well disciplined family" and converting those about her.[142] Four years later, Edward Vaughan, a cleric, dedicated a treatise on death to her and George Hastings, fourth Earl of Huntington. Vaughan must have been acquainted with her, since he confessed knowing no other woman for whom this book would "so properly appertain." He referred to "one such double deadly day's news" concerning the death of her son and her "worthy honorable husband." That day, he said, "made all England, France and Ireland, more astonished then that great invincible Armada of Spain, valorously floating under sail upon our narrow seas." He confessed that she and her friends "in that doleful day, could not discern whether the joy for the queens majesty's safety, or the sorrow for their decease was the greatest."[143]

Two other ministers, both named Wilson, who seem to have been unrelated, dedicated publications to her. In 1620, Thomas Wilson, minister at St. George's Church, Canterbury, saluted her in his twelfth book in that volume, complimenting her "true calling to Christ." He was grateful because his eldest son by her nomination was one of two Oxford University scholars endowed by Leicester. The minister most familiar with her home's religious atmosphere was John Wilson, who dedicated a sermon to her in 1625. She appointed him as minister to her family, helped him obtain a position at Guildford, and "willed" him "to count" her as his "mother."[144] These clerics were obviously seeking her patronage, but if some truth to their comments had not existed, they would not have so publicly praised her good reputation and religious fervor.

Meanwhile, Mary Cresswell Gunter, her ward, converted to Protestantism at Drayton Basset. The evidence for Gunter's experiences is in a volume with a funeral sermon for her also dedicated to the countess in 1625. Thomas Taylor, a Puritan preacher, gave the sermon at Reading. When it was published, Mary's husband, Humphrey Gunter, a Berkshire gentleman, attached to it a narrative concerning her life.[145] In the dedication to the countess, Gunter remarked:

> God hath honored [her] with so many days and years and taught [her] not to fear either the end of [her] pilgrimage out of this strange country or the near approach to [her] own home.

This was a reference to Taylor's sermon, entitled "The Pilgrim's Profession" and based on Psalm 39:12: "I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner as all my fathers."

The daughter of Thomas Cresswell, a Catholic cousin of Blount, probably a maternal relative, Mary was born about 1586. As her parents died in her infancy, she was raised by a Catholic woman and, then at Blount's

request, moved when she was about 14 to Drayton Basset, where she continued to practice her Catholic devotions secretly.[146]

The countess learned of Cresswell's devotions but at what date is unknown. It would be interesting to learn whether she discovered her Catholic worship before or after Blount's death as a reconciled Catholic. Lady Leicester confiscated Mary's rosary beads and religious materials and forbade her Catholic prayers. Strict watch was kept on her and her correspondence. She had to attend the household's daily religious devotions, read prayers with the ladies in the countess's private chamber, and comment upon two sermons preached each Sunday. The mistress of a household was expected to oversee the religious education of her female attendants, and Lady Leicester won praise from both Gunters for enforcing these rules.[147]

At first, Cresswell obeyed the countess's regulations out of fear, but as she came under the influence of the household's chaplain, Mr. I. W., probably the above-mentioned minister, John White, she began to believe that his goodness would lead her to heaven and to examine some of his doctrines. Eventually, she was won to the "truth" and moved to the next stage, converting others to her new faith.[148]

Meanwhile, Lady Leicester's elder daughter, Lady Rich, had died. The Stella of Philip Sidney's "Astrophel and Stella," she married Lord Rich in 1581 and gave birth to nine children, five of whom were sired by her lover, Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy. In November 1605, she was divorced from Lord Rich in the London consistory court with a decree of *a mensa et thoro*, which prohibited remarriage during a former spouse's lifetime. Nevertheless, in December, Mountjoy's chaplain, William Laud, future Archbishop of Canterbury, married him to Lady Rich, thereby offending the king who had ennobled Mountjoy as first Earl of Devonshire. The two lovers/spouses died soon after their marriage, Devonshire in April 1606 and she in July 1607. Lady Leicester seems to have viewed the marriage as valid, since in a petition to Salisbury, she referred to Penelope as Lady Devonshire.[149]

Johanna Rickman has recently related that no rumors circulated about Lady Rich/Devonshire before her illegal marriage confirmed the adulterous relationship. For this silence, Rickman credited her high social status, the lack of public quarrels, and her careful management of household duties. Rickman also believed that their "network of friends and followers" had conspired successfully to protect them.[150] It is ironic that her mother, mostly because she married Leicester, has been charged with adultery on the basis of rumors only, while Lady Rich, who committed adultery, was never featured in any gossip about her dishonorable actions until she married Devonshire. Lady Leicester was also of high social status, was not known to have quarreled with her first husband, and seems to have performed her marital duties loyally. By comparing her life to her daughter's, it is possible to give gossip a context; it sometimes served to demean men in high-profile positions as well as their wives and to create

normal political disagreements, like the disputes over Irish policy of two earls, one her husband, the other her future husband, into a contest between them for her body.

Lady Leicester's younger daughter also experienced marital difficulties. In 1583, she eloped with Thomas,[151] the son of Sir John Perrot, soon to be lord deputy of Ireland. Because of animosity between her late father and her new father-in-law, partly over Irish politics, elopement seemed their best option. The marriage ended in February 1594 with the death of Thomas and their heir, Robert.[152]

Later that year, she wed Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland. It was a "tempestuous" alliance, as they were separated several times during their initial years together. Their first two sons died as infants but four other children survived, including Algernon, the future earl, born in 1602. Convicted of involvement in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, Northumberland remained at the Tower until 1621. He apologized in 1606 to Salisbury for his countess' display of "dislike" to him. He hoped that Salisbury would bear with her for "she is a woman, a loving wife, and a tender mother." Two years before his release, in August 1619, his countess, who often visited him in prison, died.[153]

Lady Leicester enjoyed a good relationship with her grandchildren and other dependents, especially Essex's heir, Robert, one of six siblings, only two others of whom, both sisters, survived childhood. The countess was present at his birth and served as his godmother. In 1606, he entered into a disastrous marriage with Frances, daughter of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk. When it was annulled in 1613 on the charge of his impotency, he retired to his grandmother's home at Drayton Basset. He often spent winters with her there, at Chartley, or at the home of his sister, Frances Devereux, who married William Seymour, Marquess of Hertford and future Duke of Somerset. From about 1614, Arthur Wilson, accompanied Essex on these visits. He characterized as harmless their recreations at Lady Leicester's home, such as hunting, masking, and playing chess. She signed off on one of her extant letters to Essex in a shaky hand, as "his grandmother, loving" him.[154]

For seventeen years after his divorce, Essex remained single. In 1630, he experienced another unsuccessful marriage with Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Paulet, whom he met at his sister, Lady Hertford's house. Sometime after his grandmother's death, they were separated. By 1636, his wife became involved in an illicit relationship with Sir William Uvedale. Despite the notoriety of their affair, when she gave birth to a son, Essex recognized the child as his, but soon after, the infant died. Embittered by his experiences and without his grandmother's support, he never remarried.[155]

Meanwhile, Lady Leicester had been arranging the marriages of her various kin and connections. As her children became parents and then grandparents and great-grandparents, and as she had agreed to serve as godmother to many of them, naming the girls after herself, the number

of matches in which she participated grew considerably. Some of the weddings took place at Drayton Bassett. In 1598, discussions commenced about the marriage of one of her namesake nieces, Lettice Knollys, the daughter of Margaret and Lady Leicester's late brother, Henry, who was living at Drayton Basset. That same year, Sir Robert Digby married Lettice, daughter of Gerald Fitzgerald, Lord Gerald, and his wife Catherine Knollys, Lady Leicester's sister. Two years later, in 1600, Margaret Knollys, wrote to the countess hoping but ultimately failing to marry her daughter, Lettice, with Thomas, the future first Viscount Beaumont of Swords. Just four years before her own death, Lady Leicester helped to match Lettice Willoughby, her goddaughter who resided at Drayton Basset, with John Burgess, the rector of Sutton Coldfield.[156]

After Blount's death, she occasionally petitioned governmental officials for assistance. In 1601, she asked the lord treasurer, Thomas Sackville, future first Earl of Dorset, for aid in handling "a few perverse tenants." Five years later, she requested that Salisbury further the suit of a nephew and niece against a prominent member of the government. In 1609, she petitioned him for a wardship and an exemption from a widow's fee. It was not until the 1620s that more of her letters have survived. After 1624, in an "olde weak hand" she wrote to Henry Rich, first Earl of Holland, second son of Lady Rich/Devonshire, recommending the bearer of the letter to him and signing off "Resting ever your grandmother dearly loving you."[157]

Five years before she died, she was still struggling with the duties of a landowner. In 1629, she informed James Hay, first Earl of Carlisle, husband of her granddaughter, Lucy Percy, that she wanted the lease to one of her houses he controlled so that she could dispose of it. He was two years behind in rent but she was certain he would "deal honorably" with her. In fact, he did not. In a later note to her grandson, Essex, she protested that she should not have to wait three or four years for her rent from Carlisle, who had "wronged" both him and her "touching our lands." The letter, written in a shaky hand, was undated.[158]

She seems mostly to have enjoyed good health until shortly before her death. In 1632, an observer, John Pory, reported that she could still walk a mile a day.[159] She died at Drayton Basset on Christmas Day 1634, leaving a will dated October 15, 1622, probably during an earlier, serious illness, which was probated on January 17, 1635. Despite her claims of poverty, her probate inventory valued her possessions at about £6,645.[160] She named as her executor, Essex, heir to her Devereux jointure lands, and bequeathed the great diamond she wore on her thumb, her "best jewel" to her "worthiest child." She also remembered some of her siblings, such as her brother, Francis, to whom she left £100. For her servants, she asked her "house be continued for one month" after her death to give them time to "provide for themselves" and requested her executor reward them according to the years of their service. Finally, she left £100 to the poor at Warwick.

In February 1635, her body was buried at Beauchamp Chapel next to Leicester, as she had requested. On the wall above their monument is a

wooden table with an inscription enumerating all her noble titles. It refers to only one of her brothers, William, ennobled as the first Earl of Banbury. It also notes her happiness that she had living the grandchildren of her grandchildren. To her descendant, Gervase Clifton, the grandchild of her daughter, Lady Rich/Devonshire, who was baptized at Drayton Basset in January 1611, the countess left her "best great pearl to hang at his ear, and the hatband and a diamond ring." He composed an epitaph for her inscribed on the tablet. Among the lines are the following: She

> thought it safest to retire
> From all care and vain desire,
> To a private country cell,
> Where she spent her days so well,
> That to her the better sort
> Came as to an holy court . . .[161]

Because of unsubstantiated rumors and confusion about Tudor maternity clothes, modern scholars have often characterized Lady Leicester as a woman who defied her society's mores concerning appropriate female sexual behavior. She seems to have been judged as promiscuous mostly because she married Leicester, who admitted having sired an illegitimate child with another woman. She was loyal to her family, ended her life as a devout Protestant, and enjoyed her descendants' esteem. In these pages she is celebrated as a survivor of public struggles and personal tragedies. If her great-grandson believed she supervised a "holy court," it seems appropriate to believe this young man, who knew her well.

Chapter 6

Jane More

Historiography

Unlike the other women whose lives are reassessed here, Jane Colt, the first wife of Sir Thomas More, escaped censorious comments by early-modern authors when they referred to her by name. Modern scholars, following the lead of Percy Allen, have more deeply criticized her behavior than did, for example, William Roper, the son-in-law whom she did not live to meet.[1] After examining Roper's life of Thomas and those by four other early-modern authors, this chapter will evaluate Percy's claim that she was a contrary wife, who objected to her husband's instruction. It will then turn to information about her life.

In the 1550s, when Roper, the widower of Margaret, the eldest More daughter, wrote a study of his father-in-law, he offered little information about his mother-in-law, whose given name he failed to note, possibly because he could not recall it. She had died, perhaps in 1511, seven years before he, as a student at Lincoln's Inn, moved into the More home, the Barge at Bucklersbury in the parish of St. Stephen's Walbrook.[2] She was, Roper explained, one of the three daughters of "Master Colt, a gentleman of Essex," whose "honest conversation and virtuous education provoked him [Thomas] there especially to set his affection." Although he deemed the second daughter the "fairest and best favored," he became concerned that marrying her before her elder sister, Jane, was wed, would cause the latter "great grief and some shame." Feeling sorry for Jane, he transferred his affections to her, and they were married.[3]

Roper wrote this study to assist Nicholas Harpsfield, who planned to compose a more comprehensive life of More. When Harpsfield completed his biography, he dedicated it to Roper, relating that he undertook the task at his request.[4] Both of their manuscripts, for unexplained reasons, remained unpublished during their lifetimes, Roper's not appearing in print until 1626 and Harpsfield's until 1932.

After repeating Roper's comment about Thomas's selecting his first wife, whose given name was again unidentified,[5] Harpsfield added information, based on a letter of Erasmus to Ulrich von Hutten in 1519, but did not cite his source.[6] As she was "young and rude" like individuals raised in the countryside, Thomas decided, after she became his wife, to "frame her to his own will, appetite and disposition." He instructed

her in scholarship and music, and they would have had a comfortable life together had she lived longer.[7]

About 30 years later, in 1588, Thomas Stapleton's Latin history of More was published.[8] Until recently a member of the University of Douai theological staff, he credited English Catholic emigres at Douai for information about the More family. Among the emigres was the physician, John Clement, who had moved into More's home some four years before Roper. Fond of Clement, More wrote to Erasmus, probably in 1518, praising his excellent lectures at Oxford and calling him "my" Clement. Stapleton also conversed with John Harris, More's private secretary, and his wife, Dorothy Colly Harris. In addition, Stapleton relied on written material, especially More's writings, but probably did not have access to Roper's or Harpsfield's work. While some of his information could have been obtained from their manuscripts, identifying them as his sources is problematic. Stapleton discussed, for example, More's parliamentary experiences during Henry VII's reign about which Roper's work represents the earliest written record. Others like Clement, could easily have heard about More's legislative experiences even before Roper moved into the Barge.[9] Two discussions in Stapleton's biography seemingly reminiscent of Harpsfield's work, as the modern editor, Ernest Reynolds, observed, differed in important ways.[10]

That Stapleton relied mostly on More's writings and on the emigres' reminiscences is evident when his remarks about More's wives are examined. As for the first wife, Stapleton had so little to say about her that Reynolds left her name out of the index of his edition of this biography. Stapleton repeated neither of the anecdotes about her from Roper's and Harpsfield's studies and omitted her given and family names, simply stating that she was the mother of his children.[11]

More's biographer, long known as Ro. Ba., the abbreviated name on his title page in 1599, was almost certainly Sir Robert Basset, a grandnephew of Roper's daughter, Mary, wife of James Basset.[12] Repeating Roper's story, although with somewhat different wording, about More's decision to wed Colt's eldest daughter,[13] Basset was the first of these authors to provide her with a given name, "Joan."[14] About her wifely obedience, Basset explained that she was "pliable to all his will and pleasure." Then, Basset offered a shortened version of Harpsfield's account of her upbringing.[15]

He included an anecdote about a bogus gift, not previously mentioned, concerning Anne Cresacre, who married Thomas's son, John. After she repeatedly asked her father-in-law for a pearl necklace, he gave her one set instead with white peas. Aggrieved, Anne never again showed any interest in wearing jewels.[16] This is undoubtedly an apocryphal story, although More did caution his children's tutor, William Gonell, to teach them not "to think more of themselves for gaudy trappings... nor try to heighten" themselves by "artifices."[17]

In Hans Holbein the Younger's portrait, completed at More's Chelsea home, however, all the women, including Anne, wore rich clothing and jewelry. Even More had on "a gold livery collar."[18]

Perhaps, Basset had recalled an anecdote in Erasmus's *The Praise of Folly* and forgot or chose to forget that it narrated a bogus gift to a man's bride, not his daughter-in-law. Erasmus dedicated this book, written while staying at More's home, to him because the Greek word, *Moria*, means folly. In it, he told about a man giving his bride "imitation" jewels that she believed were "genuine." The reasons that writers have identified this wife as Jane and the husband as Thomas, besides his denunciation of "artifices" for his children, were that he was known as a jokester, and Erasmus had *Folly (Moria)* introduce the story with a statement about a "certain man named after me."[19]

If he meant Thomas, it is odd that Erasmus was not more explicit, since he identified him by his complete name in this book and elsewhere. It seems impossible to reconcile Thomas's comparison of the soul to real diamonds in *The Last Things*, perhaps composed in 1522, with the suggestion that he would be content to see his wife wear "imitation" jewels. An individual without knowledge might be satisfied with the "imitation," he claimed, but he who "by experience, hath in his eye . . . the true luster of the diamond . . . list not to look upon the counterfeit."[20]

In *Folly*, Erasmus could have been referring to Thomas's father, John. After the death of his first wife, Thomas's mother, Agnes Graunger, John wed three other women, the last in 1521, when he was about 70. Aware of his remarriages, Erasmus referred to Thomas's stepmothers in 1519. John, like his son, told humorous, somewhat unpleasant, jokes about women.[21] Modern scholars have continued to associate this anecdote with Thomas rather than his father although it is more a criticism of him than of his trusting bride, since it characterizes him as deceitful.

Anne Cresacre's descendant, Christopher (Cresacre) More, failed to include this jewelry anecdote in his study. The great-grandson of the martyr, Cresacre was born in 1572, the youngest of 13 children of Thomas More and Maria Scrope. Between 1616 and 1620, he wrote his biography, which was published about 1630 or 1631. In it he cited Stapleton and Roper as his sources and seems to have drawn upon Harpsfield, as well as the chroniclers, Edward Hall and John Stowe.[22]

He repeated Harpsfield's anecdotes about his great-grandparents, identifying his source as Erasmus's letter to von Hutten. Some of Cresacre's information was inaccurate. He claimed that Thomas married his second wife, Alice, two or three years after Jane's death. As this lapse of time is incorrect, since the wedding took place within one month after Jane's funeral, it is possible that Cresacre was also mistaken in stating that this first union lasted six years. This issue will be addressed again later in this chapter.[23]

Of the three authors who cited both Roper's study and Erasmus's letter about Jane, none even hinted that she had resented her husband's

instruction. She and her sister may have lacked tutoring in scholarship and in music, but Thomas seems to have been attracted to them by their "honest conversation and virtuous education," indicating that they received the normal lessons for girls in deportment and in domestic management, as well as religious instruction.[24]

In 1918, Percy Allen, who began editing Erasmus's Latin epistles in 1906, wrote a short article, entitled "More and Netherhall." Apparently frustrated by the paucity of information historians had recorded about Jane, whose family's home was Netherhall, Essex, Allen decided while perusing Erasmus's colloquy, "Marriage," first printed in 1523, to identify her as one of its anonymous wives.[25]

Percy related that Erasmus's fictitious character in the colloquy, Eulalia, narrated the story of a "man of good birth and education, and singularly clever and tactful," who wed a 17-year old, unsophisticated girl. She had grown up in the "country where noblemen usually like to reside for hunting and hawking." Desiring to "mould her to his own tastes," he tried to interest her in "books and music." He also encouraged her to repeat material from "sermons" and sought to teach her other useful employments. Soon becoming "bored" with these exercises, she "burst into tears, sometimes even throwing herself down . . . and beating her head on the floor." Her stymied husband escorted her to her family's country home, left her with her "mother and sisters," while he went hunting with her father whose intervention with his daughter he sought. Believing that his son-in-law should "beat" her into submission, her father reluctantly agreed to assist him. Later, when he found his daughter alone, he warned her that, as she was a "plain child," she was fortunate that he had been able to find a husband for her whom any young woman would wish. Subdued by his comments and his hints of violence, the girl begged his and then her spouse's forgiveness for her behavior. In later years she expressed happiness at having "such a husband."[26]

In his 1965 translation of Erasmus's colloquies, Craig Thompson validated Allen's identification of Jane as the anonymous girl because, as he pointed out, its facts dovetailed with Erasmus's comments to von Hutten. When, in 1997, Thompson reworked the notations to his translations for their inclusion in the University of Toronto's series, *Collected Works of Erasmus,* he transferred his statements about Jane as the model for this bride from the text's introduction to an endnote. He partially justified associating Jane with this recalcitrant wife, because More's biographers had accepted Allen's findings.[27] Thompson's statement, was not entirely correct, since it took longer for these authors to validate Allen's interpretation than it did experts on Erasmus's writings.

Although More was not raised to knighthood until 1521, well after Jane's death, Allen insisted that he was the anonymous husband, the "*nobile,*" in the colloquy and communicated his belief to others. Seven years before his article appeared, Allen, an Oxford professor, began corresponding with Preserved Smith, an American professor interested in humanist

scholarship. They sometimes disagreed on which individuals Erasmus's anonymous characters were based, but both agreed the model for the contrary bride was Jane.[28]

In his 1923 study of Erasmus's life and ideals, Smith publicized Allen's identification of Jane as the colloquy's bride, who had temper tantrums when her husband attempted to instruct her in sound learning and religious exercises.[29] By contrast, More's biographers more slowly accepted this story; some recent ones have even questioned its authenticity.

