

Counties without borders? Religious Politics, Kinship Networks and the Formation of Catholic Communities

Abstract

This article examines the formation of Catholic communities and the roles played by religious politics and kinship networks within that process. It contributes to historiographical debates about early modern English Catholics' self-identification in religio-political terms, suggesting that intra-Catholic feuds were not the sole preserve of the Catholic missionary clergy. It uses the Petre family, barons of Writtle in Essex, as a case study by which to argue that these seemingly inward-looking debates were actually about how the community understood itself in relation to the state and, as such, were fundamental in the process of English Catholic community construction.

This article examines the formation of Catholic communities and the roles played by religious politics and kinship networks within that process. It contributes to the debate started in John Bossy's *The English Catholic Community, 1570–1850* (1975) and continued in Michael Questier's *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England* (2008) about English Catholics' self-identification in religio-political terms. The article argues against the perception that English Catholic politics was overwhelmingly the sole preserve of the clergy so of no consequence for the lives or experiences of the laity. Such a perception has arisen because of the historical accident that a larger amount of source material generated by the clergy has survived, partly due to them sending so much correspondence to their religious superiors based outside England. Thus the general perception has arisen of an ideologically quiescent lay Catholic community. In contrast, the Petre family archive,¹ despite likely only

representing a fraction of the paperwork that the family would have produced, allows the historian to draw conclusions about a significant section of the population that did not identify with the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. The use of such a family archive, when studied alongside sources more frequently cited like clerical correspondence or printed polemic, shows lay Catholics initiating, reacting to, and interacting with, events. As such, intra-Catholic feuds had wide repercussions as they were about how the community identified and understood itself, particularly in relation to a state that indulged in periodic outbursts of bloody violence against it. This was a politically informed lay Catholicism that did not just affect English Catholics' outlook but shaped it, dictating marriage alliances and kinship relationships. Central to this argument is the idea that despite its emotional violence – the capacity to rip apart hitherto close communities and even families – the Reformation formed new ties. It is here, therefore, that can be found both the fault lines within the post-1580 Catholic community, but also, paradoxically, the ideological glue that bound it together.

The article will open with a brief outline of the Petre family following Henry VIII's break with Rome to the outbreak of the English civil war, showing that, superficially, they generally behaved to the historiographically expected norm of the early modern English Catholic landowner. In contrast to this standard behaviour, the Petres' commitment to the Jesuit vision of English Catholicism will next be explored, first through the marriage of William, 2nd baron Petre, and then the matches made by his children. It will be argued that these marriage alliances were not just with other Catholic families in the surrounding area, as is frequently assumed. Rather, the marriages were explicitly to other Jesuit-supporting families, the Petres looking far beyond the county boundaries of Essex in order to forge relationships with other like-minded Catholics.

Originally, the Petre family was from South Devon, until William Petre² settled in Essex, built Ingatestone Hall and acquired vast estates having proved a man of somewhat elastic conscience by serving four Tudor monarchs. Between 1544 and 1557 he served as Principal Secretary of State. Ingatestone Hall was built on former monastic land that was granted to him by the crown. Never less than scrupulous, William Petre ensured he secured absolution from the Pope for his actions in November 1555 during Mary I's vigorous attempts at re-Catholicizing the country.³ For good measure, Reginald, Cardinal Pole acted as confirmation sponsor for his oldest surviving son, John.⁴

On the death of Sir William in January 1572, John succeeded to his father's vast estate. Unlike his father, John never took up a government position of national importance but he was a significant figure locally, diligent in his work, offering seemingly loyal, conformist service. He was High Sheriff of Essex 1575–76⁵ and knighted at the end of his tenure. From 1584–87, he was knight of the shire for Essex, then the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Essex from 1588–1603, as well as commander of a regiment of six hundred local men levied in order to repel the attempted Armada invasion. He was collector of the forced loan for Essex from 1590 to 1598, as well as one of the commissioners for the county musters.⁶ Furthermore, he was a prominent Essex magistrate from 1573 onwards and also sat on the commission of justices charged to examine and restrain papists and seminary priests in the south-east corner of Essex, not to mention the 1591/92 commission against Jesuits and seminary priests.⁷ In 1603, James I raised John to the peerage as baron Petre of Writtle.⁸ He died on 11 October 1613.