More has been a subject of great interest to biographers. From 1925 through 1937 at least 12 books about him were published.[30] In 1925, George Potter said that Jane was "perhaps" 17 and proved More's "apt pupil" after "a little paternal persuasion." As Potter did not cite his source, the first biographers actually identifying Jane as the bride in Erasmus's "Marriage" colloquy were E. M. G. Routh and R. W. Chambers in the mid-1930s. Routh remarked that an "amusing anecdote" of Erasmus's "has been thought on good authority" to refer to Thomas and his wife Jane.[31] Chambers proclaimed: "This story, because of some phrases in it which he elsewhere applies to More's young wife, we can be quite sure relates to her and her husband."[32]

These three writers seem to have been the only biographers in this early period to state that Jane was her husband's reluctant pupil. Perhaps their assertions kept Algernon Cecil in 1937 from challenging Allen's application of Jane to the colloquy's wife, as he declined to speculate about whether the story related to her or not, asserting ultimately that More's kindness proved "irresistible" to her.[33] It was ten years before other writers turned to More's life. Between 1947 and 1965, Theodore Maynard, John Farrow, and Bernard Basset adopted Chambers's and Routh's opinion that she was the recalcitrant bride.[34] Some other authors, meanwhile, had begun questioning whether the colloquy characterized Jane's relationship to Thomas, but four biographers between 1983 and 2000, Anthony Kenny, Jasper Ridley, Gerard Wegemer, and John Guy again confirmed her reluctance to accept More's instruction.[35]

Unlike Kenny and Wegemer, who cited the episode to sympathize with More's difficulties in managing a contrary wife, Ridley and Guy found other implications in it for his marriage. Ridley wondered whether Erasmus, who was unskilled in English, could tell if Jane were happily married, but conceded, "it would be unwise for a biographer nearly five hundred years later to try to answer the question."[36]

By contrast, Guy cited the episode to highlight the negative way in which men, even More and Erasmus, treated women. Guy related, "The story is taken even by More's hagiographers to refer to Jane Colt, since phrases in it are virtually identical to those used by Erasmus when describing Jane elsewhere. Obviously the identification is plausible."[37] Later, in his biography of Margaret More Roper, Guy retreated somewhat from this opinion. After claiming that Jane was definitely 17 when she married Thomas, an issue that will be examined later in this

chapter, Guy admitted that the story "doesn't add up," because of the hunting allusion, since More despised blood sports. Guy speculated that Erasmus might have written the episode to "muddy the waters," leaving the Mores's early relationship purposely open to "endless speculation."[38]

From 1953 to 1998, four of More's biographers treated the colloquy cautiously. The first, Leslie Paul, stated that Thomas and Jane "were perhaps unfortunate to be so shrewdly observed by Erasmus . . . if the colloquy . . . is to be trusted as a picture of their relationship."[39] About a decade later, in 1968, Reynolds conceded, "Erasmus may have been referring to Thomas and Jane" in this colloquy but warned, "it would be a mistake to see an exact record . . . in the Colloquy where the author would allow his imagination some play."[40]

The two final studies cautioning the use of the colloquy for Jane's life were Richard Marius's in 1984 and Peter Ackroyd's in 1998. Marius remarked that those who claim it is a true account of More's relationship to his first wife may "be right . . . But the artistic imagination always decorates reality, and perhaps it is an error to read the little dialogue by Erasmus as literal history." Thereafter, however, he treated the colloquy as evidence for her life. Unlike previous biographers, Marius cited it to criticize More's moralistic attitude that reflected the anonymous husband's "relentless drive for improvement" and characterized him as an "eighteenth-century Methodist born out of his time."[41] Later, Peter Ackroyd concluded somewhat vaguely about this episode: It "may have no connection with Thomas More and Jane Colt but it is suggestive."[42] Alas, he did not say of what it is suggestive, perhaps of More's view of women, or of early-modern gender relations, or even family relationships.

A final biographer of More, James Monti in 1997, omitted all discussion of the colloquy but did comment: "Perhaps, Jane More had been willing meekly to accept her husband's unusual ways." As he cited Chambers's study for information about More's household, Monti was aware of other scholars' misinterpretations of it, but still chose to ignore it.[43]

Understandably, More's biographers, have been far more concerned with analyzing his career and writings than with clarifying his wives' biographies, but unlike them, my major interest is the lives of early-modern women, including, of course, Jane and Alice More. While examining his biographers' treatment of them, I recalled Garrett Mattingly's 1959 comment on the career of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, commander of the Spanish Armada in 1588. In reassessing his contributions to that defeat, Mattingly explained: "Nor does it matter at all to the dead whether they receive justice at the hands of the succeeding generations. But to the living, to do justice however belatedly, should matter."[44] It should matter for Jane and Alice because until we expunge from the historical record the biases about More's wives, we will fail in achieving a deep or accurate understanding of them, their relationship to him, and their culture.

Jane More's Life

This section begins with a comparison of William Roper's facts about Jane and her family with Erasmus's statements about the anonymous woman and her relatives in the "Marriage" colloquy. It highlights several discrepancies between members of the More household and the fictitious characters. After reassessing Roper's reference to Thomas's initial preference for Jane's younger sister, some information about her family provides her life with an appropriate social context. Finally, an alternate candidate for the anonymous woman, which I first suggested in a 1983 article, demonstrates how identifying Jane as the colloquy's bride is highly problematic.[45]

A major difference between Jane and Erasmus's anonymous wife is their education. Although the Colt sisters lacked instruction in music and in what might be termed academic matters, they did not seem otherwise to be ill-trained or idle. Roper recalled that their "honest conversation" and "virtuous education" attracted More. In Erasmus's later colloquy, "Courtship," the wooer, Pamphilus, defined a good education as "wholesome instruction and godly examples."[46]

A received part of the family tradition is that Jane was a 17-year-old bride, but the sole evidence for this specific age depends on accepting her as the girl in the "Marriage" colloquy.[47] She could certainly have been 17, since Erasmus referred to her in the von Hutten letter as *admodem puellam* (quite young) Even so, the colloquy should not be taken as absolute proof of her age any more than that of her education or character. It seems odd, furthermore, that Erasmus provided a specific age for the anonymous bride in 1523, but only a general reference to Jane's youth in his letter to von Hutten in 1519.[48]

That Jane might have been 17 when becoming Thomas's wife raises another interesting issue. According to Roper, he first favored her younger sister perhaps also in her teenage years. At 27, if he had succeeded in wedding her, he would have been flouting even more greatly the humanist prescription for equality in spousal characteristics than he actually did by settling for Jane. Erasmus maintained that marriages were much more likely to be successful if the bride and groom were equal, not merely in appearance, age, wealth, and social rank, but within certain hierarchies, first "the good things of the mind, then those of the body, and finally those called external."[49] These similarities would lead to a successful marriage.[50]

Finally, concerning the anonymous girl's personal traits, her father berated her as "plain," but Roper, in contrast, never hinted that his wife's mother had any physical defects. When noting that More considered the younger daughter the "fairest," Roper did not describe Jane and her other sister as "plain." All three could have had appearances pleasant enough to prevent observers from disparaging their looks. Roper's assertion about the girls' "good conversation" and "virtuous education" would seem to belie the notion that Jane was immature enough in her late adolescence

to indulge in temper tantrums like two-year-old toddlers. Whoever was Erasmus's model, surely this exaggerated reaction was one of the flights of "imagination" about which Ernest Reynolds warned.

In comparing the beleaguered nobleman's characteristics to More's, it must be emphasized that the latter was not *"nobile*," the original Latin word. Allen had, however, translated *nobile* as "a man of good birth."[51] Of course, "good birth" could mean noble rank, but utilizing a more specific translation would have resulted in a more accurate rendering of the husband's social status. Occasionally, Erasmus does seem to have associated More with nobility. Erasmus claimed that proficiency in the common law engendered the greater part of the island's nobility, and More, was, of course, a common lawyer. Erasmus also related that many believed that a London birth endowed individuals with "some nobility" and said More's successor was *alium nobilem*.[52]

However, by those comments, he seems to have been alluding to the quality of mind or manners not to social rank, as he did in a letter to William Herman in 1498. Erasmus contrasted the rank of William Blount, fourth Lord Mountjoy, with that of two others as follows*: "Sum apud nobilem quendam hominem atque humanissimum Anglum vna eum duobus adolescentibus generosis."* The gist of this statement is that he was staying with two young gentlemen (*adolescentibus generosis*) at the home of a very refined nobleman (*nobilem*).[53]

In the "Marriage" colloquy, Erasmus situated noblemen in the countryside pursuing hunting and their rural pleasures. As several years before this colloquy was published, he had resided in the homes of both More, as yet not knighted, and of Lord Mountjoy, the possessor of his noble title since his youth, Erasmus had personally experienced the differences in lifestyle and daily habits between citizens in London and noblemen on country estates.

Early-modern Europeans were obsessed with social hierarchy; Mountjoy's title provided him with legal privileges as well as social advantages. A peer was never required to swear an oath before testifying in court or at any time whatsoever. In addition, he could not be arrested for debt. In processions, Mountjoy walked with other barons behind higher-ranking noblemen with members of the lesser aristocracy, knights, esquires, and gentlemen trailing behind the lords.

Before he was knighted in 1521, More did not, of course, even belong to the top tier of the lesser aristocracy. In 1504 or 1505, when he wooed Jane, his contemporaries would not have considered him a husband any girl hoped to have. Some aristocratic fathers might even have viewed a Londoner as an unattractive match for their daughters, unless he were quite wealthy. Until December 1513, however, More held the lease of only part of his home, the Barge.[54] When he married Jane, More's important political and literary accomplishments still lay ahead.

If the frustrated husband in the "Marriage" colloquy is accepted as representing More, readers are left with a somewhat bifurcated view of his

personality. Many writers, who have claimed Jane as the anonymous bride, have also described his second wife, Alice, as a shrew, whom he managed to control as well as to educate, and with whom he was said to have lived harmoniously. Given his accepted treatment of this apparently strong-willed woman, that he would have been either reluctant or unable to enforce his husbandly authority upon the youthful Jane, if he had married her because he felt sorry for her, seems incongruous, to say the least.

A serious problem with identifying More as Erasmus's fictitious husband is that he went hunting with his father-in-law, an activity in which More, the humanist, almost surely would not have participated, as Guy noted. In 1505, when he was newly wed to Jane, almost 20 years before the colloquy was printed, he joined Erasmus in translating the antimilitaristic dialogues of the Greek satirist and rhetorician, Lucian, and in expressing his opposition to aristocratic hunting practices.[55] The dialogues were published in 1506, five by Erasmus and four by More, and Epistle 193 served as its preface.[56]

It was somewhat disingenuous for Thompson to accept Allen's claim of More as this noble husband who went hunting, because he later rejected Allen's identification of More as an anonymous character, Polis, in Erasmus's colloquy, "Exorcism, or the Specter," partly because More disliked the sport of hunting that Polis was said to enjoy.[57] In his 1997 notations on the "Exorcism" colloquy in attempting to restore consistency on this issue,[58] Thompson asserted that More, as the husband in the "Marriage" colloquy, was willing to join in this sport for a specific purpose, not because he enjoyed the activity. Surely, hunting was only one of the many ways in which the two men could have spent some private moments together. Thompson further related that Smith, disagreeing with Allen's identification of More as Polis, associated the character with John Colt, More's father-in-law, because in Greek *Polis* means colt.[59] In the introduction to this colloquy, first published in 1524, Thompson explained: "Erasmus was writing fiction, not writing biography." As he composed quickly, he may have forgotten some details. However, the "play's the thing, and we may be sure More is in the cast."[60] This observation would seem to put into grave doubt the veracity of all anonymous biographical information gleaned from any of the colloquies.

Erasmus seems to have made only one, somewhat vague, but verifiable, comment about Jane's father in his letters. In 1518, he sent Thomas a message, informing him that its bearer was attempting to buy from "Colt, your relative," some land, which had once belonged to an ancestor of his.[61] He continued, if you cannot assist him, please give him some advice. With only a vague reference to Colt in this letter, it would be remarkable that, if Jane were the anonymous girl in the "Marriage" colloquy, Erasmus would have included about as much information concerning the reluctant father as the noble husband. Erasmus failed to identify the father specifically as noble, but the fictitious Eulalia's statements seem to imply that he could have been noble or at least was closely associated with individuals who

were noble. More's father-in-law did own a country estate and some other rural property, and might well have enjoyed hunting, but he was not a nobleman. Erasmus certainly knew the difference between a count, as he sometimes referred to Mountjoy, and someone with no higher title than gentleman or esquire.[62]

In contrast to Mountjoy, Thomas was not a nobleman and neither were the husbands of Jane's younger sisters, who were designated esquires in the family chart. It can be presumed that he said nothing to Roper about Jane's two youngest sisters, because in 1504 or 1505 they had not reached marriageable age.[63] So little is known about Jane, besides the comments of Roper and Erasmus, that confusion has existed about her given name. Germain Marc'hadour, who preferred Joan to Jane, published an article in 1992, explaining the name, Jane, actually derived from Joanna, and More's Latin epitaph named her Joanna; in *More's English Works* of 1557, Joanna was translated into Jone. Thomas's son and heir, John, named his daughter Johanna, which was Englished as Johane in his will. Cresacre More was probably the first writer to call her Jane, the variant most modern authors have favored. In fact, she seems to have been named after her mother, Jane Elryngton Colt.[64]

Roper's anecdote about how Thomas decided to marry Jane must be examined within the larger early-modern social structures. It is more than just a question of whether the tale reflected More's particular misogynous views, since his society was deeply patriarchal. Women, as well as men, were socialized to accept and to act on the widespread belief of males as the superior sex. Spousal selection and interaction in a patriarchal society related not only to misogynous views like these but also to deeply entrenched hierarchical protocols.

When aristocratic parents negotiated their children's marriages, the bride's dowry, called portion or marriage money, played an essential role in the arrangements, and its amount could be hotly contested. For daughters of knights, Barbara Harris stated, the median fell between two hundred and three hundred marks.[65] Obviously, this amount would be smaller for parish gentry like the Colts. Nevertheless, for a future husband, like More, who apparently could afford to lease only part of a London house when he decided on matrimony, the amount of his wife's dowry would have been crucial.[66] In the family hierarchy, the eldest daughter was usually favored over her sisters, sometimes granted, for example, a more lucrative dowry than theirs.[67] Parents could also evince reluctance in matching a younger daughter with a suitor before settling the older one's future.

In some sense, it was the eldest daughter's birthright.

Indeed, privileging the oldest female was so ingrained among the aristocracy, that John Smyth, the early seventeenth-century historian of the Berkeley family, noted, when referring to the marriage of James, Lord Berkeley, to Isabel, elder daughter of Thomas Mowbray, first Duke of Norfolk, it was because the issue of her younger sister, Margaret, was "advanced in honor before" Isabel's that some writers inaccurately

identified Margaret as the elder sister. Isabel was, Smyth also noted, married long before her younger sister.[68] Reasons could exist for the younger daughter's entering marriage first. For instance, the elder one might be resident at a foreign royal or noble court, the ruler of which was expected to find her a husband. Other reasons might include physical or mental problems, a strong vocation for the church, or a pending but unexpectedly delayed marriage, while meanwhile a suitor arrived to woo the younger sister. None of these reasons applied to the Colt girls.

It is also true that if Jane were only 17, then her sister would have had to have been even younger. Their youthful ages might well have led her parents to be even less inclined to match the second daughter with a husband before the older one was wed. All these nuances and issues were not adequately encompassed in Roper's statement concerning Jane's "shame" and "grief" if her younger sister were married first.

Marriage was an important economic step, since couples often formed new, separate households to start their families. It was also a significant social rite, for it meant their entrance into adulthood, which was symbolized by certain hierarchical arrangements.[69] In churches, for example, where the sexes were seated separately in the naves, the males on one side and females on the other, wives and husbands sat at the front of the church with never-married girls and boys arranged behind them. The marriage of a younger daughter before an older one would thus catapult the former ahead of the later in social and public settings. At the highest level of society, veneration for birth order was even enshrined in the Treason Statute of 1352. If a man sexually violated, whether consensual or not, the eldest daughter of the King of England, then he would be charged with high treason. The younger daughters were not included in this statute.

When Roper wrote his study, he joined other Catholic apologists who, unlike him, had either been recusants or emigres during Edward VI's reign. After Mary's accession, when freed from governmental reprisals for their faith, they deliberately set out to shape the story of More's martyrdom to meet the "needs of their propaganda." James McConica confirmed, for example, William Rastell's omission of More's two letters about the controversial Elizabeth Barton, Nun of Kent, from his complete works, which were published in 1557. McConica also cited editorial changes to other letters and even to the *Utopia* as proof of this premeditated distortion or censorship.[70]

Within this attempt to create Catholic propaganda, Roper's study must also be evaluated, since he, too, set out to present his father-in-law as favorably as possible. One of his major themes was More's lack of materialism or of avariciousness. Roper claimed, for example, he had worked "without respect of earthly commodities, either to himself or to any of his." He strove to serve God and the king, from whom he never sought monetary rewards.[71]

When selecting spouses, however, members of the aristocracy often considered marriage portions more important than personal feelings or

their friends' and neighbors' opinions. Surely, More would have needed to marry the Colt girl with the better dowry, an issue Roper ignored because his goal was to provide evidence of his father-in-law's disdain for material goods. Roper's story about More's willingness to make a personal sacrifice to spare a young woman's grief lacks contexts; it was only a small part of the larger picture, since Roper neglected to mention a marriage portion or to condemn the unkindness of a suitor who favored a younger sister and thus seriously considered causing the older one "grief." For Jane it would not have been merely a personal and private rejection but a social and public demotion, as well.

One final scenario about More's problems as a suitor can be proposed here that makes his actions seem more in tune with his society's expectations. Perhaps the Colt girls were so close in age that he did not initially realize that he was favoring the younger one. When he discovered his error, he turned to Jane perhaps not so much out of "pity," as Roper characterized it to make a point about his father-in-law's sacrificial nature, but from an understanding that she was the more appropriate choice both in terms of birth order and perhaps in terms of the potential marriage portion. This possibility suggests one of More's gentle jokes, the emphasis of which Roper changed for his agenda; Thomas, not Jane, looms large as the butt of the merry tale, because he had at first attempted to woo the wrong girl.

Now turning to a dispute about Jane Colt More's age, John Guy cited in 2009 a Chancery suit, dated sometime after March 3, 1488, in which he claimed incorrectly that her maternal uncle, Simon Elryngton, allegedly said his niece was at an age that would make her seventeen in 1504 or 1505. Simon actually stated that his sister, Jane Elryngton Colt, who like him was the child of Sir John Elryngton of Hackney, Middlesex, was 23 or more years in 1488 and her husband, John Colt, had been responsible for her upkeep for only two years.[72] In his will, dated July 11, 1482, and proved February 5, 1484, her father had referred to his daughter as the wife of John Colt. Sir John Elryngton also ordered his executors to receive the profits of Colt's lands and keep them for his daughter and son-in-law. Either Colt must have been Elryngton's ward or this provision could have reflected some financial arrangement outlined in the marriage contract.[73]

Until 1486, when he began to pay for Jane's upkeep, John and Jane Colt probably lived in her parent's home.[74] Since she was about 23 in 1488, she would have been about 17 in 1482 when her father referred to her as Colt's wife. Surely, John and Jane Colt had consummated their marriage before he began to pay for her support. Normally, a young couple waited only until the wife was 16 before completing their marriage. Almost certainly, they would not have delayed doing so until she was 21 in 1486 as Guy assumed, making it possible for him to claim that Jane, their eldest child, was born, in 1487 and was thus about 17 in 1504 or 1505 when she wed More. In fact, Thomas's future wife could have been born any time after about 1482, but since Erasmus emphasized her youth, she probably was still in her teens,

perhaps even 17 when they were wed. Still, the age remains speculative, since her uncle never mentioned her or her siblings.

Besides her daughters, Jane Elryngton Colt also gave birth to two sons, the heir George, in about 1491, and Thomas. Funding these marriage portions, since all the girls survived to marry gentlemen, must have severely strained their father's finances. At John's death in 1521, his 30-year-old heir George inherited the manors of Netherhall and Down Hall, as well as other manors and parcels of land in Essex.[75]

Either married to Thomas More near the end of 1504 or early in 1505, Jane Colt was already pregnant when Erasmus returned to England in 1505, since her daughter Margaret seems to have been born later that year. It is possible that he could have heard stories about how Jane had at first tearfully resisted her husband's attempts to educate her, but he would not have had firsthand knowledge of those events. Husbands were expected to dote upon their pregnant wives, treating them deferentially. Contemporaries believed that even hinting at threats of violence against these women, as the father in the colloquy did, could bring on a miscarriage or could somehow cause injury to their fetuses. Most people thought that emotional trauma could also cause a woman to miscarry. Erasmus later explained to Thomas that Cornelia, the wife of Pieter Gillis, suffered a miscarriage because of "anxiety" about her husband's serious health problems.[76] If Jane died in 1511, as has been suggested, then Erasmus would have also had contact with her in the months before her demise, since he arrived in England a third time in 1509 and worked on *The Praise of Folly* at the Barge.[77] He could well have heard her express gratitude for her good husband at that time.

In my article,[78] I suggested another candidate, who more closely fits the facts of the colloquy's anonymous girl than did Jane. It was not then, nor is it now, my intention to argue that this candidate, Elizabeth Say, the first wife of Lord Mountjoy, should be accepted as the actual prototype for this girl. Given the speed with which Erasmus worked and his lack of attention to detail, it is problematic to take biographical information from any of his anecdotes or even from his epistles about any historical figure unless he offered a specific name. Percy Allen, himself, referred to the many errors in Erasmus's letters. Important dates, even men's given names, were frequently wrong: "His pen rushed on, striving to keep pace with the thoughts bubbling up in his mind, as he stood at his desk; and there was no time to halt for verification of details."[79]

Erasmus also confessed to this fault. To Haio Herman, Erasmus later explained that the speed with which he produced his manuscripts forced him to make many corrections in reprints or in new editions of them. He also complained about printers' errors, for which he should not be held responsible.[80]

The paternal grandfather of Elizabeth, Lady Mountjoy, was Sir John Say, a relative of the Baron Says, probably from a junior branch. He held several royal offices in the reigns of Henry VI and Edward IV and was

elected to the House of Commons four times. He succeeded in marrying women, who were related to various noble families. His first wife was Elizabeth, widow of Frederick Tilney, whose namesake daughter, Elizabeth Tilney, married first Sir Humphrey Bourchier, the heir of Lord Berners, and then as a widow, Say's stepdaughter, took as her second husband, Thomas Howard, future second Duke of Norfolk.[81] Meanwhile, her mother, Say's wife, Elizabeth, gave birth to three sons, including the family's heir, William and five daughters. After his wife Elizabeth's death in 1473, Sir John wed Agnes, widow first of Sir John Fray and then of John, Lord Wenlock. Say died possessed of a "lordly" estate on April 12, 1478.[82]

Say had held 22 manors, the majority of which lay in Hertfordshire, including Bedwell at Essenden, five miles southwest of Hertford. Later, at his heir Sir William's death in 1529, his son-in-law, Lord Mountjoy received: "stewardship of the manor, the keepership of Bedwell Park, of the hunt of deer and of the king's manor of Bedwell with a little garden thereto annexed or adjoined." Famous for its hunting attractions, the park even supplied the king's chase at Waltham with deer.[83]

Sir William Say also enjoyed a legislative career, holding seats possibly in four parliaments.[84] Sometime after his father's death in 1478 but by November 1485, William married as his second wife, Elizabeth Fray, widow of Sir Thomas Waldegrave, and the mother of seven children, four of them girls. As a daughter of Sir John Fray and his wife, Agnes, who became the second wife of Sir John Say, Elizabeth Fray was a stepsister of William Say, her second husband. In addition to his two girls, Elizabeth and Mary, William sired two sons who died in infancy.[85]

William decided to find husbands for his daughters, his coheiresses, when they were still young. Elizabeth became the bride of Lord Mountjoy and Mary the wife of Henry Bourchier, second Earl of Essex. Both noblemen inherited their honors and estates in their youth. The weddings probably occurred in the spring of 1497 when the girls were still in their teens, for they would have been born sometime after William married their mother.

That Say was able to provide dowries sufficient to match his daughters with noblemen is a comment on the size of his fortune. In 1522, at least, he seems to have been considerably wealthier than Lord Mountjoy. For a loan that year, the crown assessed him at 1,000 marks (£666 66 s) but his son-in-law at only £100.[86] When William died in 1529, his will arranged for 1,000 masses to be said for him, his parents, his ex-wives, and all Christians within a month.[87]

Lord Mountjoy, his son-in-law, was born about 1476[88] at Barton Blount, Derbyshire, the heir of John, third Lord Mountjoy, who died October 12, 1485, and Lora Berkeley. She remarried twice after his lordship's death, first Sir Thomas Montgomery and then Thomas Butler, seventh Earl of Ormond, a great-grandfather of Anne Boleyn. When her son, the fourth Lord Mountjoy, married Elizabeth Say, the two may have taken *verba de futuro* vows, promising to wed in the future. These vows did not create a

legal marriage unless they were followed by sexual relations. Elizabeth was undoubtedly too young to live with Mountjoy and did not accompany him when he left for France in early 1498. In Paris, Mountjoy met Erasmus, appointed him as his tutor, and asked him to return home with him. After accompanying him to England in 1499, Erasmus joined him on a trip to Say's Bedwell estate and also resided at Mountjoy's Greenwich manor. Albert Hyma noted how "strange" it was that Erasmus's biographers have paid "extremely little attention" to his visit to Bedwell, a "magnificent estate."[89]

William must have been a splendid host. In a November 1499 letter to Mountjoy, written at Oxford where he journeyed from Bedwell, Erasmus said that he hoped his lordship's "kind father-in-law" was well. After later returning to the continent, Erasmus praised William's hospitality to his friend Jacob Batt with whom he spent two evenings discussing his English experiences.[90] Erasmus continued to boast about the hospitality at Bedwell, communicating about it with Jean Crucius, professor of logic at the Collège du Lys, Louvain, who became a tutor to Mountjoy's children. Erasmus also referred to it in his *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, issued in 1523, the same year as the "Marriage" colloquy was first printed.[91]

If Lady Mountjoy were the prototype for the anonymous bride, Erasmus would have been able to witness her tantrums while in England in 1499, when her husband sought assistance from her father in controlling her, as the colloquy indicated. After Mountjoy's return from Paris, he probably swore *verba de praesenti* vows with her, agreeing they were married, and began to live together as husband and wife. In a letter to Mountjoy from Oxford University in 1499, Erasmus referred to his lordship's recent wedding.[92]

One minor problem with identifying Elizabeth, Lady Mountjoy, as the colloquy's wife is that Erasmus recalled that her husband left her with her mother and sisters when he went hunting. Since her mother had daughters from a previous marriage, the question of the sisters is readily resolved. There is no record, however, of her father's remarrying after the death of her mother in 1494.[93] Perhaps, Mountjoy's mother, who was keeping a keen eye on her son's whereabouts, accompanied them to Bedwell. In a 1499 letter to Batt, Erasmus revealed that Mountjoy would visit Italy, if his mother gave him permission.[94] She also had daughters, one by Mountjoy's father and at least one by her third husband.

Mountjoy enjoyed a warm relationship with his father-in-law. In a letter concerning Hertfordshire administrative matters, Mountjoy addressed him with the words, "Mine own good father, in my heartiest manner, I commend me unto you," and signed off as "your loving son." Earlier, he had written to Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, referring to Lord Ormond, his stepfather, as his "special friend" and interceding for his father-in-law, trusting his cause had come to "a good end."[95]

During his visit to Oxford in 1499, Erasmus wrote at least three letters to Mountjoy in which he mentioned Elizabeth, Lady Mountjoy,

without addressing her qualities. In the first he said: "I ask you for your part to feel towards me in such a way that you may not be deemed to have unnecessarily deprived your wife of your company." Erasmus remarked at the beginning of the second letter, already cited above, he would greatly rejoice if everyone in Mountjoy's household were well, especially his wife and father-in-law. In the third, Erasmus noted that he was glad to see his lordship although "naturally preoccupied" with his marriage, was still concerned with "sound learning."[96]

Erasmus's work, *Matrimonii encomium*, in favor of marriage, was probably composed to please Mountjoy, when he was about to be married in 1499. It was published in 1518 and again in 1521 with a treatise opposing matrimony. In the first study, Erasmus praised the companionate marriage and recommended husbands train their wives carefully, for this instruction would insure marital harmony.[97] Later, in the colloquy, "The Godly Feast," first printed in 1522, Erasmus's fictitious character, Timothy, stated that we are to blame if our "wives are bad... we choose bad ones... or don't train and control them as we should."[98] Thus, when in his letter to von Hutten, Erasmus referred to More's instruction of both Jane and Alice, he was praising him for following the humanist principles that he had recommended to Mountjoy more than 20 years earlier.

Before Erasmus left England in late 1499, Mountjoy also encouraged him to complete the *Adagia*, which was published on his return to Paris. It and subsequent editions were dedicated to his lordship, who was a learned man, although obviously not a scholar of More's caliber. The "Marriage" colloquy did not refer to the nobleman as a great scholar and humanist, but only as a "well educated" and "clever" man. In a letter to Mountjoy in 1508, however, Erasmus, was willing to flatter his patron with the following words: "*inter doctos noblissimus, inter nobiles doctissimus, inter vitrosque optimus*." R. A. B. Mynors and D. F. S. Thomson have translated this as "most noble of scholars, most scholarly of nobleman and in both classes the best."[99]

In 1505, Mountjoy invited Erasmus to return to England, offering him a place to stay. His visit was brief, from probably early autumn 1505 until June 1506.[100] Much of his time was spent in London, visiting at Mountjoy's mansion in Castle Baynard Ward and preparing with More an edition of works by the Greek satirist Lucian. He could have observed at this time that Mountjoy's marriage with Elizabeth was a success. It is unclear whether Erasmus was still in England when she died, sometime before June 29, 1506, since he left for Paris earlier that month.

As these biographical sketches indicate, identifying Jane More or Lady Mountjoy as the anonymous woman requires more stretching of the known facts about Jane than about her ladyship. Erasmus's colloquy, first published in 1523, might have been built on a modicum of truth; however, if either woman was, in fact, his prototype, the years since their death, Jane's perhaps in 1511 and Lady Mountjoy's in 1506, would have made recalling small details a challenge. When considering the passage of time,

the advantage lies definitely with Lady Mountjoy as his model. While he could easily have forgotten with which relatives the bride stayed while her husband hunted with her father, Erasmus would have known in 1523, that, unlike Lord Mountjoy, Thomas More was not a peer and had only recently been knighted.

Regardless of which woman seems the better inspiration for Erasmus's recalcitrant bride, it is best to return Jane and Lady Mountjoy to the status that they enjoyed until 1918 and 1983, respectively. The incomplete records of their lives seem to reveal that they were obedient, loyal, and silent companions to their husbands, the kind of wife humanists and nonhumanists praised in the prescriptive literature of early-modern Europe.

Chapter 7

Alice More

Historiography

Beginning with William Roper's reminiscences about Thomas More, scholarly attention to his second wife, Alice Middleton, has been more substantial than that to the first one, Jane Colt.

In the 1550s, Roper criticized Alice for failing to appreciate her husband's reasons for challenging Henry VIII's royal supremacy. Identifying her as the anonymous women in some of Thomas's jests, Nicholas Harpsfield later condemned her as the quintessential shrew. As though these interpretations were not defamatory enough, in 1906, Percy Allen claimed that a Greco-Roman mythological creature in Erasmus's correspondence referred to her. This chapter will reassess these statements and then reveal how some writers, following Allen's lead, have added even more negative evidence to Alice's life story, linking her to shrews, such as Geoffrey Chaucer's Dame Alice and William Shakespeare's Mistress Quickly.[1] In the second part of this chapter, the information in which she is specifically named will be cited to present a more realistic account of her life.

Roper's initial reference to Alice concerned her husband's jest after resigning the lord chancellorship in 1532. Normally, one of More's gentlemen approached Alice in church when the service was over and said, "Madam my lord is gone." To reveal that he was no longer lord chancellor, Thomas, himself, approached Alice and related: "Madam, my lord is gone."[2]

Two years later, after he refused to swear the oath required by the Act of Succession, the preamble of which denied papal jurisdiction, Henry's councilors summoned him for questioning. Expecting never to return home, he changed his parting routine; instead of permitting his wife and children, whom he "tenderly loved," to accompany him to his boat to say good-bye, he "pulled the wicket after him, and shut them all from him."[3]

Roper's next reference to her was in his discussion of Thomas's arrangements for disposing of his estate, dispersing some to Alice, some to Anne Cresacre, his son John's wife, for her jointure, and some to William for Margaret's dowry. Following Thomas's conviction, a statute voided this legal document. Two days after it was drawn up, however, Thomas had released immediately the lands allotted to the Ropers. Since the statute applied only to the first action, they, alone, obtained their share of his estate.[4]

Figure 7.1 78951. Sir Thomas More and his Family, by Rowland Lockey after Holbein, Nostell Priory and Parkland, by kind permission of Lord St. Oswald and the National Trust, ©NTPL/John Hammond. (The individuals in the portrait are Margaret Clement, Elizabeth Dauncey, Sir John More, Anne Cresacre, Sir Thomas More, John More, Henry Patenson, Cecily Heron, Margaret Roper, John Harris, and Lady Alice More).

Finally, Roper presented Alice as a materialistic foil to her spiritually minded husband. When visiting him in the Tower of London, "like a simple, ignorant," and "somewhat worldly" person, she advised him to take the oath as others had done in order to regain his freedom and return to their home, where he could enjoy her and his children's companionship. To his query: "Is not this house . . . as nigh heaven as my own?" she impatiently replied, "Tille valle, Tille valle!"[5]

Nicholas Harpsfield, for whom Roper prepared his account, began his biography of Thomas with the jests of his father, John More. The first was about choosing a wife, an action he compared to a sightless man placing a hand in a sack of snakes and eels, "seven snakes for one eel," and the second was about how many shrews there were. Just one, he explained, and every husband recognized that he was married to her.[6]

Besides repeating Roper's stories, Harpsfield then supplied other material, including Thomas's only extant letter to Alice about theirs and their neighbors' barns that burned down in 1529. In it, Thomas requested that she determine the extent of their neighbors' losses for which they should be completely compensated. He had married Alice, a widow, who

although she was "aged, blunt and rude," he cherished her as if she were a young wife, providing him with children.[7] Harpsfield then characterized her with words based on a letter of Erasmus to Ulrich von Hutten in 1519, without citing his source.[8] Thomas wed her more for supervising his offspring and household than for "bodily pleasure." Even though Alice was materialistic, he instructed her in music lessons and dwelt contentedly with her.[9]

Further embellishing his biography, Harpsfield associated Alice with some anonymous women in Thomas's anecdotes. In the first, Harpsfield claimed that Alice avowed that she had given up all her "shrewdness" when confessing to her priest and would start anew. Second, after observing her draw her hair back severely and pull in her waist tightly, each causing her suffering, her husband allegedly remarked: "If God give you not hell, he shall do you great wrong, for it must needs be your own of very right, for you buy it very dear, and take very great pain therefore." Next, protesting Thomas's lack of ambition, Alice wondered why he did not try to advance himself as others did. When he asked what he should do, she replied that it was best to be in charge: "I would not . . . be ruled where I might rule." Thomas supposedly retorted that he had never seen her "willing to be ruled."[10]

Finally, Harpsfield turned to a woman's visit with a poor prisoner. She complained to him about the jailer's closing his cell door at night, for she would be gasping for breath if a door restrained her. The man replied that he was aware that she shut the doors and windows to her bedchamber every evening: "What difference then as to the stopping of the breath," whether an individual was closed "within or without?"[11]

Thomas Stapleton's biography, published in 1588, had fewer comments about Alice than Harpsfield's. The first reference to her mostly concerned her husband. Stapleton quoted Thomas's message to her concerning the burning of their barns as proof that he cared little for worldly possessions.[12] His next reference to her was only that Thomas had no children with her. Later, he explained her husband's humorous joking style before turning to his resignation as lord chancellor. Stapleton's version differed somewhat from Roper's. Alice was deeply aggrieved to discover that he had resigned, but he had devised this method of telling her "to soften the blow" and to demonstrate how inconsequential that important office was to him. Next, Stapleton related another of Thomas's jokes, reporting that when he was asked why he married two short wives, he responded, he chose the lesser of "two evils."[13]

Finally, Stapleton's discussion of the Tower visit was less condemnatory than Roper's. She was dispatched "to weaken his resolution by soft words and womanly wiles" or to cause him to feel sorry for their family. When begging him not to surrender "his life, which he might yet enjoy for many years," he interrupted her: For how many years do you expect me to live. To her reply, "twenty years," he countered that she negotiated very poorly if she expected him "to exchange eternity for twenty years."[14] Gone from this version are Roper's and Harpsfield's "Tille valle" and "near heaven"

remark. Stapleton also did not mention Thomas's release of his property to the Ropers.

Ro. Ba., probably Sir Robert Basset, a grand-nephew of Roper's daughter Mary Basset, offered a slightly different version of Thomas's announcement of his resignation as lord chancellor. In response to "my Lord is gone," she replied: "I am glad . . . you are so merrily disposed." After realizing that he was informing her of his loss of office, she "brooked it as a woman; he was himself, always the same, merry, wise and constant."[15]

Basset also added a new story. Alice was said to have obtained a little dog stolen from a poor woman who demanded its return. Thomas inquired if the disputants would permit him to decide who its owner was. Gaining their permission, he asked both women to summon the dog, which naturally went to the poor woman. After giving the pet to her and presenting her with a coin, Thomas requested that she relinquish the animal to Alice. Pleased with his gift and statements, the woman transferred the dog to her.[16]

Next, Basset revealed that the anonymous women whom Harpsfield associated with Alice were lifted from her husband's *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, composed at the Tower in 1534–1535. In his biography, Basset then repeated three of them;[17] however, he later added that Thomas had so much improved her character that the two were probably dwelling comfortably together in heaven.[18]

Cresacre More included additional information about Alice in his seventeenth-century study. When Thomas began courting her for another man, she recommended he woo her for himself. If she had not suggested this course of action, Cresacre thought, Thomas probably would never have thought to marry her. In 1891, Thomas Bridgett speculated that Cresacre had invented this anecdote to offset Roper's claim of Thomas's preferring Jane's younger sister. [19]

Next, Cresacre credited Erasmus's correspondence for Harpsfield's information about Alice that was repeated in subsequent histories.[20] He then inserted two new stories. As to her attitude toward money, he related that she was often "penny-wise, and pound-foolish, saving a candle's end, and spoiling a velvet gown."[21] The other addition was somewhat odd. When Thomas started to criticize "her dressing," Alice scolded her girls for not noticing this problem. He then supposedly questioned them: "Do you not perceive that your mother's nose stands somewhat awry?" These words angered her, but he was trying "to make her think the less of her decay of honor" that had greatly distressed her.[22]

Finally, he noted that she was evicted from her Chelsea home and her goods were confiscated. She received only a pension of £20, an inadequate amount for "a Lo: Chancellor's Lady,"[23] thus expressing some sympathy for her plight.

In honoring More's martyrdom, Roper and Stapleton supplied information about Alice that can mostly be accepted as factual, albeit the former's interpretation was more negative than the latter's. The

anecdotes in the other biographies should be excised from her history. They were invented, perhaps based on unverifiable rumors, or lifted from *A Dialogue of Comfort's* stock medieval characters.[24]

One reason for disassociating Thomas's "merry tales" with Alice is they contradicted Erasmus's description of his joking habits in *The Praise of Folly* in 1509 as follows: "The life of married couples is supported and sustained by flattery, laughing things off . . . being deceived."[25]

Earlier, in a message to Richard Whitford, Erasmus remarked: Thomas has "a great deal of wit" that is "good-natured."[26] The anonymous "merry tales" are neither good-natured nor merry nor flattering, and sometimes pointedly cruel.

They should also be rejected as evidence for Alice's life because they were eclectically taken from Thomas's works. Harpsfield failed to cite all the antifemale anecdotes in *A Dialogue of Comfort*,[27] ignoring one that no biographer seems to have associated with Alice, concerning a woman whose servant feared her mistress's anger.[28]

Three authors have validated two other jests from *A Dialogue of Comfort,* also ignored by Harpsfield. Edith M. G. Routh and Leslie Paul agreed that the following "merry tale" applied to Alice.[29] An anonymous woman claimed that she was satisfied that her husband should "have all the words," for after she spoke them, she gave them "all to him." More recently, Gerard Wegemer applied to Thomas and Alice the other ignored tale that identified a married couple's different gardening goals: he wished for good "weather" to grow his grain, and she wanted "rain" to nourish her vegetables.[30]

Only four of More's biographers have failed to associate Alice with the anecdotes in *A Dialogue of Comfort*.[31] All others selected at least one of its tales, none citing all of them. After referring to two anonymous women, identified by Harpsfield as Alice, Ernest Reynolds admitted that they were "applied to her without any firm reason for doing so." He explained: "Such tales may have come to More's ears in many ways, or he may have invented them. Need we assume that every women he mentions is Mistress More?" Nevertheless, Reynolds later treated the tale about the woman's objecting to the jailer's closing the door on the prisoner as though it described More's Tower cell.[32]

Harpsfield associated Alice with Thomas's "merry tales" only in *A Dialogue of Comfort*. Despite citing John More's jokes, repeated in Thomas's *A Dialogue of Heresies,* he ignored the references there to "My lady." More's modern biographers have likewise shown little interest in those references in that dialogue, edited by Thomas Lawler, Germain Marc'hadour, and Richard Marius. They identified More as the host who had a lengthy discussion with a visitor, presumably at Chelsea. If the host were More, then his references to "My lady" had to mean Alice. When the guest wished to continue their discussion, More responded that they should eat first, because "My lady" would be unhappy with him for keeping their visitor so long from dinner. He then opined that if he were more like her, he should

think more about what they were discussing "and eat no meat for longing to know," seeming to indicate that she wished to offer appropriate hospitality to their guest, not that she, herself, was eager to dine. Later, as the two men discussed the priesthood, More began: "But were I pope." The visitor interrupted to remark that he wished More were pope, and "my lady your wife popess, too." Agreeing, More said that she could reform the nuns while he attended to the priests.[33] In contrast, More's biographers have preferred to define Alice as entirely materialistic. The editors of the *Heresies'* dismissed as "conventional" More's characterization of the lady, they accepted as Alice, although asserting that she had some reason to be "perturbed" with him and his visitor.[34]

Associating her with the anonymous women has continued to tempt scholars, who have added to Harpsfield's list some from More's other writings. Elsie Hitchcock identified Alice as the woman who refused to heed her husband's science lesson in *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*. Its modern editors, L. A. Schuster, Richard Marius, James Lusardi, and Richard Schoeck validated Hitchcock's opinion,[35] although the rejection of her husband's guidance appears to have contrasted sharply with Erasmus's remarks to von Hutten about Thomas's fashioning of Alice into a companion whom "he could make . . . do anything."[36]

Garry Haupt, editor of *a Treatise upon the Passion*, applied two of More's comments to Alice. One was the story of the woman who thought that her "broad forehead" made her look attractive, but an observer saw only her "crooked nose." Haupt also associated Alice with the woman in More's reference to St. Paul, who knew that if a wife were permitted to speak, "she will have so many words herself, that her husband" will have none.[37] This second tale contradicted More's version in *A Dialogue of Comfort*. The woman there let her husband possess the words.

Scholars have no means to sort out which women in these numerous "merry tales," if any, were modeled on Alice. Either she must be identified as the player in all of them, a method resulting in contradictory characterizations, or she must not be associated with any of them. The better choice is the second one, the rejection of all these anonymous women as evidence for her life.

Identifying Alice as the shrewish women actually ignores contemporary hierarchical and gender protocols. While writers, such as More, repeated antifemale stories, it would have been unusual and even self-incriminating publicly to name their wives as shrews. If an author joked about his wife's behaving as a shrew, he would have been admitting his incapacity to enforce his headship of the household. In Erasmus's colloquy, "The Godly Feast," cited previously in the chapter on Jane (Chapter 6), the male character stated: "It's our own fault that our wives are bad." Either men married bad wives, or they neglected to educate them.[38] Thomas's joking even privately about Alice's shrewishness, furthermore, would have undermined her household authority. The whole point of their marriage, at least according to Erasmus, was for him to secure a wife on whom he could rely to raise

his children and to manage his household. Erasmus actually recalled how positively Alice responded to Thomas's instruction.

As if relating More's "merry tales" to Alice had not defamed her enough, Percy Allen misinterpreted a Greek phrase in a letter sent by Andreas Ammonius to his friend, Erasmus, at Cambridge University. Born at Lucca, Ammonius had moved to England by 1506. Three years later, he began serving as William, fourth Lord Mountjoy's secretary and lodging at More's house.[39]

In his Latin epistle, dated October 27, 1511, Ammonius explained to Erasmus that he had just moved into the hospital of St. Thomas of Acon, where he was no happier than at the Barge. After criticizing English housekeeping, he said that at least he would no longer have to see something described by five untranslatable Greek words. In 1901, when Francis Nichols translated this letter, he included the garbled Greek phrase exactly as it was printed, explaining that he could not guess "to what deficiency in the English houses Ammonius complained."[40]

As he prepared Erasmus's Latin letters for publication, Allen decided that Ammonius was complaining about Alice's behavior. In 1985,[41] I pointed out how Allen manipulated the garbled Greek words. He substituted *ramphos*, meaning "crooked or hooked beak" for the nonexistent noun, *romphon* (of course, transliterations).[42] He also changed another word, an undecipherable adjective, to the Greek word for crooked. Technically, his translation referred to the crooked, crooked beak of the harpy.

The Greek harpy was not a linguistic ancestor of the English harper, which has Anglo-Saxon origins. The latter refers to someone who dwells upon a subject, speaks frequently, or who plays a harp. Some confusion has existed about how to define Ammonius's harpy. In 1968, for example, Reynolds admitted that Ammonius's statement was rude, but Alice might have "used her tongue to get him out of the house."[43]

In Greek mythology, the "storm winds," "fast movements," and "snatchers" of children in Homer's epics emerged in later works as more well defined creatures, as "death-demons" or "harpies." The Homeric tradition named three harpies: Okypete, Aello, and Celaeno. In his work, Apollonius Rhodius identified them as agents of a vengeful Zeus sent to punish Phineus. Whenever he attempted to eat, these demons swooped down, grabbing his food, and leaving behind befouled scraps. Roman writers also referred to harpies. Virgil described their greedy, plundering ways, their foul odor, their movement with the wind, and their association with death. Greek artists depicted harpies as women with wings, but Romans referred to them as birds with women's pale faces. In early-modern Europe, the usual description of harpies recalled Virgil's views; they were winged creatures with maiden faces, pale with hunger, their bellies dropping filth, and with clawed hands.[44]

Besides Ammonius's letter, several other references to harpies as greedy or as thieves can be found in Erasmus's writings. In his adage, "To Extract Tribute from the Dead," printed in 1515, Erasmus, when referring to priests,

princes, and those who took fees from "the dead," labeled the collectors of tithes on wine as "harpies." Later, Erasmus called "harpies" the creatures who preyed upon the goods of the deceased. He seems to have meant the Augustinians, who, if they were to learn how he planned to bequeath his estate, might attempt to seize it from his legatees. As a member of the Augustinian order, Erasmus's estate belonged to it and not to him.[45] All harpies in Erasmus's writings, when their sex can be determined, were male.

Later, in *Utopia*, Thomas More, seemingly agreeing with Erasmus, had Hythodaeus refer to Celaenos, an ancient harpy, as *rapaces* or greedy.[46] Indeed, the parts of their bodies most frequently mentioned were their talons not their noses or beaks. Alice More neither acted like them nor looked like them. She did not swoop down upon her new husband's household to plunder, since she brought with her a widow's jointure and inheritance and cared for his four children.

The question of whether Alice had a crooked or hooked nose is also important because contemporaries associated that feature with a scold's appearance. In Hans Holbein the Younger's rendition of the More family, the first great work of secular portraiture in Northern Europe, he painted Alice with a nose unlike the crooked one of a bird, for example, a vulture. So popular has Allen's suggestion about Alice as the harpy become that Richard Marius even suggested that Holbein might have misrepresented her features with "a little discreet retouching." Perhaps, Marius recalled that some writers have claimed that Holbein deceived Henry VIII by painting Anne of Cleves as more beautiful than she actually was. An English diplomat, Nicholas Wotton, present at her brother's court in 1539, however, noted that the portrait was an exact image of her.[47] More specifically about Holbein's painting of Alice, in a letter to Erasmus, Thomas lauded the artist's skills.[48]

The first More biographers accepting Alice as the harpy were Edith Routh and R. W. Chambers.[49] After 1935, only three biographers have failed to associate Alice with Ammonius's creature. One of those three, however, James Monti identified her as the woman with the "memorable" crooked nose, citing an anecdote from More's *Treatise on Passion*.[50] Even Ruth Norrington, the author of the only full-length biography of Alice, agreed that she was Ammonius's harpy but believed the description was "grossly exaggerated."[51]

Allen offered no evidence to prove that Alice was the harpy because none exists. He did not know whether the garbled Greek resulted from a printer's error or from someone's decision to skew the words. Perhaps, the garbled Greek was an ongoing private joke. On September 16, 1511, less than one month before Ammonius complained about the harpy, Erasmus, at Cambridge since August, sent him a letter, admitting that he was amused by his friend's earlier "Greek note." Then, Erasmus added, "*Inquissimus sim, nisi Moro dem veniam tam seriis occupato negociis*." Translations vary. Chambers's version was as follows: "I should be to blame, indeed, if I did not forgive More, considering how pressed he is just now." Chambers

speculated More had failed to write to Erasmus because he was anxious about Jane's illness.[52]

Another stream of negativism about Alice has emerged in modern scholarship. In early-modern England, although dame was the appropriate title for a knight's wife, the custom was spreading to address her as lady, for example, Lady More rather than Dame Alice. In the United Kingdom, of course, dame still is an honorable title, but in the United States, where aristocratic titles are illegal, it has acquired a slang usage. Whether deliberately to vilify her or not, American experts on More's writings began selectively calling her Dame Alice, not only associating her with American slang but also linking her to Geoffrey Chaucer's Dame Alice in *The Canterbury Tales*. In 1998, Peter Ackroyd referred to this literary connection: "Alice More, or 'Dame Alice' as she has come to be known, has always been a stock figure of fun for More's biographers." He even credited Thomas for encouraging "the impression he had married a woman whose temperament lay somewhere between the Wife of Bath and Noah's Wife in the guild pageants."[53]

All authors who published their biographies of More in the United States between 1947 and 1995, except for Gerard Wegemer, referred to her as Dame Alice, even anachronistically. For example, when discussing her conversation with the parish priest, Father John Bouge, a Carthusian, about one year after her marriage to Thomas, perhaps 1512, John Farrow and Jasper Ridley addressed her as "Dame Alice." Her husband was not knighted, of course, until 1521.[54]

In many book indexes she is listed as "Dame Alice." The indexers of The Complete Works of St. Thomas More, for instance, used the "D" of Dame rather than the "A" of Alice to alphabetize her name. Thus, in the *Heresies*, the "D" of Dame causes Alice to be placed after Cecily in the More lineup, as though she were christened Dame Alice.[55] Except for St. Thomas More, the other names lack titles. Finally, in Roper's study, edited by Richard Sylvester and Davis Harding, only the commentary and notes referred to her as "Dame." Roper addressed her as "Mistress Alice" and "my lady his wife."[56]

More's biographers, beginning with Roper, began this vilification of Alice. Stapleton offered the most reasonable portrait of her, which reflected the opinions of many English exiles acquainted with her. Modern scholars have chosen, instead, to draw upon her husband's writings and Erasmus's correspondence to identify her as the quintessential shrew and as a Greco-Roman mythological creature. Even indexers have joined in the challenge to ridicule Alice. It is now time to turn to the facts of her life and prove the invalidity of these negative conceptualizations.

Alice More's Life

Until recently, little was known about Alice before her marriage to Thomas, except she was the widow of John Middleton and had two daughters.

Following a heraldic trail, Norrington discovered that she belonged to the Ardern family of Essex.[57] Her maternal grandparents were Sir Peter Ardern, who died in 1467, and his wife Katherine Bohun. Peter, a chief baron of the exchequer and justice of the king's bench, erected a family chapel in the Church of St. Mary-at-Latton, near his manor of Markhall.

The second of their two daughters was Elizabeth, who married three times: Sir John Skeiner, Sir Richard Harpur of Eppington, and Sir Andrew Dymoke, baron of the exchequer. She had children only with Harpur, who, when he died in 1492, possessed the manor of Latton adjacent to Markhall, which had served as their home. She gave birth to four infants, three boys and, perhaps in 1475, a daughter named Alice. Norrington noted that the "distinctive ornament" that Elizabeth wears on the brass at Latton Church seems "identical to the oval medallion with pendants" that Alice wears in Holbein's sketch of the More family.[58]

When Alice married John Middleton is unknown, but since her father failed to mention her in his will in 1492, she was probably already wed. The Middletons and the Arderns owned property in Yorkshire and had intermarried; thus John was Alice's cousin. He belonged to the branch of the family in possession of Stockeld Park, Yorkshire, the arms of which appear on the tomb of Alice's namesake daughter and her second husband, Sir Giles Alington, at Horseheath Church, Cambridge.

A wealthy silk merchant, Middleton was a member of both the Mercers' Company and the Staple of Calais.[59] In his will, dated October 4, 1509, and proved on November 11, he named Alice and Nicholas Mattock, mercer, coexecutors and requested burial in the Church of St. Katherine's Coleman. Alice was probably pregnant, since he made a bequest for the "infant being within the womb" of his wife "if God provide" and hoped it would be a boy. The specific outcome of the pregnancy is unknown, but Alice did not take a small child with her to More's home. Besides his widow, who inherited a large estate from him, John was survived by two daughters, Alice and Helen, each bequeathed £100 for her dowry.[60]

After Jane's death, when Thomas More hastened to remarry, he surely selected a wife from his acquaintances. He might have chosen Alice because of her experience in managing a household and raising children, but he must have had other reasons as well. As a mercer, he was likely aware of the considerable property she possessed.[61] He must also have believed that she was a godly woman. In 1530, Thomas and she were both to join the Fraternity of Christ Church, Canterbury, expressing their devotion to St. Thomas Becket and the cathedral.[62]

When Alice and Thomas met is unknown. In March 1509, the mercers voted to make him free of their company, as they needed him to represent those members who were Merchant Adventurers in negotiations with the Pensionary of Antwerp. He was shortly to arrive at Mercers' Hall but could not speak English.[63] Whether Middleton, a Stapler rather than an Adventurer, was at the March meeting when More received company freedom is also unknown. Although his will was dated October 4, he could

have been ailing for sometime or could have fallen sick that autumn. Contemporaries usually had their wills drawn up when they were ill enough to suspect that they were dying. As livery companies directed funeral observances for their members, if More were not acquainted with Alice before her husband's demise, he would have had opportunities thereafter. Mercers were fined for not attending the company's formal processions or interments. The More and Middleton families had probably known each other for some time, since Thomas's father, John, married two mercers' widows.[64] Members of these companies socialized at special events not only with their own members but also with those of other liveries. In 1519, for example, Alice and her namesake daughter were guests at the Grocers' supper for the election of its livery.[65]

The evidence for how soon after Jane's death Thomas wed Alice is in a letter written in 1535 by the parish priest, Father John Bouge, who recalled that within a month after Jane's funeral, Thomas came to see him one Sunday night with a license from Cuthbert Tunstall, commissary-general of the prerogative court of Canterbury, to dispense with the banns for his marriage to Alice Middleton. The dispensation had cost ten shillings.[66] The next morning Bouge married them, probably at the church door, which was the usual place for weddings. The question remains, when did this ceremony take place?

It is unfortunate that in Erasmus's extant correspondence with Ammonius, neither writer mentioned Jane's death. Adopting Allen's identification of Alice as the harpy, subsequent scholars have assumed that Alice, as Thomas's new wife, forced Ammonius to move from the Barge in October 1511. As she was not the harpy, she did not insist on Ammonius's departure.

Thomas could have remained relatively quiet about marrying Alice. Unlike first weddings, elaborate festivities did not accompany them, as religious and social attitudes about remarriages, sometimes labeled bigamous, could be negative. Thomas, himself, described them as bigamous. Later, Cresacre referred to his great-grandfather as bigamous because he had married twice.[67] In their wills, some husbands requested their widows remain unmarried and raise their offspring in honor of their fathers.

If Alice were born in 1475, she was 36, at least three years older than Thomas. This age gap would have led friends to assume that he selected her to care for his children rather than to have more offspring. That his wife was older than he was not a rarity in early-modern England. Peter Laslett has determined that a relatively large proportion of husbands were younger than their spouses.[68]

Perhaps, neither Ammonius nor Erasmus learned about the wedding until some weeks after it occurred. Having returned to Cambridge by October 5, after a short round-trip to London, Erasmus wrote on November 11 to Ammonius, who had left the Barge by October 27, with a message to give Thomas when he next saw him. On November 18, Ammonius related that he had not seen Thomas, and John More, his brother, had brought Erasmus's

correspondence to him. John served as Thomas's secretary, but did not usually act as Erasmus's courier. Thomas regularly delivered to Ammonius the messages addressed to Erasmus and took from Ammonius to their addressees the letters Erasmus sent to him.[69] John's role as messenger in 1511 could be an indication that Thomas was still settling household matters following his remarriage.

Erasmus thus might not have learned about More's new wife before returning to London in late December or early January. Later, Erasmus explained to von Hutten that Thomas had wed her a few months after Jane's death.[70] The More family tradition specified a longer period between his two marriages. Although aware of Erasmus's letter to von Hutten, Cresacre dated Thomas's marriage to Alice some two or three years after Jane's death.[71] Probably, Thomas and Alice did not emphasize to their children and friends the short time between Jane's funeral and their wedding. This speedy ceremony would have astonished even friends that were aware of his need for assistance in managing a household with four children between the ages of about two and six. Certainly, it was one of the events of Thomas's life that Father Bouge remembered.

A reasonable guess about the sequence of events is that More failed to correspond with Erasmus in September because Jane was dying. Erasmus may even have returned to London for her funeral. On October 5, back at Cambridge, he informed Ammonius how sorry he was to have missed seeing him at the More home, when he arrived there from church. It is odd that Erasmus referred to the presence at the Barge of his friend, the physician, Thomas Linacre, who later founded the College of Physicians, but not to that of More or any other household member. Perhaps, the family was mourning privately or still at church. Besides inaccurately noting the lapse of time between Jane's death and More's remarriage, Cresacre claimed that Thomas was wed to his first wife for six years. Given the above explanations, it does seem plausible the length of their union was six years.[72] Unlike the issue of how soon Thomas wed Alice after Jane's burial, the duration of his first marriage could have been preserved without controversy in the family tradition.

If not Alice, who was the harpy? Probably, Ammonius's Greek statement in October built upon a Greek joke in September, since Erasmus seems to have needed no further explanation about it. If Jane were, as is likely, ill in September, then the harpy might have been either a member of the medical or clerical professions, perhaps even Father Bouge. Erasmus viewed both groups as avaricious and greedy: They were his harpies.[73] Although in his adage, "To Exact Tribute from the Dead," Erasmus did not identify the clergy specifically as harpies, he complained that unless parishioners paid money to priests, they could not receive the holy sacraments.[74]

That Alice was inhospitable to her husband's guests is based largely, but not entirely, on the belief that she was the harpy who forced Ammonius from the Barge. He was not a guest in the sense of being a freeloader,

however. He must have been a lodger, paying for his room and board. With a family of four children and only part of the Barge available in 1511, More could not have afforded to keep free of charge a long-term guest like Ammonius, especially as he was employed.

Usually, even guests contributed to their upkeep. In 1535, for example, Thomas, Lord Berkeley, and his wife, Anne, defrayed the cost of their board and their servants while staying at the home of Elizabeth, Lady Wiltshire, Anne Boleyn's mother. In 1511, Erasmus expressed this view when regretting that William Grocyn had refused to accept compensation for his earlier visit.[75] Thus, it was likely that Ammonius was obliged to leave More's household because of its mistress's death. He departed belatedly, since adequate housing in London was scarce.

Erasmus also had trouble locating a room for the winter season, 1511–1512. In messages to Ammonius, Erasmus differentiated between his patrons, like Mountjoy and William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, from whom he expected financial assistance and his friends, like William Grocyn, Bernard André, the blind French poet, and Thomas More, for whom he must have anticipated defraying the costs of his residence. When Erasmus accepted Mountjoy's invitation to visit England in May 1509, he assumed that his lordship or some patron, possibly Henry VIII, would provide him funding, thus freeing him to devote his time to scholarship. Instead, by August 1511, Erasmus had to accept employment at Cambridge University.[76]

Erasmus must have been surprised to learn about the second marriage of Mountjoy, whose first wife died in 1506. By the end of July 1509, perhaps just before Erasmus reached England, Mountjoy married Agnes de Venegas, a Spanish lady and a member of Katherine of Aragon's household.[77] In October, Henry reactivated Mountjoy's appointment as lieutenant of the castle of Hammes, near Calais, an office that forced him frequently to be abroad. Meanwhile during the summer of 1509 while suffering from an attack of kidney stones, Erasmus worked on *The Praise of Folly* at More's house. A few weeks later, he must have moved into the London home of Mountjoy and his new wife, but no correspondence between December 1508 and April 1511 has survived to verify his whereabouts. It is possible that he purposely suppressed his letters. He could have, in fact, made negative comments about Mountjoy or someone in his household that he did not wish to be made public.[78]

Perhaps in early 1510, after his patron's departure for Hammes, Erasmus left Mountjoy's home because of someone there he denounced as Cerberus. In the autumn of 1511, while still at Cambridge, he considered returning to Mountjoy's home when he arrived from Hammes for the winter season, but finally decided that the Cerberus was so detestable that his lordship's presence would not provide an adequate buffer.

Cerberus was the name of the mythological Greco-Roman dog with three heads that stood guard at Hades.[79] Because of its occupation, writers have assumed that Erasmus's Cerberus was a doorkeeper or steward.[80] It

seems unlikely, given hierarchical protocols, that Erasmus would have hesitated to correct or silence a servant of Mountjoy's, especially if his lordship were in residence. Actually, it was Cerberus's barking that captured the attention of contemporaries. Those condemned as Cerberus were persons perceived as incessantly talking. For example, in 1523, Cuthbert Tunstall, then bishop of London, denounced Martin Luther as a Cerberus, "whose hideous yelping" attacked the church. Protestants also complained about Catholic orators. In 1549, John ab Ulmis referred to Stephen Gardiner, former Bishop of Winchester, as "that lying and subtle Cerberus," one of many "babblers."[81]

The individual that Erasmus perceived as speaking incessantly might not have known enough Latin to have been able to communicate with him directly but could simply have been talking loudly enough throughout the house to disturb his scholarship and to make him uncomfortable. A likely candidate for Erasmus's wrath was the new Lady Mountjoy. Two of his attitudes suggest that he could have characterized her as Cerberus. He viewed women as loquacious. In 1489, for example, he denounced old women as gossipy and later explained that women employed "their tongues as a weapon in order to relieve their feelings."[82]

His second attitude is more complex. The first denunciation of Spaniards in his correspondence survives from November 26, 1511, when still at Cambridge. In response to Ammonius's concern about French aggression in Italy, Erasmus warned: would you rather have the "Spaniards" rule you or the "Venetians." Erasmus also inquired in this letter if Mountjoy had returned from Hammes. Five years later, in March 1517, Erasmus commented to More about the Spanish humanist, Juan Vives: If you have often seen him, you will be able to understand my anguish, as I have had to deal with many "Spaniards" who "pay their respects," also "Italians and Germans." Unquestionably, he became good friends with Vives, but Erasmus also confessed, he counted learned individuals as "Italians." He subsequently refused two invitations to travel to Spain and later explained to Jacopo Bannisio that at the Brussels court he had been exceedingly bothered by the "pitiless courtesy of the Spaniards." In other letters, he continued criticizing them.[83] Whether or not Lady Mountjoy was Erasmus's Cerberus, his comments actually say more about his prejudice than about the Spanish people, themselves.

It is interesting when he and Ammonius exchanged views about where he could lodge in 1511, they did not mention More's home. The obvious reason was Jane's death, as no evidence suggests that Erasmus was then aware of Alice's existence. He was much less concerned about More's harpy than he was about Mountjoy's Cerberus. Since he did later visit the More family, probably the harpy was no longer at the Barge but Alice certainly was.[84]

In 1980, Conal Condren admitted a problem in rehabilitating Alice's character is the negative evidence that can be found about her in Erasmus's correspondence.[85] It is now time to turn to more of Erasmus's letters and then to the other evidence about her life.

In February 1516, two years after Erasmus departed from England, Thomas sent him a letter, the first to him that has survived, ending it with greetings from Alice. That he forwarded this message to Erasmus, who was planning to visit England in June, Thomas seemed to be indicating that his wife had met his friend, and they had interacted as pleasantly as any male and female acquaintances could, who lacked a common language and similar level of education. As Erasmus began to suffer from a serious illness, he delayed his visit until August.[86]

Reaching London by August 9, he apparently still felt unwell and was possibly in a morose mood after the difficult Channel crossing.[87] Soon he must have become convinced that residing at More's home was adversely affecting his health. On about August 14, he informed Ammonius at Cambridge that two matters would keep him in London, acquiring a "horse" and a reunion with him, if he were not weary of the country and "sentirem me vetulum iam hospitem vxori Moriae sepputere." Essentially, he was explaining to Ammonious that he considered himself a stale guest to More's wife. This was approximately how Nichols translated the phrase a few years before Allen misidentified her as the harpy. Scholars, nevertheless, have generally validated R. A. B. Mynors's and D. F. S. Thomson's somewhat freer and more recent translation. Accepting Allen's claim that Alice was the unnamed "harpy," who forced Ammonius from the Barge, the above translators turned Erasmus's phrase around and had him state that he thought she "resents" his extended visit to her home. It is not likely that he would have associated her attitude with his length of stay, since he had been in London for only a few days.[88] Wedding plans might actually have complicated his visit, as Alice's namesake daughter might have married her first husband, Thomas Elrington, on August 21, four days after Erasmus reached Rochester, the home of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester.[89]

Erasmus failed to explain why he believed that he had become a "stale" guest, but in other correspondence, he denounced English housekeeping, describing for example, in 1518, to John Francis, a physician of Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, why English houses were not properly ventilated. They were structured so that fresh air could not flow into them, since large portions of their walls were composed of "latticed windows that admit unhealthy draughts." He always became sick after entering English buildings.[90] On their floors they spread clay and then rushes, which they refreshed occasionally but left a bottom tier, perhaps for 20 years, with unsavory excrements. He also denounced the English diet of salted foods and beer that brought on his kidney stone attacks.[91]

Having just recovered from an illness, Erasmus probably began to feel unwell again at More's house. In the August heat, London chambers without appropriate ventilation could be stifling. Even so, his comment was not totally positive. Despite being unable to communicate directly with her, beyond perhaps a few basic words, he could have thought that he had been too demanding and that he was imposing too much on her hospitality.

Occasionally, because of his bad health and strict diet, Erasmus did express concerns about being a nuisance. For example, in 1522, he informed Konrad Heresback, that he had been a "troublesome" guest when he stayed with friends at Constance.[92] Finally, the possibility exists that Erasmus's statement to Ammonius in 1516 was an attempt to excuse his failure to remain in London and meet with his friend.

That Erasmus also commented negatively about staying with Fisher at Rochester provides a context for his remarks about Alice. By August 17, he had reached the home of Fisher, who, Erasmus informed Ammonius, had pleaded with him to remain for ten days. Erasmus regretted having accepted this invitation, since he wished to return immediately to the continent. The problem was not Fisher's hospitality but his house and grounds.[93]

Eight years later when Fisher was ill, Erasmus reported to him what he thought caused his friend's sickness. His house was unhealthy because of its location near the sea where low tides carried in mud. Moreover, his library's windows had narrow openings that released "filtered" air into the room, endangering his health.[94] This letter actually provided the reason for his earlier regret at having promised to stay at Rochester for ten days. He believed that English houses, undoubtedly More's as well as Fisher's, were undermining his health.

It is time to discard the widespread belief that Percy Allen initiated that she sought to chase her husband's humanist guests from her home. Clearly, she was not Ammonius's harpy in 1511, and Erasmus's Latin phrase in 1516 need not be given its now-popular negative translation. Scholars should also consider, when evaluating her relationship with Thomas's friends, that in the *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, as noted above, he explained to his unnamed guest, with whom he had been conversing at length concerning religious reform, that his "lady" wished to offer him hospitality and provide him with a meal at the appropriate time. Thomas also commented that she, herself, would prefer discussing religion to eating meals. Later, after dinner, the visitor complimented her godliness, even suggesting that she should become the "popess."[95]

Most of Erasmus's other references to her were favorable, but those that were not usually referred to her looks and age, traits for which she was not personally responsible. From Calais on August 27, shortly after leaving Fisher's residence, he informed Johann Reuchlin about revisiting his English friends and finding them more amiable than before. Although he might not have characterized Alice as a friend, certainly he seemed appreciative of English attempts at hospitality. Two months later, he sent his respects to More, his "dearest" friend, "to you and yours." The next year, Erasmus was even more enthusiastic about More's family whom he had praised to Pieter and Cordelia Gilles, his Antwerp hosts. He sent regards to More and his "delightful wife" and children and noted that his hosts also forwarded warm wishes to Thomas and Alice.[96]

His next reference to Alice, in his letter of 1518 to More, was rather odd; if he were serious, he pictured Alice as a pious woman. He claimed Leo X, who favored a crusade to recover Constantinople from the Ottoman Turks, had forbidden the wives of husbands absent at war to put on cosmetics or sport jewelry and had imposed a fasting regimen on them. The wives of men who remained at home were required to follow those same directives. In addition, they could not occupy beds with their spouses or kiss them. Although some wives would deplore these rules, Erasmus believed that More's lady in her wisdom and devotion to the Christian religion "would obey and gladly, too."[97] The focus of his letter was less on Alice than on the pope's militaristic attitude.

In 1519, Erasmus wrote the now-famous letter to von Hutten, previously discussed. He noted that Alice was not beautiful or young, as More, himself, said, but a skillful housewife. He continued: "Few husbands receive as much obedience from their wives by severity…as he did by his kindness and his merry humor. He could make her do anything."[98] Her most negative trait, her inflexibility, had not prevented her from learning to play several instruments to please her husband, including the zither, lute, monochord, and recorder. How Alice felt about those lessons, is unknown, but it is possible that she enjoyed playing the first instrument so much that Thomas decided to teach her to play the others. Richard Pace noted that Thomas "played the flute" with her.[99]

In 1521, Erasmus referred to Alice's oversight of her stepdaughters' education in a letter to Guillaume Budé. Affirming that her abilities were "in mother-wit and experience" rather than academic training, he lauded her careful supervision of the household school, assigning lessons to the girls and checking to see they were completed.[100]

At least three more of Erasmus's comments about her have survived, one of which has an unfavorable tone. The first, in 1529, concerned his copy of Holbein's portrait of Alice, which Erasmus told Margaret Roper he planned to "kiss," since he could not "kiss" her "honoured" stepmother directly.[101] The second, with both positive and negative comments, he wrote to Quirinus Talesius in 1532, five months after More's resignation as lord chancellor. More had assured him, he related, if he married many times, he would never select a young girl, but then Erasmus went on to remark that his wife was "a little old woman," who had lived too long. If she had died, he mused, More would have been able to woo a rich noblewoman.[102] After mentioning her husband's implicit compliment, Erasmus lamented Alice's longevity. His concerns were, however, money and status and not her behavior. If Thomas had become a widower before losing royal patronage, he might well have married a wealthy lady. Perhaps, Erasmus expressed frustration about Alice's endurance, because had Thomas enhanced his wealth through a third marriage, he might well have become Erasmus's most trustworthy patron.

Somewhat contradicting his death wish for Alice, two months later in 1532, Erasmus described More's Chelsea household to John Faber,

Bishop of Vienna. Since he never visited Chelsea, he probably obtained his information from a friend. Thomas lived there "happily" with his wife and children. He was so compliant that if he saw something in Alice needing alteration that could not be amended, he set out to treat it as though it were an asset. The members of this household were great readers of literature, but their major concern was "piety."[103]

Now returning to the beginning of her life with Thomas, Alice moved into the Barge probably in late October or early November 1511 with her namesake daughter and began caring for his four children: Margaret, Elizabeth, Cecily, and John. Apparently, Alice's younger child, Helen, died before her remarriage. Besides stating that he officiated at their wedding, Father Bouge commented concerning their spousal relationship. About one year following their ceremony, Alice discovered that her husband wore a rough hair shirt that bloodied his back. Wondering who washed it, she requested Bouge to advise him to cease wearing it.[104] If Bouge complied with her wishes, Thomas did not heed him because Roper claimed that his wife Margaret cleaned it for her father.[105] In 1512, when she was seven years old, Margaret was probably not completing this task for him. Thomas must have been trusting a female servant to wash it for him.

Its existence, in addition to Erasmus's denying that Thomas married Alice for "pleasure," has raised questions about their sexual relationship.[106] No speculation about whether they lived a celibate life will be made here, but some social and religious contexts will be provided. It is not known when he first donned the hair shirt; the practice could have predated his marriage to Alice. According to Thomas Stapleton, who spoke with emigres from the More household, Thomas did not wear it every day, usually only on "Fridays, the vigils of the saints, and the Ember Days."[107] It is also noteworthy that the church expected spouses to pay the marital debt to each other. If a husband desired celibacy, he had to obtain his wife's permission and with her swear vows to that effect before a church official. Father Bouge made no mention of any such vows. Whether or not they lived a celibate life, they shared the same bed; in 1534, he sent regards to Alice, "his good bedfellow." That they slept together was a tradition in the More family. Cresacre referred to Thomas lying by her side in bed.[108]

By August 1516, when Erasmus last visited the More home, Thomas had developed a relationship with his second wife that suited him. Earlier that year, in February, shortly after returning from a mission to Flanders, he had explained to Erasmus that diplomatic employment was better for priests, who had no wives or children, than it was for laymen, who while absent from home, yearned "for our wives and families." He also lamented that he had to pay for two households, one abroad and one in England, but the crown only compensated him for his official entourage.[109]

Alice seems to have responded to her husband's jests with witticisms of her own. In a December 1516 letter to Erasmus, who had written the

previous August that he was a stale guest in her home, Thomas related:

> My wife bids me send you a thousand greetings, and I am to thank you for your highly polished message, in which you wished her a long life. She is all the more eager for this, she says because she can plague me all the longer.[110]

She, not her husband, made herself the butt of this joke. Apparently, in a letter no longer extant, after his short, unpleasant visit to London in August, Erasmus had sent a kind message to Alice.

One reason why Thomas probably felt comfortable with Alice was her affection for his children. To one of their tutors, William Gonell, he wrote from court, probably in 1518, testifying to Alice's "maternal love" for them that she had demonstrated in "many ways."[111] This praise is all the more significant because of stepparents' reputations. In his adages Erasmus referred to the tension between stepmothers and stepchildren, claiming that "innate in every stepmother is a sort of predestined . . . hatred for her stepchildren."[112]

The presence in his home, among others, of Margaret Giggs, a foster daughter, of Anne Cresacre, an orphaned heiress who married his son John, and of Margaret Roper, her husband, and first child, caused Thomas to seek larger quarters. He purchased Crosby Place in June 1523 but sold it in January to Antonio Bonvisi of Lucca, deciding to relocate to Chelsea. The date of their move in 1525 to the house he built there is not known; in 1524, they stayed at a farmhouse just southwest of the mansion while it was under construction.[113]

In 1526, Thomas's servant Walter Smith published a treatise called *The Merry Jests of the Widow Edith.* An extremely popular book, its tenth jest described fictional events at More's Chelsea home.[114] Alice, but not Thomas, was in residence. The conning widow Edith bragged about her great wealth to three servants, who were "cast in a heat" to become her husband. When they learned that she had duped them, they mixed purgative medicine in her drink, causing her to become quite ill at a Sunday supper. She needed to leave but was prevented:

> Till my Lady began to have
> pity in her hart
> And for woman's honesty, bade that she should rise . . .[115]

Smith did not clarify in the jest whether Edith had also fooled Alice, but that he pictured his mistress as capable of displaying compassion for a lower-class woman whom household servants had made sick is an interesting comment on her character.

Some information about Alice at Chelsea has already been cited. Holbein finished painting the family portrait there, but unfortunately only his preparatory sketch of it is extant. The original perished in an

eighteenth-century fire, but has survived in three late-sixteenth-century copies. Norrington utilized one of the differences between the sketch and the copies to prove that Alice possessed a strong personality. On the sketch where she was drawn kneeling can be found the words, "this one will sit," and Holbein painted her sitting in the portrait. Norrington speculated that he changed Alice's position because she "objected to kneeling, when all the others were either sitting or standing." In an article on Holbein's sketch and portrait, David Smith interpreted the alterations as part of an overall change in the portrait's conceptualization of the household. Holbein did not, as first intended, show the family at prayer. Smith believed that Thomas probably did not want the portrait's treatment of secular "hierarchy and ceremony to carry over into Christian forms and rituals."[116]

Although at home for this painting, More was often away at Westminster or the king's court, as, for example, when his and his neighbors' barns burned down. The 1529 letter he wrote to Alice from Woodstock was cited by Stapleton to indicate that More was not materialistic.[117] It also stands as evidence of how much he trusted Alice to obey him and to use good judgment in handling their domestic problems. After requesting that she take the household to church and thank God for what he had both granted them and removed from them, he asked her to "devise" what needed to be done to provide food for the family and for "seed" to plant the next year. He hoped to be with her soon when they could consult together about what arrangements to make and signed off as her "loving husband."[118]

In 1529, as lord chancellor, he fined a suitor, who had been involved in an "elaborate deception of another man's wife," £92 in cost and charges. More dismissed his complaint about the fine with the joke that he should explain these issues to Alice. Incredibly, since women did not hold public office as justices, the suitor seems to have appealed to Alice. A year or so later, he petitioned Thomas, Lord Audley, the new lord chancellor, complaining that he presented his case unsuccessfully to Lady More.[119]

Because Henry sought an annulment of his marriage to Katherine of Aragon, life became more complicated for the More family. In all, they lived only seven years at Chelsea before their comfortable world began to disintegrate. In 1532, Thomas resigned as lord chancellor, citing ill-health, but privately concerned about the crown's attack on the church's independence. With a reduced income of about £100 yearly, he could not afford to provide for his large household. Some servants and family members, except for the Ropers, departed. Alice was not personally penniless, however, for although most of her inheritance was probably spent, she still had £30 annually from her Hitchen property in Hertfordshire and her jointure from her first marriage that was placed in trust for her namesake daughter, who had married Sir Giles Alington in 1524 after the death of her first husband.[120]

Although willing to remain silent about opposing the annulment of the king's marriage to Katherine of Aragon, Thomas refused to swear to

the Act of Succession's oath, denying papal jurisdiction in England, which Parliament enacted in 1534. When he refused to take the oath, royal councilors ordered him incarcerated in the Tower of London. Later, Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy, confirming the king as Head of the Church in England and declaring it treason to deny his new title. More was tried, convicted, and executed on July 6, 1535.

After his imprisonment, some family members, at least his wife and daughter, Margaret, visited him in the Tower and also tried to convince him to take the oath. Whether or not Roper's "Tille valle" was Alice's favorite slang expression will never be known for certain. As Roper was not present during her conversation with Thomas, Alice must have repeated the exchange with her husband to her relatives and friends. Most of Thomas's family, including the Ropers, actually wanted him to act as Alice pleaded: Take the oath and retire to Chelsea. James McConica claimed that Margaret's "recorded views are closer to her mother's views than they are to More's"; like most of her relatives, Margaret swore the oath.[121] Thus, Alice's plea to Thomas "seems eminently reasonable."[122] Why, indeed, would his loved-ones desire his execution? This is the view held by those who constructed their narratives about his life and death to justify and honor his martyrdom.

Ultimately, the government prevented him from attending mass and curtailed the visits of family members, but he still exchanged letters with them. Perhaps, officials deprived him of these privileges from the hope that he would swear the oath to obtain the restoration of their visits and his permission to attend mass. Unfortunately, his only extant correspondence with his family was with Margaret, although on her behalf, he might have composed a rather long, complex letter to Alice Alington.[123] In most of his eight letters to Margaret, Thomas mentioned his wife affectionately. In the second, he referred to his sons-in-law's "shrewd wives" and his "shrewd" wife, meaning clever, and asked Margaret to recommend him to several people, but "to my shrewd wife above all." He worried in others that his actions would endanger his family, including his "good wife," and stated that he did not think if crown officers searched the house, the king would permit them to seize Alice's "gay girdle and her golden beads," neither of which were disparaged. He expressed a wish to talk with his friends, "especially" his "wife" and those under his care and, lastly, referred to Alice as his "good bedfellow." In only the first and the final two of the eight extant ones to Margaret did he not include Alice in a list of people to whom his daughter should give his respects. The latter two were written late in his life, the first about a month before his death and the last the day before his execution.[124]

Questions have been raised about why Thomas failed to mention Alice in his eighth letter to Margaret, but since it breaks off, lacking a final sign off statement, like those in the other seven messages, the missing part could well have referred to her.[125] It is also possible that he sent a separate note to Alice. When his correspondence was collected, she was no longer

alive. Perhaps, William Rastell, More's nephew who published his works in 1557, did not have access to her letters, which she could have destroyed before her death. Given Thomas's long absences from home, he surely sent more than the 1529 letter to her.

Before his arrest, Thomas had set out to protect his family from financial ruin because of his refusal to deny papal jurisdiction. In his study, Roper discussed his father-in-law's two legal conveyances. The first, on March 25, granted his land in Chelsea to ten trustees, including John Clement, who were to hold them in a life estate for More and then, after his death, convey them to his designees. These included a jointure for his son's wife, Anne, a marriage portion for Margaret Roper, and widow's support for Alice. Two days later, More seems to have transferred Butts Close at Chelsea, along with a house, barn, and garden, outright to the Ropers. The statutes of attainder passed in 1534 and 1536 nullified only the first conveyance, as Roper reported.[126]

Meanwhile, Alice began requesting financial relief for herself and her household. About December 1534, she addressed a letter to Henry VIII, noting by refusing the oath, her husband forfeited "his goods and chattels and the profits of his lands, annuities and fees" and those of her, his wife, as well. Because a statute not only sustained the former forfeiture but also took all the lands and tenements Henry had granted Thomas, she was petitioning for permission to keep her husband's "moveable goods and the revenues of his lands" to support him in prison and pay for her household expenses. She reminded Henry, she had brought to Thomas "fair substance," which had been spent in royal service; indeed, this complaint has some support from her husband's letter about his embassy to Flanders in which he complained about the king's paying for the diplomatic costs but not for his family's needs. In her petition, Alice also explained that her husband's unwillingness to swear the oath was based on a "long continued and deep rooted scruple, as passed his power to avoid and put away." Finally, she pleaded for his release so that he could "quietly" live out his life with her.[127]

Two months before her husband's execution, Alice wrote to Sir Thomas Cromwell. Financially strapped because she had to pay the costs of her household and 15s. for the board and keep of her imprisoned husband and his servant, she confessed having been forced to sell some of her clothes. She requested assistance for her and her husband in this their sorrowful senior and needy years.[128] Albert Geritz has related that scholars, who have written negatively about her, "overlook the sincere personal concerns for her husband's safety that the petitions to Henry and Cromwell so movingly express."[129]

At More's execution, only Clement's wife, Margaret Giggs, had a license to witness it. On the previous day, when Sir Thomas Pope arrived to inform More when he should die, More asked him if his daughter could be at his burial. Pope, according to Roper, replied that his wife, children, and friends could attend the service.[130] When he was buried at St. Peter

ad Vincula at the Tower, however, only Margaret Roper and her maid, Dorothy Colly Harris, joined Margaret Clement as witnesses. If family members had not already discussed and approved Alice's absence, surely Roper or Harpsfield would have condemned her decision. It is possible that either her frail health at the age of 60 or her emotional condition was the reason for her failure to witness that tragic scene.

Before his death, the enforcement of the first Act of Attainder against Thomas had been delayed because of some irregularity with the oath officials attempted to administer to him. During that interval, Alice seems to have taken the opportunity to increase her income at the crown's expense. Some of their movable property disappeared; when escheators belatedly arrived, they found many missing items that were never recovered. Thomas also permitted Alice to manage a farm at Sutton Court, which he had earlier leased from Richard Pace. To a speculator, John Lane, Alice sold her interest in Sutton Court, as well as several hundred sheep. When Lane paid her only half of the agreed amount, at the advice of her son-in-law, Alington, she petitioned the court of chancery in 1538 to enforce the sale contract, noting that she lacked the necessary written documentation under seal for common law proceedings.[131] Lane's problem was that the Acts of Attainder against More made it illegal for him to have purchased any goods or interest in lands from Alice because they belonged to the crown. If the case went to trial, he might lose much more than the funds already paid to her. Therefore, he arranged with Alington to settle the case out of court.[132]

The crown, which granted her a £20 annual annuity, was kinder to her than was her step-son-in-law, Roper. The annuity was paid regularly until after Edward VI's accession, when it was paid with less "punctilious" care.[133] In the meantime, Henry also allowed her to possess until 1543 a lease of some lands in Battersea obtained by Thomas in 1529. Despite knowing about her claim, Roper acquired the lease of those lands. Again, Alington assisted Alice legally, forcing Roper to compensate her for the loss. Witnesses explained that Alice expressed extreme anger whenever she spoke about Roper's behavior.[134] His actions were all the more disturbing because, as he, himself, admitted, he and Margaret, alone of More's dependants, received a generous share of his estate. He was somewhat duplicitous to complain after her death about her worldliness and materialism while he enjoyed his property, took the oath More refused, and catered to the whims of the government, suffering only brief arrests twice. Elsie Hitchcock, a modern editor of Roper's study, said that he was "of doggedly litigious disposition" when property was at stake.[135]

Since forgeries were extremely common, questions might be asked about the validity of More's release to the Ropers of his property two days after the first conveyance. Only the first document, dated March 25, 1534, has survived.[136] Roper's study of More seems to contain the initial reference to the second one, the release of property to the Ropers, which was cited by subsequent early-modern writers, except for Stapleton. Those who have

written about Roper's life have never produced the actual document that released the property to him and Margaret. Was Roper's purpose in raising the issue to provide proof that More loved Margaret best of all his children or defensively to justify his bounty at the expense of the others, who might have felt snubbed by his acquisition of the property? They might even have wondered why he, or their father, did not help them obtain their shares, as well. It was entirely contrary to early-modern protocol to privilege a daughter over a son, unless he were disloyal, and John was not. It was also always the husband's duty to provide a jointure for his wife.

In his last extant letter to Margaret, Thomas did not refer to the disposition of his property in the paragraph wishing her and her family well. At the end of the message, which has no closure, he sent his regards to his "good son," John, and his wife, "my loving daughter." If John were to obtain his lands he continued, he should honor what had been earmarked for his sister, Elizabeth.[137] Did Thomas realize when writing this statement that some of his property had already gone to the Ropers? We will never know.

Alice faced other tragedies. Giles Heron, husband of Cecily More, was executed for treason in 1540, and her grandson, John Elrington, along with other relatives, including her stepson, John More, was arrested for plotting against the authority of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. To obtain his freedom, John More took the oath to the Act of Succession but her grandson, deemed a traitor, was probably executed. It is ironic that scholars have extolled Margaret's relationship to her father although it was her brother, John, not she, who initially supported his refusal to swear the Act of Succession's oath.[138]

It is not known how long Alice resided in the great house at Chelsea. Cresacre repeated a family tradition that she was turned out of it shortly after Thomas's death.[139] Following the execution of John Larke, the rectory's occupant, for treason in 1544, she was able to lease the rectory for 21 years at a rent of 21s. annually. That the Chelsea Chapel was called Lady More's Chapel probably means that she was buried in its vault. During her research on Alice's life, Norrington discovered the previously unknown year of her death. An entry in the Land Revenue Miscellany Book, 216, noted on April 25, 1551, that she had died.[140]

Years earlier, just after moving to Chelsea, Thomas had Jane's body exhumed and buried in its vault. He wrote the following now-famous epitaph for both his wives:

> The one so lived with me, & the other now so lives, that it is doubtful whether this or the other were dearer unto me. Oh how well could we have lived joined together in matrimony, if fortune and religion would have suffered it. But I beseech our lord that his tomb and heaven may join us together. So death shall give us that thing that life could not.[141]

If he could communicate to the writers who have commented negatively about his wives in order to make him look either more saintly or more misogynist, he surely would call for justice for them.

Even taking into consideration all of Erasmus's comments and Roper's negativism, the evidence indicates that Thomas and Alice had a comfortable relationship that suited them both. She managed his household, cared for his children, and sought to save his life when he was imprisoned. Margaret was a highly educated woman, following her father's wishes, but she and her sisters also learned from Alice the modest and appropriate behavior expected of a gentlewoman and the domestic skills required of a wife and mother. Alice was not a shrew; she obeyed her husband, as her society expected, quite unlike the anonymous women in *A Dialogue of Comfort*. Thomas's biographers and editors should praise her rather than demean her role as his wife. Young and beautiful she was not, but she was a kind, dutiful, pious woman with deep affection for Thomas, who lived comfortably with her until his imprisonment and death.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

A study of these six women reveals patterns of slander and libel that connect their lives together in compelling and obvious ways. In most modern works referring to them, they stand charged with behavior their contemporaries, both lay and clerical, routinely defined as wicked. Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard lost their lives for allegedly committing adultery, and as the spouses of powerful noblemen, Lady Somerset and Lady Leicester have suffered hostile criticisms, the former for haughtiness and shrewishness, the latter for sexual improprieties. Even the two gentlewomen, Jane More and Alice More, who never lived high-profile lives at court, have gained reputations for disobeying and nagging their husband.

Contemporary writers admonished women to obey their spouses, who were expected to maintain control of their households. Their wives' shrewishness or adultery besmirched the men's honor and subjected them to ridicule for failure to achieve mastery at home. Male reputations became especially discredited if their wives suffered public condemnations as shrews or sexual deviants, either mandated by governmental officials or arranged by neighbors and parish priests. The public degradation of wicked women served to deepen and enhance the social respect for chaste and obedient wives.

Since the women studied in this book belonged to the gentle and noble classes, all normally would have escaped public punishments for the wicked behavior traditionally attributed to them. The two queens consort were executed for their alleged sexual crimes, which dishonored Henry VIII's reputation that was considered inseparable from those of his dynasty and kingdom. Had they married noblemen or gentlemen, they would have been exempted from capital punishment. Most early-modern theorists agreed that husbands did not have the right of life and death over adulterous wives.

In offering a context for reinventing the lives of these six women, this book has examined the importance of early-modern rumormongering, of social attitudes toward gender, and of gender expectations. Advising women generally about how to avoid social and familial censorship, authors of conduct books admonished females to behave chastely and submissively. These six women, however, failed to sustain appropriate wifely reputations not because of their own actions but because of the

important decisions made by their politically prominent husbands that proved to be deeply divisive. The English Reformation, which began with Henry's schism from the papacy, causing More to resign as lord chancellor, continuing in Edward VI's two prayer books, and later finalized in Elizabeth's reign, created religious and political controversies that reverberated across Christendom. Catholics critical of Henry's Reformation claimed that Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard manipulated him into marriage and then cuckolded him. Writers celebrating John Foxe's admiration for Somerset as "the good duke" partially relieved him of blame for his political inadequacies by emphasizing his wife's aggressive behavior and claiming she ruled him. To disparage Elizabeth's character, Catholic writers condemned her favorite, Leicester, as a power-hungry, lecherous tyrant. Another strategy utilized to besmirch his honor was to defame his second wife as a whore. Catholics extolling More's martyrdom because of his unwillingness to accept the division of Christendom, chose to enhance his saintliness by revealing his patience with two possibly unattractive and disobedient wives.

By validating questionable and biased early-modern comments about the women, modern scholars, mimicking Tudor religious and political attitudes, have attempted to heighten the unpredictability of Henry's actions, to extol the Protestantism of the "good duke," to exaggerate the earl's lechery, and either to enhance or diminish the saintliness of More. They have identified Anne Boleyn as a flirtatious courtier or whore, thus blaming the victim for her death; Katherine Howard as a deceptive wife, attempting to pass off another man's child as the king's; Lady Somerset as a wife who demanded her husband commit fratricide and as a haughty poetic wolf; Lady Leicester as a pregnant bride, inaccurately assuming that she wore a maternity dress as her wedding gown; Jane More as Erasmus's anonymous disobedient bride, and Alice More as a shrew and as a harpy in Erasmus's correspondence. Thus, scholars have created these women as more wicked than did early-modern reporters, except for Anne Boleyn, since it is probably impossible to damage her reputation beyond that which Sander had already achieved.

In fact, most of the information that historians have cited to condemn these women relies on unverifiable statements. People have always gossiped, and social attitudes have usually blamed females, reputedly the more loquacious sex, as the worst offenders. Rumormongering was ubiquitous and pervasive in Tudor England. Gossip, often originating in London and Westminister, the urban areas near which these women resided during their adult lives, was spread by various travelers through the provinces. All England thus bustled with news. Many derogatory remarks about women generally are extant because these oral transmissions have survived in written form: governmental records, legal documents, and diplomatic dispatches, for example.

Early-modern admonishments that wives should behave chastely and obediently gained credence because they circulated at a time when legal

systems, medical lore, and religious dogma together identified females as the weaker sex. Women had less opportunity to litigate in most courts of law than men, gained reputations as more lecherous than men because of their need to fill up their wombs with babies, and were expected to suffer painful childbirth and subjection to their husbands as a result of Eve's transgressions.

Despite strictures directing their obedience, some wives did find ways to demonstrate their innate abilities within the household. Many were clearly not submissive, since in the absences of their husbands and occasionally because of their charismatic personalities, some wives did achieve near dominance in their households. Nevertheless, they, as well as other women, were expected to express verbally their inferior status, utilizing what Alison Wall has called the "rhetoric of submission."[1]

None of these women, despite rumors or polemics, achieved this near dominance in their families. Convinced of his two consorts' adultery, Henry approved their executions. During her marriage to Somerset, the duchess suffered his rebuke for gossiping and then imprisonment because of his political inadequacies. After marrying Leicester, his countess continued for a time to sign her name as the widow of the late Earl of Essex and was only slowly permitted to enter some of her new husband's properties because of Elizabeth's resentment. Apologists for More have granted him the patience to subdue his disobedient or shrewish wives.

The sources traditionally utilized for documenting their lives are the writings of Erasmus, the creativity of various poets, diplomatic documents, legal records, historical writings and chronicles, and polemical religious treatises. The records most often cited to characterize them as wicked are the work of Catholic authors—either diplomatic, such as the reports of Eustace Chapuys, or polemical, such as the propaganda of William Roper, Nicholas Harpsfield, and Nicholas Sander. In addition, the name of John Foxe belongs to this list. His "Martyrs," which some writers have credited for spurring on Catholic-printed retaliations in Elizabeth's reign, repeated condemnatory statements about Lady Somerset.

These women, whose life histories are connected by their besmirched honor, mostly were unacquainted. Anne Boleyn surely never met her young Howard cousin although she certainly knew the future Lady Somerset, who attended court during her queenship and that of Katherine Howard and may have later become acquainted with Lady Leicester. If the two noblewomen did not know each other, the duchess would have at least been aware of the countess's marriage to the queen's favorite. The youngest of the six, Lady Leicester could have been acquainted personally only with Lady Somerset. Finally, Alice More, a mercer's widow, probably had met Jane while she was married to Thomas.

It is interesting that although from their births these alleged wicked women possessed the status of gentlewomen, and, therefore, began their lives in the lowest echelon of the English aristocracy, they achieved

marriage with men who were either of higher social rank than theirs or who rose to those advanced positions. Henry chose to wed Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard both of whom belonged to the lesser aristocracy. Anne, as the daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn and Katherine of Lord Edmund Howard, although granddaughters of the second Duke of Norfolk, were not, themselves, noble and addressed only as mistress.[2] After Sir Edward Seymour married Anne Stanhope, he gained noble status when his sister, Jane, became the third wife of Henry. Lettice Knollys achieved advantageous marriages with the earls of Essex and Leicester. Thomas More earned knighthood after marrying a gentleman's daughter and a rich mercer's widow.

Besides their gentle birth, these women also had other qualities in common. As noted above, they were wed to important men with great political influence: a king who denied papal authority; a lord protector who committed fratricide; a queen's favorite who was allegedly her lover; and a lord chancellor who became a Catholic martyr. Moreover, Henry's political and dynastic ambitions linked them together. Besides marrying Anne and Katherine, he agreed to More's execution, placed Somerset on the governing council of his son Edward VI, and fathered Elizabeth who favored Leicester.

In investigating why these Tudor women gained reputations for wickedness, it is useful to study all six together, although two of them remained gentlewomen while four advanced to noble or royal status. Including their lives in this book offers invaluable opportunities to demonstrate, with this depth of evidence, that rumormongers and propagandists were not primarily interested in the women, themselves. These detractors displayed a willingness to attack women of any rank whatsoever if they were the wives of men with important, controversial, political office. They painted the women as wicked because their fundamental fault was their marriage partners. Denouncing the sexual behavior of three of them resulted in the denigration of their husbands, the king, who made far-reaching governmental decisions, and Leicester, who exhibited what was perceived to be uncontrollable political ambitions. Other critics denounced the remaining three women's alleged unattractiveness and shrewishness either to lessen the criticism of the politically inept Somerset or to condemn him for lacking control of his household and either to enhance the patience of the martyred More or to blame him for his misogynous treatment of them.

Another theme connecting them together is that they were mostly victims of the vicissitudes of the English Reformation. By the mid-sixteenth century, the separation between Protestantism and Catholicism was beginning to become well-defined, the result partly of the deliberations of the Council of Trent and the establishment of Protestantism in England and elsewhere. Polemical writers, supporting their particular stripe of Christianity, sought to vilify heretics or papists and to honor their apostles. This propaganda led to attacks on their wives' reputations. Apologists denigrated Henry by defaming Anne Boleyn and then her daughter Elizabeth,

whose favorite gained a reputation for sexual voraciousness. It is interesting that modern scholars no longer credit the stories about Elizabeth giving birth to Leicester's children but continue to validate the defamation of his second wife's sexual behavior. To further vilify Henry, Catholics did not forget Katherine Howard's alleged betrayal. While lauding the reputation of the "good duke," Foxe blamed Lady Somerset's dispute with Katherine Parr for causing disagreements between their Seymour husbands. Other writers honored the martyred More, as noted above, by disparaging his wives' attractiveness and behavior.

Turning to the details of each woman's life, both sets of early-modern religious writers did not spare the lives of five subjects of this book. Scholars have featured Henry's two queens consort in ways that would have amazed them. If Nicholas Sander's identification of Anne Boleyn as an adulteress with witchlike features were not sufficient condemnation, E. W. Ives, while claiming her innocent of illicit sexual behavior, theorized that she was guilty of courtly love, of acting as the mistress of young men who obsessed endlessly about their love for her in a relationship that could become sexual. Picturing her as six years older than her actual age, he endowed her with behavior too flirtatious for her own good, thus providing Sir Thomas Cromwell with enough evidence to effect her execution. Agreeing with Ives about her age and her flirtatiousness, G. W. Bernard utilized a French poem by a diplomat, who arrived in England about a month before her execution, to prove her guilty of sexual misconduct with three of the five accused men over less than a two-and-one-half-year period, ending, according to the accusations against her, in December 1535. Somehow, without an abettor, she successfully kept these rendezvous secret until the spring 1536. Ives's and Bernard's dismissal of the miscarriage in January 1536 as the cause of her fall, although Henry went to great lengths to make it impossible for him to be named the fetus's sire, leaves their readers with political theories that are mostly uninformed by early-modern cultural attitudes toward women. Their analyses of her life, which are based on an eclectic mining of questionable documents filtered through a modern view of gender relations, also ignore some important evidence, such as Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury's comment about Anne's felicitous afterlife with God.

Her cousin, Katherine Howard, however, confessed to having premarital sexual relations with Francis Dereham and after her royal marriage, meeting secretly with Sir Thomas Culpeper, but not committing adultery with him. All three modern authors of book-length, separate biographies of her proclaimed that she had cuckolded Henry and the latest, Joanna Denny, even maintained that the queen hoped to become pregnant by Culpeper and convince Henry that the child was his.

The two great ladies, the Duchess of Somerset and the Countess of Leicester, loom large as wicked in modern studies. Writers have characterized the duchess as a haughty, disagreeable noblewoman, whose quarrels with Katherine Parr, the queen dowager, over precedence passed on to their husbands and ultimately led to fratricide. No reliable

contemporary statement refers to this precedence dispute. In fact, no such quarrel occurred because women did not lose their social status even when they married men of lesser rank than they. The duchess would always have been placed after the dowager queen on any official occasion. Their dispute actually arose because Katherine flaunted widow's protocol and too hastily married Seymour after Henry's death. Further enhancing the negative traits attributed to Lady Somerset, modern literary experts have identified her inaccurately as the proud, anonymous wolf in one of Surrey's poems.

By contrast, writers have characterized the countess as a sex-driven noblewoman who committed adultery with her future husband while still married to her first one. In her interpretation of Lady Leicester's actions, Elizabeth Jenkins, a modern popular writer, proved guilty of "Present-centred History," that is "viewing the past through categories of the present."[3] She assumed that early-modern clothing arrangements for pregnancy mirrored those of the 1960s. Thus, Lady Leicester's loose-fitting bridal gown, which Jenkins identified as a maternity dress, would have signaled her pregnancy to the minister and the witnesses at her wedding.

Both great ladies gained wicked reputations because they married men whose friends as well as enemies, in the case of the duchess, and enemies, in the case of the countess, used their husbands' activities to tar them and their wives with slanderous rumors. Defending or denouncing Somerset's political inadequacies involved defaming his duchess, and attacking the powerful and controversial Earls of Essex and Leicester meant denouncing the sexual activities of the first lord's wife and the second lord's future wife.

The Catholic writer, Nicholas Harpsfield, condemned Alice, Thomas's second wife, as a shrew. He relied on William Roper's written statements about his step-mother-in-law, Alice, with whom he had intense legal disputes, and Thomas's anonymous antifemale jokes in *The Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*. In shaping the narrative of her husband's martyrdom, Harpsfield denounced Alice's attempt to convince Thomas to swear the required oath and avoid capital punishment. Twentieth-century writers, Percy Allen among others, following Harpsfield's lead, have cited new misinformation to condemn her. Allen identified her as an unnamed harpy, a Greco-Roman malevolent monster, mentioned in Erasmus's correspondence. Although Harpsfield did not claim that all the anonymous women in the antifemale jokes in *The Dialogue of Comfort* referred to her, modern writers, to further defame her, added more of them from that book to his original number and then some from the martyr's other publications. Many of More's apologists have also viewed her as an early-modern version of Chaucer's Dame Alice, the appellation most prevalent today, although Roper referred to her as "Mistress More" and "my lady, his wife."

Jane More was the only one of these six women who escaped vilification by name in the sixteenth century, but her son-in-law's comments have caused some modern writers to speculate that she was physically

unattractive. Roper, who never met her, recalled her husband's story about how he decided to marry her. He had preferred her younger sister but out of pity chose her because he did not wish to cause her grief if she were not wed first. The aim of Roper's story was to honor Thomas for his sacrificial behavior rather than to denigrate her. It was the identification of her by Allen as the disobedient bride in Erasmus's "Marriage" colloquy, four hundred years after her death, that created her a wicked wife by her society's expectations. He claimed that Jane was Erasmus's unnamed woman, who responded to her husband's instruction in literature and music with temper tantrums, causing him to seek her father's help in taming her. Although Erasmus met Jane and referred to her in a letter to Ulrich von Hutten, he never claimed that she was the model for his disobedient bride. Including her life here demonstrates definitively, as those of the other five cannot, that even a young woman, who died prematurely and about whom no contemporary, except her son-in-law, seems to have made a negative comment when identifying her, could not escape the deluge of modern libels against the wives of famous early-modern controversial figures.

To provide a more reasonable and alternative view of their lives, this book has drawn upon recent women's history, gender analysis, and the history of sexuality. This present interpretation accepts that a separate female culture with common attributes, transcending class differences, existed in Tudor England. All women were expected to marry, give birth to the family heir, and to supervise their households. Mothers were admonished to oversee their daughters' education and provide religious instruction to female members of their households. Obviously, Lady Somerset, Lady Leicester (as Lady Essex), and Jane More did give birth to a heir who survived while Anne Boleyn, Katherine Howard, and Alice More failed in that endeavor. All six women seem to have managed their households successfully, although less is known about Jane More and Katherine Howard because of their youth and the brevity of their marriages.

It is also true that if the modern characterizations of these women, relying mostly on early-modern rumor and polemical denunciations, are true, then they were assertive in inappropriate ways and were wicked because they failed to live as chaste and obedient wives and mothers. But were they assertive or were they submissive? Henry ordered the deaths of Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, who almost certainly were not guilty of adultery. Lady Somerset suffered her husband's rebuke and Lady Leicester's wifely activities remained strictly limited by Elizabeth's resentment over her marriage. Finally, Erasmus claimed that More taught both his wives good literature and controlled their behavior. A letter of Thomas to Alice made it clear that he trusted her good management of his household, but it also indicated that he remained firmly in charge, even in his absence, instructing her about how to deal with the aftermath of the fire that destroyed their farms.

Despite these limitations they all led productive lives until their disgrace or deaths. Both Queens Anne and Katherine left evidence of their

concern for the well-being of their households. Ladies Somerset and Leicester, of course, remarried after their husbands' deaths and assumed the role of family matriarchs, supervising their descendants and seeing to their relatives' needs. Thomas actually expressed public contentment with both his wives, Jane and Alice.

This book is not about six wicked women but the invention of them as wicked. By validating early-modern rumors and comments in questionable and biased sources and utilizing as evidence anonymous females in creative works, historians have conceptualized these women, except for Anne Boleyn, as even more wicked than their contemporary vilifiers. The method followed here has been systematically to expunge from their biographies the unverifiable material that was written both in their lifetimes and after their deaths because they had married powerful political figures during a century of divisive religious changes. Reformation and Counter Reformation writers seeking to vilify or magnify the reputations of their husbands, when religious divisions were becoming increasingly rigid, chose to attack them by criticizing their wives' behavior. In many historical analyses, the women continue to be painted as wicked.

The ubiquitous gossiping and rumormongering besmirching them with these undesirable reputations should be recognized as offering evidence that reveals to modern readers more about the culture in which they lived than about the women, themselves. In short, if documents contain evidence about an anonymous, wicked woman, her characteristics should not be transposed onto a real person. If diplomats failed to provide the source for their rumors, as, for example, Bernardino de Mendoza's dispatch of June 11, 1583 proves, then their unverifiable evidence should not be accepted as fact. Sometimes, even when the diplomats' sources are revealed, the information could also be flawed because of deliberate governmental policy. Letters, depositions, and interrogatories, written by individuals socialized to believe females were the more lecherous and loquacious sex, should be treated carefully and not simply taken literally. Did, for example, Katherine Howard, at the age of about 13, actually fall in love with her abusive music master? Polemical religious works composed with a particular agenda and sometimes with little, if any information that can be corroborated, also require careful analysis. If Leicester did not control the court and the realm, then why should the other allegations in *Leicester's Commonwealth* be credited unless they can be independently verified? Researchers ought not to interpret these documents in an eclectic manner, picking and choosing facts, to meet the needs of their agendas and theories.

An eclectic research method combined with present-minded interpretations and modern cultural attitudes have led to the invention of these women as wicked by the standards of their society. Polemical diatribes about their important husbands, who acted controversially during a time of rapidly changing Christian values, have spilled over on to them. Chapters 2 and 3 examined how Catholic polemicists, especially Sander,

defamed Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard in order to attack the characters of Henry and Elizabeth because the king removed England from the Roman confession and the queen established a Protestant church. His attacks have shaped how some modern historians view their lives although sexual and reproductive attitudes that have changed greatly over time. Gossip and rumor reflected how contemporaries defamed the two great noblewomen, who were featured in Chapters 4 and 5. Friends of the "good duke" hoped to excuse his fratricide by blaming it on his wife's bad character, thus beginning the tradition of referring to her as haughty. By defining Leicester as a libertine, Catholic polemicists set out to criticize the queen, in the process labeling his wife an adulteress, a characterization that continues in modern histories. Finally, over time, as pointed out in Chapters 6 and 7, those who honored More's martyrdom and those who have criticized his behavior have worked together to create his two wives as contrary and shrewish, either to enhance his saintly patience or to denounce his misogynist attitudes.

By recognizing this historiographical development and by relying on gender relations, family history, and the history of sexuality for historical analyses, it is possible and timely to write more realistic life-stories. Separating fact from fiction about these women, means revising research methods and digging beneath a complicated three-tier layer of bias that exists simultaneously in the archives, in early-modern publications, and in modern interpretations.[4] Removing these biases from their life-stories is important not only because modern researchers should want to do justice to their histories but also because flawed interpretations of their lives can prevent a fuller understanding of the historical significance of their male contemporaries and of the manifold social and religious changes that occurred during the Tudor century.

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2 Queen Anne Boleyn

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18. George Wyatt, "The Life of . . . Queen Anne Boleigne," *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey by George Cavendish*, ed. Samuel Singer, second ed. (London: Harding & Lepard, 1827), pp. 421–34; E. W. Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn, "The Most Happy"* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 39–41, accepts Wyatt's version. A mark on the little finger of the left hand and small moles were actually signs of witchcraft. See Montague Summers, *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology* (Seacaucus, NJ: University Books, 1956), p. 71.
19. George Wyatt, *Boleigne*, pp. 421–34.
20. William Segar, *The Booke of Honor and Armes* (London: Richard Jones, 1590), pp. 34–5.

21. George Nott, *The Works of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and of Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Elder*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, & Brown, 1815), II, xix–xxi; Thomas Fuller, *The History of the Worthies of England*, ed. Austen Nuttall, new ed., 3 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1965), II, 152.
22. Elizabeth Benger, *Memoirs of the Life of Anne Boleyn, Queen of Henry VIII*, third ed. (Philadelphia: John E. Potter, [1850?]) First published 1821 and 1827, pp. 132–3, 163–7.
23. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. H. Brodie (eds.), *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII,* 21 vols. in 35 (London: HMSO, 1862–1932), X, no. 798 (Hereafter *LP*); Nott, *Wyatt*, II, xxiii, reported that Gilbert Burnet saw the letter before it was damaged and made no comment about what she said about Wyatt. It "did not reflect either on his character or on that of the unfortunate queen"; Catharine Davies, "Page, Sir Richard (d. 1548), Courtier,"*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com (accessed January 8, 2007).
24. Hume*, Chronicle*, p. 63; Harpsfield, *Divorce*, pp. 253, 332.
25. This is taken from Nott, *Works*, II, 143; R. A. Rebholz, *Sir Thomas Wyatt: The Complete Poems* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 77, said that the Latin motto *Noli me tangere quia Caesaris sum* was supposedly inscribed on the collars of Caesar's hinds. It is probably derived from a conflation of John, XX, 17 and Matthew, XXII, 21.
26. Enrico Gaetani, *Instructions for Young Gentlemen, Or, the Instructions of Cardinall Sermonetta to His Cousen, Petro Caetano* (Oxford: John Lichfield and Thomas Huggens, 1633), p. 56.
27. John Bruce, "Recovery of the Lost Accusation of Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Poet, by Bishop Bonner," *Gentleman's Magazine*, new series, 33–i(1850), 566–7; for George Wyatt's relating Henry to Caesar in Wyatt's poem, see David Loades (ed.), *The Papers of George Wyatt Esquire of Boxley Abbey in the County of Kent*, Camden, fourth series, vol. 5 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968), p. 185.
28. Kenneth Muir, *Life and Letters of Sir Thomas Wyatt* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1963), pp. 262, 267, 269.
29. Muir, *Letters*, pp. 164, 166.
30. Thomas Wyatt, *Of the Quyete of Mynde* (London: Richard Pynson, 1528), dedication.
31. Rebholz, *Poems*, p. 381; Hyder Rollins (ed.), *Tottel's Miscellany*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928-1929), I, 53.
32. Paul Friedmann, *Anne Boleyn: A Chapter of English History, 1527–1536*, 2 vols. (London: Maxmillan, 1884), I, xii, 13–4, 39, 55, II, 199, 265–8, Appendix, Note A.
33. The first was Henry Herbert, *Memoirs of Henry the Eighth with the Fortunes, Fates and Characters of His Six Wives* (New York: C. M. Saxton, 1860).
34. Martin A. S. Hume, *The Wives of Henry VIII and the Part They Played in History* (London: E. Nash, 1905), pp. vi, 73, 262–3, 349, 359–61, 438, 447 (New edition, London: E. Nash and Grayson, 1927).
35. Others include: Philip Sergeant, *Life of Anne Boleyn* (London: Hutchinson, 1923); Walter Jerrold, *Henry VIII and His Wives* (New York: George H. Doran, 1926); Benedict Fitzpatrick, *Frail Anne Boleyn and Her Fateful Love with Henry VIII* (New York: Dial Press, 1931); Paul Rival, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, trans. Leo Gurko (New York: G. P.

Putnam's Sons, 1936); Evelyn Anthony, *Anne Boleyn* (New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1957); Marguerite Vance, *Six Queens: The Wives of Henry VIII* (London: Whiting & Wheaton, 1965); Marie Louise Bruce, *Anne Boleyn* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1967); Hester Chapman, *The Challenge of Anne Boleyn* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1974); Norah Lofts, *Anne Boleyn* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979); Carolly Erickson, *Anne Boleyn* (London: MacMillan, 1984); Alison Weir, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991); Antonia Fraser, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1992); David Loades, *The Politics of Marriage: Henry VIII and His Queens* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1994); Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived: A Feminist Reinterpretation of the Wives of Henry VIII* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995); Joanna Denny, *Anne Boleyn* (London: Portrait, 2006); Elizabeth Norton, *Anne Boleyn: Henry VIII's Obsession* (Stroud: Amberley, 2011).

36. E. W. Ives, "Faction at the Court of Henry VIII: The Fall of Anne Boleyn," *History,* 57(1972), 172–4.
37. Simon Gaunt, *Troubadours and Irony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Peter Noble, *Love and Marriage in Chrétien de Troyes* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982); Larry Benson, *Malory's Morte Darthur* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).
38. Ives, "Fall," pp. 176–86; see also E. W. Ives, *Faction in Tudor England* (London: The Historical Association, 1979), pp. 16–8, 24–9, where he clarified his definition of faction.
39. Hugh Paget, "The Youth of Anne Boleyn," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 54(1981), 162–70; Ives, *Anne Boleyn* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), pp. 17–19; Ives, *Life and Death*, pp. 3–27. When Anne's letter is photographed, the electronic version makes it appear much more legible than it is.
40. Annibal Guasco, *Discourse to Lady Lavinia His Daughter*, trans. Peggy Osborne (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 2, 16, 51; Lady Lavinia was 11 when appointed maiden of honor.
41. Ives, *Boleyn*, pp. 42, 86–7, 303–28.
42. Ives, *Life and Death,* pp. 307–11.
43. G. W. Bernard, "The Fall of Anne Boleyn: A Rejoinder," *English Historical Review*, 107(1992), 665–74; G. W. Bernard, "The Fall of Anne Boleyn," *English Historical Review,* 106(1991), 584–610.
44. Earlier Greg Walker, "Rethinking the Fall of Anne Boleyn," *The Historical Journal,* 45(2002): 1–29, said that over the weekend of April 29–30, 1536, she and Rochford ridiculed Henry's sexual prowess, leading him to have her indicted for cuckolding him with five men.
45. G. W. Bernard, *Anne Boleyn: Fatal Attractions* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 148–81, 195; *LP*, X, nos. 410, 603, 688.
46. Bernard, *Boleyn,* pp. 148–81, 195; Georges Ascoli (ed.), *La Grande-Bretagne Devant L'Opinion Française Depuis La Guerre de Cent Ans Jusqu'a La Fin Du XVI Siècle* (Paris: Librairie Universitaire J. Gamber, 1927), pp. 231–73. For an English translation, see Susan Walters Schmid, "Anne Boleyn, Lancelot de Carle and the Uses of Documentary Evidence," unpublished PhD dissertation, Arizona State University, 2009, pp. 109–76.

47. Bernard, *Boleyn*, p. 202, n. 15; Ascoli, *Grande-Bretagne*, pp. 231–2.
48. Bernard, *Boleyn*, pp. 5, 19, 57.
49. David Starkey, *Six Wives: The Queens of Henry VIII* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), pp. 8, 278–83, 611.
50. Simon Adams (ed.), *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 13–132; Paul Hammer, "Patronage at Court, Faction and the Earl of Essex," *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 65–86.
51. Warnicke, *Boleyn*. pp. 84–5; for example, *LP*, IV, nos. 3218, 3219, 3220, 3221, 3325, 3326, 4383, 4403, 4408, 4410, 4449, 4537, 4539, and 4894.
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53. M. J. Rodriguez-Salgado, "Suárez de Figueroa [née Dormer], Jane, Duchess of Feria in the Spanish Nobility (1538–1612), Noblewoman and Courtier," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com (accessed December 29, 2006); Henry Clifford, *The Life of the Lady Jane Dormer, Duchess of Feria*, trans. E. E. Estcourt, ed. Joseph Stevenson (London: Burnes, 1887), pp. 76, 79–80.
54. Hastings Robinson, *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, 1531–58, Chiefly From the Archives of Zurich*, 2 vols. Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846–1847), II, 553.
55. G. Bergenroth, et al. (eds.), *Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain Preserved in the Archives at Simancas and Elsewhere*, 13 vols., 2 supplements (London: Longman, 1862–1954), V–i, 21 (Hereafter *CSP Span*).
56. Forrest, *Grisild*, p. 53.
57. Joseph Dwyer (trans.), *Pole's Defense of the Unity of the Church* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1965), pp. 185–6.
58. Denys Hay (ed.), *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil, A.D. 1485–1537,* vol. 74 (London: Camden Society, 1950), p. 331.
59. Aki C. L. Beam, "'Should I as Yet Call You Old?' Testing the Boundaries of Female Old Age in Early Modern England," *Growing Old in Early Modern Europe: Cultural Representations*, ed. Eren Campbell (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 55–116; Gilbert Creighton, "When Did a Man in the Renaissance Grow Old?" *Studies in the Renaissance*, 14(1967), 7–32.
60. Fuller, *Worthies,* II, 351–2. In John Bruce and T. Perowne (eds.), *Correspondence of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury*, Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), p. 400, Parker called himself Anne's "poor countryman." Simon Adams, "'Because I am of that Countrye & Mynde to Plant Myself There:' Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester and the West Midlands," *Court: Essays*, p. 312, noted that when Leicester said he was of that "country," meaning Warwickshire, he was not stating that he was born there but was claiming descent from the medieval earls of Warwick, whose interests lay there. Regardless of

where Anne was born, contemporaries would associate her on her father's side with Norfolk, where the Boleyn seat was located.

61. W. Parsons, "Some Notes on the Boleyn Family," *Norfolk Archaeology*, XV(1935), 400; John Donne, *A Sermon of Commemoration of the Lady Danvers, Late Wife of Sr. John Danvers,"* introduction by Bettie Anne Doebler and Retha Warnicke (Ann Arbor, MI: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 2006), pp. 8–9.
62. R. Brown, G. Cavendish-Bentinck, H. F. Brown, and A. B. Hinds (eds.), *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy*, 38 vols. (London: HMSO, 1864–1947), IV, no. 824, pp. 365–6.
63. Ascoli, *Grande-Bretagne,* p. 234; Pierre de Bourdeille, Seigneur de Brantôme, *The Lives of Gallant Ladies*, trans. Alec Brown (London: Elek Books, 1961), p. 342, referred to her loveliness.
64. John Smyth, *The Berkeley MSS. Vols. 1–2: The Lives of the Berkeleys, Lords of the Manor of Berkeley, Vol. 3: Description of the Hundred of Berkeley*, ed. John MacClean (Gloucester: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1883–1885), II, 32, 395; Emily Reilly, *Historical Anecdotes of the Families of the Boleyns, Careys, Mordaunts, Hamiltons, and Jocelyns, Arranged as an Elucidation of the Genealogical Chart at Tollymore Park* (Newry: Henderson, 1839), pp. 4–6, 132.
65. W. Hepworth Dixon, "Anne Boleyn," *Gentleman's Magazine,* new series, 16(1876), 298–302; J. H. Round, *Early Life of Anne Boleyn: A Critical Essay* (London: Elliot Stock, 1886), pp. 18–21.
66. NA, C142/68/26.
67. Retha Warnicke, "Anne Boleyn's Childhood and Adolescence," *Historical Journal*, 28(1985), 939–52; Bruce, *Parker,* pp. 414, 420. Egerton Brydges (ed.), *Collins's Peerage of England*, 9 vols. (London, 1812), III, 616; and Reilly, *Anecdotes,* Appendix B, for the inscription.
68. HMC, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield Hall,* 15 vols. (London: HMSO, 1883–1976), XIII, 199.
69. William Knollys, *Pedigree of the Family of Knollys and Title to the Manor of Rotherfield Greys, Published by the House of Lords* (London: House of Lords, 1810), p. 1.
70. *LP*, I–ii, nos. 3348, 3357; Ives, *Life and Death*, p. 371, n. 27 cited an extract (Paris, BNF MS fr 7853, f. 305b) from a lost original of the payments of Mary Tudor's attendants between October and December 1514 that listed no Anne Boleyn but a Marie Boulonne. As Mary and Boulonne were common names, it is problematic to identify this Marie as Mary. Spelling was irregular at this time but the last name was spelled Boleyne in the French document signed by Louis XII. Ives also speculated that Anne must have been a servant of Mary Boleyn. Maidens in England did have one servant but one socially inferior to them, a lady's maid.
71. *LP*, X, no. 450; Ives, *Life and Death*, p. 16.
72. Judith Lewis, *In the Family Way: Childbearing in the British Aristocracy, 1760–1860* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 1986), p. 123. Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, for example, had a miscarriage in the spring of 1545 and delivered Henry, Lord Darnley, that December.
73. Warnicke, "Childhood," pp. 939–52; Warnicke, *Boleyn,* pp. 6–12; Ives, *Life and Death*, p. 371, n. 27.

74. HMC, *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton, Preserved at Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire*, ed. William Stevenson (London: HMSO, 1911), p. 399; William Forrest, "Pleasant Poesye of Princelie Practise," *England in the Reign of King Henry the Eighth*, ed. Sidney Herrtage, vol. 32 (London: Early English Text Society, 1878), p. xcii.
75. Richard Mulcaster, *Positions Concerning the Training up of Children,* ed. William Barker (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), pp. 181, 184. He also expected them to be trained in music and in languages by that time.
76. Muriel St. Clare Byrne (ed.), *The Lisle Letters*, 6 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), III, 583a, p. 133; IV, 863. If not in the nursery, they were attending to the needs of members of the royal family, not of the maidens of honor.
77. Smyth, *Berkeley*, II, 80–1.
78. Warnicke, *Boleyn*, pp. 27, 107–9, 153–4.
79. Retha Warnicke, "Family and Kinship Relations at the Henrician Court: The Boleyns and Howards," *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 50–3; William Thomas, The *Pilgrim: A Dialogue on the Life and Actions of King Henry VIII*, ed. J. Froude (London: Parker, Son, & Bourne, 1861), pp. 20–1.
80. Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 84–9, 120.
81. Joanna Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens: English Queenship, 1445–1503* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 83–110. See also Retha Warnicke, "Queenship: Politics and Gender in Tudor England," *History Compass,* 42(2006), 203–27 (http://www.history-compass.com).
82. Richard Osberg, "Humanist Allusions and Medieval Themes: The 'Receyving' of Queen Anne, London 1533," *Medievalism in the Modern World: Essays in Honor of Leslie J. Workman*, ed. Richard Utz and Tom Shippey (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 27–41.
83. Sharon Jansen (trans.), *Anne of France: Lessons For My Daughter* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), pp. 38–43, 55.
84. Jansen, *Lessons,* pp. viii, 8.
85. Juan Luis Vives, *The Instruction of a Christen Woman*, ed. Virgina Beauchamp, Elizabeth Hageman, Margaret Mikesell, et al. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), pp. xxvi, 11, 24–6, 34, 50, 81–2.
86. James Melville, *The Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill*, ed. Gordon Donaldson (London: Folio Society, 1969), p. 43.
87. Clifford, *Feria,* pp. 167–8.
88. *CSP Span,* V–ii, 121–2.
89. Brantôme, *Ladies*, p. 385; *Here Begynneth the Scholehouse of Women* (London: John King, 1561), p. 182. This is sometimes attributed to E. Gosynhyll.
90. Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex, and Marriage* (London: Longman, 1999), pp. 5–7.
91. Julie Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins, 2005), p. 11; Robert Cleaver, *A Codly [sic] Form of Household Governmente for the Ordering of Private Families* (London: Thomas Creede for Thomas Man, 1598), p. 247.
92. *LP*, X, no. 876, for the indictment.

93. Henry Charles Lea, *Materials toward a History of Witchcraft*, ed. A. Howland, 3 vols. (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1957), II, 847–9, has evidence of witches considered deformed, who passed their deformities onto their children; Montague Summers (trans.), *The Maleus Maleficarum of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger* (New York: Dover Publications, 1971), pp. 112–3, 115, 118, reported that demons infected witches' progeny. See also Rossell Robbins, *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* (New York: Crown Pub., 1959), pp. 463–5.
94. John Ayre (ed.), *The Catechism of Thomas Becon*, Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), pp. 342, 347.
95. *CSP Span,* V–ii, 39, 59; Warnicke, *Boleyn*, pp. 199, 204–5, argued that a letter from Anne to her governess, which was found in Mary's oratory, probably meant that the miscarriage took place earlier than January 29. It is interesting that in June 1536, rumors circulated in Rome claiming that as the adultery occurred before her conception, it would be announced that the miscarried child was not the king's. See *CSP Span*, V–ii, 1043.
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98. Ibid., V–ii, 28.
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100. Abraham de Wicquefort, *The Embassador and His Functions: Written by Monsieur de Wicquefort… Translated by Mr. Digby* (London: Bernard Lintott, 1716), p. 298.
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103. Stanford Lehmberg, *The Reformation Parliament 1529–1536*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp 221–47.
104. Margery Schauer and Frederick Schauer, "Law as the Engine of State: The Trial of Anne Boleyn," *William and Mary Law Review*, 22(1980), 62–84; Lehmberg, *Reformation*, p. 218.
105. Eustace de Refuge, *A Treatise of the Court or Instructions for Courtiers*, trans. J. Reynolds (London: A. Matthews for W. Lee, 1622), p. 151.
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109. *LP*, V, no. 202; X, no. 873; XIII-1, no. 981(2).
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113. Diana Wood, *Medieval Economic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 75, 161–3, 167, 178–80.
114. George Corrie (ed.), *Sermons and Remains by Hugh Latimer, Sometime Bishop of Worcester,* Parker Society, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844–1845), I, 109, 241, 244–5.
115. Edmund Lodge (ed.), *Illustrations of British History, Biography and Manners in the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, and James I,* 3 vols., second ed. (London: John Chidley, 1838), II, 197.
116. E. W. Ives, "Court and County Palatine in the Reign of Henry VIII: The Career of William Brereton of Malpas," *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 123(1972), 11–7, 30; *LP,* VI, no. 586.
117. Davies, "Page."
118. Emily Cockayne, *Hubbub, Filth, Noise & Stench in England, 1600–1770* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 43–8, 52.
119. Warnicke, *Boleyn*, pp. 191–233. Paul Remley, "Mary Shelton and Her Tudor Literary Milieu," *Rethinking the Henrician Era: Essays on Early Tudor Texts and Contexts,* ed. Peter Herman (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 66, n. 20, pointed out that the name could be Mary not Madge—some have read Madge because the similarity of "y and open-looped g in Tudor Secretary."
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125. Patrick Collinson, "Elizabeth I (1533–1603), Queen of England and Ireland," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com (accessed February 21, 2007).
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127. Franco Simone, *The French Renaissance: Medieval Tradition and Italian Influence in Shaping the Renaissance in France*, trans. H. Hall (London: MacMillan, 1969), pp. 155–6; Ottavia Niccoli, *"'Menstruum quasi Monstruum'*: Monstrous Births and Menstrual Taboo in the Sixteenth Century," *Sex and Gender in Historical Perspective*, ed. Edward Muir and Guido Ruggerio, trans. Mary Gallucci (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 3; Angus McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals: The Perception of Fertility in England from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1984), p. 47.
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131. Great Britain, Record Commission. *State Papers of Henry VIII*, 11 vols. (London: HMSO, 1830–1832), VIII, 197.
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133. Bruce, *Parker,* pp. 59, 70, 391.
134. John Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (London: Thomas Harper, 1631), pp. 514–5.
135. Sander, *Schism,* pp. 23–9.
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3 Queen Katherine Howard

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2. George Cavendish, *Metrical Visions*, ed. A. Edwards (Colombia: University of South Carolina Press for the Newberry Library, 1980), pp. 66–9.
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87. *CSP Scot*, VI, 449–50. In October 1582, Spain adopted the Gregorian Calendar, dropping ten days from the Julian Calendar. No extant dispatch from England of Mendoza's mentions the new calendar. In others, particularly concerning the arrival and departures of Catholics, he seems to have used the Julian Calendar. If he had adopted the Gregorian Calendar, his dates would still have been inaccurate. The Scottish embassy arrived by the Julian Calendar on May 3; this would have been April 23 by the Gregorian Calendar. Mendoza said May 14. The Scots' first visit with Elizabeth was May 6 by the Julian Calendar; this would have been April 26 by the Gregorian Calendar. Mendoza said May 16. The Scots departed on May 27 by the Julian Calendar; this would have been May 17 by the Gregorian Calendar. Mendoza said they were still in London on June 4.
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103. For the wills, see Adams, "Leicester," and Collins, *Letters,* I, 70–5. See also BL Lansdowne MS 982, art. 60, ff. 109, 111. He had four wills, one in 1582 listing his heir, in July 1584, funding her jointure; in 1586, bequests for his illegitimate son, and the final one in 1587.

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47. Guy, *Dearest Meg*, pp. 92, 282, 292, claimed that in two Chancery cases, NA C1/125/58–62 and NA C1/126/57–8, Simon Elryngton, her maternal uncle, gave Jane Colt More's age, proving that she was 17 at her marriage, but this seems to be a misreading of the documents that will be addressed later in this chapter.
48. *EE*, IV, 999, p. 17.
49. Desiderius Erasmus, "The Institution of Marriage," *Erasmus on Women*, ed. Erika Rummel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), p. 80.
50. Thompson, *Colloquies*, p. 94. See also pp. 401–12, "a Marriage in Name Only Or the Unequal Match," first published in 1529.
51. Allen, "Netherhall," p. 654; N. Bailey (trans.), *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, 3 vols. (London: Giffings & Co., 1900), I, 264, identified the husband as "a Gentleman of a noble family."
52. *EE,* IV, 999, p. 17; X, 2750, pp. 135–6; Marcus Haworth (trans.), *Erasmus and His Age: Selected Letters of Desiderius Erasmus,* ed. Hans Hillerbrand (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), p. 272.
53. *EE*, I, 81, p. 213.
54. Reynolds, *More,* p. 54.
55. Erika Rummel, "Fertile Ground: Erasmus's Travels in England," *Travel and Translation in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Carmine G. Di Biase (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), pp. 49–50.
56. Craig Thompson (ed.), *Translations of Lucian*, CWM, III–l, xli–xlii; R. J. Schoeck, *Erasmus of Europe: The Prince of Humanists* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1993), p. 58.
57. Thompson, *Colloquies*, p. 230.
58. Thompson, *Colloquies,* 1997, p. 532.
59. Smith, *Key*, pp. 31–3.
60. Thompson, *Colloquies,* p. 230. Thompson deleted this paragraph in his 1997 notes.
61. Mynors and Thomson, *Erasmus*, V, 402.
62. Ibid., I, 187.
63. George Colt, *History and Genealogy of the Colts of That Ilk and Gartsherrie: English and American Branches of That Family* (Edinburgh: Printed for Private Circulation, 1887), p. 234.
64. Germain Marc'hadour, "More's First Wife: Jane? Or Joan?" *Moreana*, 29:109(1992), 3–22; Jane's maternal grandfather, Sir John Elryngton, named his daughter Jane in his will. See NA PROB 11/7, ff. 59–59v.
65. Barbara Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 47; Diana O'Hara, *Courtship Constraints: Rethinking the Making of Marriage in Tudor England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 210, gives estimates of £282 for daughters of knights.
66. Simon Payling, "The Politics of Family: Late Medieval Marriage Contracts," *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society,* ed. R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (Stroud: Allen Sutton Publishing, 1995), pp. 21–48, discusses the marriage of a son and heir to a noninheriting daughter, pointing out the marriage portion, when fathers drew up the contract, went to the groom's father. One assumes that an adult male lawyer would negotiate the marriage contract.

67. Harris, *Aristocratic Women,* p. 47, noted that if the girls were not married before their father died, he usually left them equal amounts in his will. This occurred in 74 percent of the cases. She also related, "Differences in the size of the daughters' marriage portions were more likely when fathers arranged their daughters' marriages, themselves, and could weigh the relative advantages of specific marriages." See also Vivienne Larminie, *Wealth, Kinship and Culture: The Seventeenth Century Newdigates of Arbury and Their World* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press for the Royal Historical Association, 1995), p. 32 and O'Hara, *Courtship*, pp. 173, 203.
68. John Smyth, *The Berkeley MSS. Vols. 1–2: The Lives of the Berkeleys, Lords of the Manor of Berkeley, Vol. 3: Description of the Hundred of Berkeley*, ed. John MacClean (Gloucester: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1883–1885), II, 80–1.
69. R. H. Du Boulay, *An Age of Ambition: English Society in the Late Middle Ages* (New York: Viking, 1970), p. 100.
70. James McConica, "The Recusant Reputation of Thomas More," *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More*, ed. Richard Sylvester and Germain Marc'hadour (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1977), pp. 137–43.
71. Roper, *Moore*, p. 25.
72. Guy, *Dearest Meg,* pp. 92, 282, 292. Citing NA C1/125/58–62 and NA C1/126/57–8, Guy claimed that her uncle said that Jane Colt More's age was such in 1488 that when she married Thomas, she would have been 17. That is a misreading of the suits. The name of Jane Colt, the future Jane More, does not appear in those documents.
73. NA PROB, 11/7, ff. 59–59v; Payling, "Family," pp. 21–47.
74. Anonymous, *The Office of Christian Parents: Shewing How Children Are to Be Governed.* (Cambridge: Cantrell Legge, 1616), p. 211, observed that after marriage, offspring sometimes lived with parents, especially the eldest son; Smyth, *Berkeley MSS*, II, 284, 376, 381, for example, noted that after Katherine Howard's marriage to Henry, Lord Berkeley, in 1554, they lived with her grandfather, Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk, and then with her mother, Frances Howard, Countess of Surrey.
75. W. Powell (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Essex*, 10 vols. (Folkestone: Dawsons of London Reprint, 1966, for the Institute of Historical Research, 1903), V, 195–6; VIII, 224, 244; Colt, *History*, pp. 232–5; when he visited the church at Roydon, Allen reported that John was married twice and both wives gave him six children and that as Jane was 17 in 1505 (relying on the Marriage Colloquy), she must have been a daughter of the first wife. The Colt family genealogy disagrees with his interpretation of the monuments, but it is incorrect in some of the other early family history. Allen, "Netherhall," p. 654.
76. Mynors and Thomson, *Erasmus,* V, 5.
77. Schoeck, *Erasmus, Prince,* p. 87.
78. Warnicke, "Restive Wife," pp. 5–14.
79. P. S. Allen, *Erasmus: Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), pp. 18–9.
80. Mynors and Thomson, *Erasmus*, X, 342, 344.
81. J. Kirby, "Say, [Fynes], Sir John (d. 1478), Administrator and Speaker of the House of Commons," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com (accessed July 24, 2011); Great Britain, Public

Record Office, *Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry VII*, 2 vols. (London: HMSO, 1955–1963), II, no. 628(ii); John Cussans, "Hundred of Hertford," *The History of Hertfordshire,* 3 vols. (London: Chatto and Windum, 1870–1881), I, 163–4; II, 141. Through her namesake daughter Elizabeth Howard, Lady Say was an ancestor of Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard. By her husband, Sir John Say, she had a daughter named Anne who married Sir Harry Wentworth; thus she was also the ancestor of Jane Seymour.

82. C. Johnston, "The Early History of Little Berkhamstead, Herts," *Home Counties Magazine,* 11(1875), 279; Francis Nichols, *The Hall of Lawford Hall* (London: For the Author, 1891), p. 159.
83. Sir William Page (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Hertfordshire*, 4 vols. (London: Dawson Pall Mall Reprint for the Institute of Historical Research, 1971), III, 460–1.
84. Josiah Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Biographies of the Members of the Commons House, 1439–1509* (London: HMSO, 1936), pp. 747–8.
85. Johnston, "Berkhamstead," pp. 279–80. His first wife was Genevieve, daughter and heiress of John Hill of Spaxton, Somerset, who died shortly after her father-in-law in 1478; Great Britain, Public Record Office, *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry VII*, 2 vols. (London: HMSO, 1898), II, nos. 53, 66; Nichols, *Lawford,* p. 173.
86. J. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. Brodie (eds.), *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, 21 vols. in 35 (London: HMSO, 1862–1932), III, p. 1049.
87. For excerpts of William's will, see Cussans, "Hertford," II, 179–80.
88. Usually, his birth year is given as c. 1478; some *Inquisitions Post Mortem* list him as "aged 7 and more" but one said that his father died on October 12, 1485 (1 H. VII) when William was aged nine. See Great Britain, Public Record Office, *Inquisitions Post Mortem,* I, no. 240. James Carley, "Blount, William fourth Baron Mountjoy (c. 1478–1534), Courtier and Literary Patron," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxfoddnb.com (accessed June 23, 2008).
89. Albert Hyma, "Erasmus and the Sacrament of Matrimony," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte. Archive for Reformation History*, 48(1957), 153–64.
90. Mynors and Thomson, *Erasmus*, I, 246.
91. Hyma, "Erasmus," p. 156; *EE*, VII, 1932, p. 292.
92. Mynors and Thomson, *Erasmus*, I, 233.
93. Great Britain, Public Record Office, *Inquisitions Post Mortem*, I, no. 993.
94. *EE*, I, 95, pp. 233–4.
95. *LP,* II, 825, 4185.
96. Mynors and Thomson, *Erasmus,* I, 198, 228, 233.
97. Hyma, "Erasmus," pp. 154–64. See also, J. Sowards, "Erasmus and the Education of Women," *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 13(1982), 77–89.
98. Thompson, *Colloquies*, p. 60.
99. Allen, "Netherhall," p. 654; Mynors and Thomson, *Erasmus*, II, 144; *EE*, I, 211, p. 447.
100. Schoeck, *Erasmus,Prince,* p. 53. Mountjoy married three more times, by the end of July 1509, Agnes de Vanegas, an attendant of Katherine of Aragon; the date of her death is unknown. Before February 15, 1515, he wed Alice, daughter of Henry Keble of St. Mary Aldermary, and widow

of William Brown, who was the mother of his heir, Charles. Following her death in 1521, he wed Dorothy, widow of Robert, second Lord Willoughby and daughter of Thomas Grey, second Marquess of Dorset.

7 Alice More

1. R. W. Chambers, *Thomas More* (Ann Arbor Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1935), p. 399.
2. William Roper, *The Lyfe of Sir Thomas Moore, Knight,* trans. Elsie Hitchcock, Early English Text Society, no. 197 (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 55.
3. Roper, *Moore,* pp. 72–3.
4. Ibid., pp. 79–80.
5. Ibid., pp. 82–4, 131.
6. Nicholas Harpsfield, *The Life and Death of Sr Thomas Moore, Knight, Sometimes Lord High Chancellor of England*, ed. Elsie Hitchcock, Early English Text Society, no. 186 (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), pp. 9–10; Thomas Lawler, Germain Marc'hadour, and Richard Marius (eds.), *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, The Complete Works of St. Thomas More (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963–1990), VI–1, 158, 313 (Hereafter CWM).
7. Harpsfield, *Moore,* p. 93.
8. R. A. B. Mynors and D. F. S. Thomson (trans.), *The Correspondence of Erasmus,* 12 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), VII, 21; P. S. Allen, et al. (eds.), *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, 12 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906–1958), IV, 999, p. 17 (Hereafter *EE*).
9. Harpsfield, *Moore*, pp. 93–4.
10. Ibid., pp. 94–5.
11. Ibid., p. 97.
12. Thomas Stapleton, *The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More*, trans. P. Hallett, ed. E. Reynolds (New York: Fordham University Press, 1966), pp. 85–6.
13. Stapleton, *More*, p. 127. See William Barker (ed.), *The Adages of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), p. 166, for Erasmus's version of the joke.
14. Stapleton, *More*, p. 161.
15. Ro. Ba. [Robert Basset], *The Lyfe of Syr Thomas More, Sometymes Lord Chancellor of England*, ed. Elsie Hitchcock and P. Hallett with additional notes by A. W. Reed, Early English Text Society, no. 222 (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 84–5.
16. Ro. Ba., *More*, pp. 113–4.
17. Ibid., pp. 133–6.
18. Ibid., p. 137.
19. Cresacre More, *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas Moore [1630],* ed. D. M. Rogers (Menston: Scolar Press, 1971), p. 49; Thomas Bridgett, *Life and Writings of Blessed Thomas More: Lord Chancellor of England and Martyr Under Henry VIII*, third ed. (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1924), p. 116.
20. More, *Moore*, pp. 120–1.
21. Ibid., p. 127.

22. Ibid., pp. 233–4, 244–5.
23. Ibid., pp. 306–7, 363.
24. Thomas More, *a Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, ed. Frank Manley (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 122, 172, 225, 283–4; Harold Mason, *Humanism and Poetry in the Early Tudor Period* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1989), p. 52, placed many of More's epigrams in the medieval tradition.
25. Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Clarence Miller, second ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 33.
26. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence,* II, 113; *EE,* I, 191, p. 422.
27. More, *Comfort*, pp. 84, 116–7, 227.
28. Ibid., pp. 116–7.
29. E. Routh, *Sir Thomas More and His Friends, 1477–1535* (New York: Russell and Russell Reprint, 1963 of the 1934 publication), p. 48; Leslie Paul, *Sir Thomas More* (New York: Roy Publishers, 1959), p. 120.
30. Gerard Wegemer, *Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage* (Princeton, NJ: Scepter Publishers, 1995), p. 32.
31. A. Teetgen, *The Footsteps of Sir Thomas More* (London: Sands & Co., 1930); Joseph Clayton, *Sir Thomas More: A Short Study* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1933); John O'Connell, *Saint Thomas More* (London: Duckworth, 1935); Anthony Kenny, *Thomas More* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).
32. Ernest Reynolds, *The Field is Won*: *The Life and Death of St Thomas More* (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce & Co., 1968), pp. 77–8, 316.
33. Lawler, Marc'hadour, and Marius, *Heresies,* CWM, VI–1, 185–6, 301.
34. Ibid., CWM, VI–2, 486, 488, 657; Wegemer, *More*, p. 122, identified the lady as Alice More but mentioned only her wanting to serve her guest dinner.
35. Harpsfield, *Moore,* p. clx ; L. A. Schuster, Richard Marius, James Lusardi, and Richard Schoeck (eds.), *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer,* CWM, VIII–2, 604–5, VIII–3, 1618–9.
36. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, VII, 21.
37. Garry Haupt (ed.), *A Treatise Upon the Passion*, CWM, XIII, 8, 20, 244–5, 248.
38. The *Colloquies of Erasmus* (trans.) Craig Thompson (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1965) p. 60.
39. J. Trapp, "Ammonius, Andreas [Andreas della Rena] (bap. 1476, d. 1517) Humanist Scholar and Poet," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* http://www.oxfoddnb.com (accessed July 24, 2008).
40. Francis Nichols (ed.), *The Epistles of Erasmus, from his Earliest Letters to his Fifty-First Year,* 3 vols. (New York: Russell & Russell Reprint 1962), I, 31.
41. Retha Warnicke, "The Harpy in More's Household: Was It Lady More?" *Moreana,* XXII, 87–8(1985), 5–13, for the Greek references.
42. *EE*, I, 236, p. 476, n. 47.
43. Reynolds, *More,* p. 77.
44. Warnicke, "Harpy," pp. 5–13; Joel Schmidt, *Larousse Greek and Roman Mythology*, ed. Seth Benardete (New York: Mcgraw-Hill, 1980), pp. 117b; Michael Grant and John Hazel, *Gods and Mortals in Classical Mythology* (Springfield, MA: Merriam, 1973), pp. 195–6.
45. Various references are as follows: *EE,* I, 120, p. 282; Barker, *Adages,* pp. 119–23; Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence* I, 246 (translated here as vampires), II, 276, IV, 305, X, 227.

46. Edward Surtz and J. H. Hexter (eds.), *Utopia,* CWM, IV, 52–3.
47. Schuster et al., *Confutation*, pp. 41, 220; Retha Warnicke, *The Marrying of Anne of Cleves: Royal Protocol in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 85.
48. *EE*, VIII, 2212, p. 274; Ernest Reynolds, *Thomas More and Erasmus* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1965), p. 216.
49. Routh, *More*, p. 52; Chambers, *More*, p. 111.
50. John Farrow, *The Story of Thomas More* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), p. 79; Wegemer, *More,* pp. 32–4; James Monti, *The King's Good Servant But God's First* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1997), pp. 53, 77, 349, 364.
51. Ruth Norrington, *In the Shadow of a Saint: Lady Alice More* (Waddeston, UK: Kylin Press, 1983), pp. 9, 30, for example.
52. *EE,* 228, p. 468; Chambers, *More*, p. 108;
53. Peter Ackroyd, *The Life of Thomas More* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998), p. 138.
54. Farrow, *More*, p. 53; Jasper Ridley, *Statesman and Saint: Cardinal Wolsey, Sir Thomas More, and the Politics of Henry VIII* (New York: Viking Press, 1983), p. 127.
55. Lawler, Marc'hadour, and Marius, *Heresies,* CWM, VI–1, 861.
56. R. S. Sylvester and D. P. Harding (eds.), *Two Early Tudor Lives*: *The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey by George Cavendish and the Life of St. Thomas More by William Roper* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 199, 243.
57. Norrington, *Alice*, pp. 9–27.
58. Ibid., p. 22; John Guy, *A Daughter's Love: Thomas More and His Dearest Meg* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009), pp. 40–1, 60, 221, claimed that Alice, while married to More, attempted to obtain Markhall Hall but did not cite a specific source.
59. G. D. Ramsay, "A Saint in the City: Thomas More at Mercers' Hall, London," *English Historical Review*, 97(1982), 275, for Staplers's financial well-being between 1480 and 1510.
60. NA PROB 11/16, ff. 169v–70.
61. Jackson Boswell, "Poor Lady More," *Renaissance Papers 1991,* ed. George Williams and Barbara Baines (Raleigh, NC: Southeastern Renaissance Conference, 1992), p. 31.
62. J. Trapp and Hubertus Herbrüggen (eds.), *"The King's Good Servant": Sir Thomas More, 1477/8–1535* (Ipswich: Boydell Press, 1977), no. 281.
63. Letitia Lyell and Frank Watney (eds.), *Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), pp. 320, 330–5; Ramsay, "Saint," p. 280.
64. Lyell and Watney, *Acts of the Mercers',* pp. xxi, 318; Mercers' Company, *The Charters, Ordinances, and Bye-Laws of The Mercers' Company* (London: Privately Printed, 1881), p. 69; John More's second and third wives were widows of John Marchall and Thomas Bowes, mercers. His fourth wife, Alice, was a widow of John Clerk. His first wife, the mother of Thomas, was Agnes, daughter of Thomas Graunger, Alderman of London. See Margaret Hastings, "The Ancestry of Sir Thomas More," *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More*, ed. Richard Sylvester and Germain Marc'hadour (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1977), pp. 93, 98.

65. J. Kingdon, *Richard Grafton, Citizen and Grocer of London* (London: Privately Printed by Richard Arnold, 1901), Appendix, xxi, noted that a Mrs. More and her daughter were guests. Richard Sylvester, "Review," *Renaissance News,* 16(1963), 321, identified this Mrs. More as Alice.
66. James Gairdner, "A Letter Concerning Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More," *English Historical Review*, 7(1892), 713–5; Jeremy Boulton, "Itching After Private Marryings? Marriage Customs in Seventeenth-Century London," *The London Journal,* 16(1991), 17.
67. Lawler, Marc'hadour, and Marius, *Heresies,* CWM, VI–2, 614; More, *Moore,* p. 230.
68. Peter Laslett, *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations: Essays in Historical Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). p. 13.
69. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence,* II, 193, 197–200.
70. Ibid., VII, 21.
71. Ibid., II, 176; More, *Moore,* p. 48.
72. More, *Moore,* p. 47.
73. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, VI, 85, 148, 150; VIII, 105, 135; XI, 80.
74. Barker, *Adages,* pp. 122–3; Germain Marc'hadour, "Erasmus as Priest: Holy Orders in His Vision and Practice," *Erasmus' Vision of the Church,* ed. Hilmar Pabel (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1995), p. 126, said that Erasmus considered priests' avarice and ambition "worse and more havoc" than their sexual impurity.
75. John Smyth, *The Berkeley MSS. Vols. 1–2: The Lives of the Berkeleys, Lords of the Manor of Berkeley, Vol. 3: Description of the Hundred of Berkeley*, ed. John MacClean (Gloucester: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1883–1885), II, 257, 284–5; Mynors and Thomson, Correspondence, II, 196. For further information about housing, see also, Christopher Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages: Social Change in England, c. 1200–1520* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 99.
76. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, II, 268.
77. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. H. Brodie (eds.), *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, 21 vols. in 35 (London: HMSO, 1862–1932), I, no. 128 (Hereafter *LP*).
78. J. K. Sowards, "The Two Lost Years of Erasmus: Summary, Review, and Speculation," *Studies in the Renaissance*, 9(1962), 184.
79. Charles Gayley, *The Classic Myths in English Literature and in Art*, new ed. (Waltham, MA: Blaisdell, 1911), pp. 46–9, 355.
80. See for instance, Francis Nichols, *The Hall of Lawford Hall: Records of An Essex House and of Its Proprietors from the Saxon Times to the Reign of Henry viii* (London: Printed for the Author, 1891), p. 246.
81. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence,* X, 28; Hastings Robinson (ed.), *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation*, Parker Society, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846-1847), II, no. 187, p. 388.
82. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, I, 61; VIII, 177.
83. Ibid., II, 205; IV, 274–5; V, 12, 177; VI, 54, 141, 318; IX, 139; XI, 219, 240; Henry de Vocht, *Monumenta Humanistica Lovaniensia: Texts and Studies about Louvain Humanists in the First Half of the XVIth Century* (Louvain: Librairie Universitaire, 1934), pp. 5, 443, noted that even Vives was reluctant to return to his homeland.

84. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence,* II, 175–7, 192, 195–6.
85. Conal Condren, "Dame Alice More & Xanthippe: Sisters to Mistress Quickly?" *Moreana, 16:*64(1980), 60–4.
86. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, III, 236, 297.
87. R. Schoeck, *Erasmus of Europe: The Making of a Humanist, 1467–1500* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1990), p. 252, for his dislike of travel.
88. *EE*, II, 451, p. 217; Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, IV, 38; Nichols, *Erasmus,* II, 320; I consulted with my colleague, Antonella Dell'Anna of the School of International Letters and Culture, Arizona State University, concerning this translation.
89. Two dates are given for the wedding in the editorial notes of Harpsfield, *Moore*, p. 313; the other date was February 21, 1516, which seems unlikely because it occurred during Lent.
90. C. S. Facer, ed., *Erasmus and His Times: a Selection from the Letters of Erasmus and His Circle* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchaszy-Carducci Pub., 1988), p. 59.
91. Facer, *Erasmus*, p. 60.
92. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, IX, 188
93. Ibid., IV, 39.
94. Ibid., X, 368. Fisher lived on an estuary that exposed mud-flats at low tide.
95. Lawler, Marc'hadour, and Marius, *Heresies*, CWM, VI–2, 486, 488, 657.
96. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence,* IV, 56, 93, 372.
97. *EE*, III, 785, p. 239; Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence,* V, 326–7.
98. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, VII, 19, 21–22.
99. Richard Pace, *De Fructu Qui Ex Doctrina Percipitur* (The Benefit of a Liberal Education), trans. Frank Manley and Richard. Sylvester (New York: Frederick Ungar for The Renaissance Society of America, 1967), p. 47.
100. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence,* VIII, 295–6.
101. *EE,* VIII, 2212, p. 274; Reynolds, *More and Erasmus*, p. 216.
102. *EE,* X, 2735, p. 123; Marcus Haworth (trans.), *Erasmus and His Age: Selected Letters of Desiderius Erasmus,* ed. Hans Hillerbrand (New York: Harper & Row: 1970), p. 267.
103. EE, X, 2750, pp. 135–6; Reynolds, *More and Erasmus*, p. 214.
104. Gairdner, "Letter," p. 714.
105. Roper, *Moore,* p. 49.
106. Schuster et al., *Confutation*, p. 42.
107. Stapleton, *More*, p. 69.
108. *Sir Thomas More, Selected Letters* (trans.) Elizabeth Rogers (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 239; see also, Elizabeth Rogers (ed.), *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947), p. 530, for a comment about being awake while his wife slept; More, *Moore*, p. 268.
109. Mynors and Thomson, *Correspondence*, III, 234.
110. Ibid., IV, 171–2.
111. Rogers, *Selected Letters*, p. 104.
112. Barker, *Adages,* pp. 119, 169.
113. C. Paul Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More's London* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 75.

114. Walter Smith, *The Wydow Edyth* is the first jest in ed. W. C. Hazlitt, *Shakespeare Jest Books,* 3 vols. (London: Willis & Sotheran, 1864), III, 36–108. The visit to Chelsea is on pp. 75–86.
115. Smith, *Edyth*, p. 84.
116. Ruth Norrington, The *Household of Sir Thomas More*: *A Portrait by Hans Holbein* (Waddeston, UK: Kylin Press, 1985); David Smith, "Portrait and Counter-Portrait in Holbein's 'The Family of Sir Thomas More,'" *The Art Bulletin*, 87(2005), 484–506.
117. Stapleton, *More*, p. 85.
118. Rogers, *Selected Letters*, pp. 170–1.
119. Margaret Hastings, "Sir Thomas More: Maker of English Law?" *Essential Articles*, p. 104, for the case, NA, C 1/706/34.
120. Norrington, *Alice,* p. 75; Guy, *Dearest Meg*, p. 43.
121. James McConica, "The Recusant Reputation of Thomas More," *Essential Articles*, p. 137; Guy, *Dearest Meg*, pp. 5–6, argued that Margaret helped her father "conquer his physical and mental fears" and "face Henry's wrath." She may have included the phrase "in as far as it would stand with the law of God." in her vow. See Chambers, *More*, p. 312, but he cited no evidence for this claim.
122. Albert Geritz, "More's Remarriage: Or, Dame Alice Vindicated," *Indiana Social Studies Quarterly*, 37(1984), 54.
123. Rogers, *Correspondence*, pp. 514–32.
124. Rogers, *Selected Letters*, pp. 214–5, 234–42, 245–53, 256–8.
125. Philip Bell, "Lady Alice the Unknown," *Moreana,* 59(1978), 11; Rogers, *Selected Letters*, p. 258.
126. J. Duncan Derrett, "More's Conveyance of His Lands and the Law of Fraud," *Moreana*, 5(1965), 19–24; Guy, *Dearest Meg,* p. 227; Trapp, *Good Servant*, nos. 236, 239, 251. Actually, the Act of Annulment in 1536 voided a deed of enfoeffment and an act of indenture.
127. BL Arundel MS. 152, f. 300v; Rogers, *Correspondence*, pp. 547–8.
128. Rogers, *Correspondence*, pp. 554–5.
129. Geritz, "Remarriage," p. 51.
130. Roper, *Moore*, p 101.
131. Germain Marc'hadour, "Supplique de Dame Alice More au Chancelier Audley (1538?)," *Moreana,* 4(1964), 71–2.
132. J. Duncan Derrett, "More's Attainder and Dame Alice's Predicament," *Moreana*, 6(1965), 9–26.,
133. Norrington, *Alice*, pp. 113–4; *LP,* no. XII, 795, gr. 28.
134. Roper, *Moore*, p. xli ; the depositions are NA, C 24/52, Roper v. Royden and the pleadings in chancery, C 3/153/1.
135. Roper, *Moore*, pp. xxxv-vi
136. Trapp, *Good Servant,* no. 236.
137. Rogers, *Selected Letters,* p. 258.
138. Norrington, *Alice*, p. 115.
139. More, *Moore*, p. 363.
140. Norrington, *Alice*, p. 118. Norrington also tentatively identified Alice as the "Alice More, widow," who was sought in marriage by Roland Hunt when she was 71 years old (p. 117).
141. Sir Thomas More, *The Workes of Sir Thomas More, Knyght, Sometyme Lord Chauncellour of England, Wrytten by Him in the Englysh Tonge,* ed. William

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8 Conclusion

1. Alison Wall, "Elizabethan Precept and Feminine Practice: The Thynne Family of Longleat," *History,* 75(1990), 29.
2. Henry, of course, raised her to the nobility after he planned to wed her.
3. T. G. Ashplant and Adrian Wilson, "Present-Centred History and the Problem of Historical Knowledge," *Historical Journal*, 31(1988), 253–74.
4. Retha Warnicke, "Reshaping Tudor Biography: Anne Boleyn and Anne of Cleves," *Writing Biography: Historians & Their Craft*, ed. Lloyd Ambrosius (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), pp. 53–78.

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Index

Note: References to illustrations are printed in bold.