Such a career trajectory is fairly typical of the Elizabethan country gentleman and, with the added knowledge that he was also a church papist whilst his wife a recusant, John Petre represented the typical *Catholic* country gentleman. Nevertheless, he had dealings with the

first wave of seminary-trained priests to enter England and had close links to the launching of the notorious 1580 Jesuit mission, which would, arguably, be the first defining moment in domestic country Catholicism.⁹

William, 2nd baron Petre was Sir John's eldest son from his marriage to Mary, daughter of Sir Edward Waldegrave, who had been prominent in Mary's reign and had subsequently died in the Tower of London for hearing Mass and harbouring priests.¹⁰ He was born at another Petre Essex residence, Thorndon Hall, in 1575 and, after attending Exeter College, Oxford, he married Katherine, daughter of Edward Somerset, 4th earl of Worcester in 1596. Once again, the Petres were marrying into a Catholic family – Queen Elizabeth had allegedly commented on Somerset that he 'reconciled what she believed impossible a stiff papist to a good subject'.¹¹ Unlike his father-in-law, the 2nd baron Petre did not conform to the state church.

When he was younger, William had been a Member of Parliament, representing Essex from 1597. He was often to be found at court at the end of Elizabeth's reign.¹² Furthermore, from 14 to 20 April 1603, he spent £17 'in goinge to the Kinge at york & backe', meaning he was one of those who rode to greet James I, no doubt excited at the 'Catholic' choice – or at least the belated candidate of Robert Persons – coming to the throne.¹³ He attended several of the masques which were a feature of the Jacobean Court, including one at Whitehall to celebrate 'the Princes creation', at which he and the earl of Worcester participated in the actual ceremony.¹⁴ On the death of his father, William became more involved locally, serving as a Justice of the Peace and attending many of the Quarter Sessions from 1617 to 1623. Moreover, his faith seemed to be of little importance when the Privy Council was requesting 'voluntary gifts' in defence of the Protestant Palatinate, the 'heritage of the Count Palatine, his ma[jesty]s Sone in lawe', as it increasingly came under threat from the Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand II, in October 1620.¹⁵

However, in 1625, with the House of Commons insisting on strict enforcement of the penal laws, he was dismissed from the magistracy. His arms and armour was delivered to the earl of Warwick at Leez Priory in Essex that December.¹⁶ This sudden turn in fortunes occurred despite his receiving a pardon of grace following Charles I's marriage to Henrietta Maria and being invited to the 'Royall Coronation'.¹⁷ Nevertheless, William would not conform, resulting in his being presented by the Grand Jury in Essex on 12 January 1625/26, only an intervention from Charles I stopping him being tried for recusancy.¹⁸ At the end of January 1625/26, Lord Petre also received 'a dispensation to be absent from Parliament, which is almost certainly to be interpreted as a disqualification'.¹⁹ This, however, did not stop him acting as a commissioner for the collection of the forced loan.²⁰

That the Petres were becoming central to a Catholic community due to their marital connections is evident in that 'five of the thirteen Catholic peers disarmed at the same time [as William] were related to Lord Petre by marriage'.²¹ As such, the family was at the forefront of active Catholicism amongst the nobility, notably in their patronage of the Jesuits. In 1633 William funded the erection of the Jesuit College of the Holy Apostles to cover Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, Bossy estimating that the Petre investment was one of the largest benefactions received by any Catholic clergy during the period of official religious proscription against Catholics.²²

William's oldest surviving son was Robert, born at Ingatestone in 1599, and possibly named after his godfather, Sir Robert Cecil.²³ Robert and his younger brother, William, matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, in February 1612/13, but became the first Fellow Commoners of Wadham College when it was founded in 1610 by their great-aunt Dorothy Wadham.²⁴ Robert subsequently married Mary, daughter of Anthony Browne, 2nd viscount Montague and spent much of his life at Ingatestone Hall, which his father had handed over in 1623.

In 1637, William, 2nd Lord Petre died, being succeeded by Robert. However, Robert died on 28 October 1638, barely eighteen months later. In turn, his heir was the eleven year-old William, who became the 4th Lord Petre. His young age, particularly where a Catholic family was concerned, was potentially disastrous as he became a ward of the Crown.²⁵ Later in life, William was held in the Tower of London without trial for five years, Titus Oates claiming that he saw William receiving a commission as a Lieutenant-General of the 'Popish Army' as part of the fictitious Oates Plot. Incarcerated, William died in 1684.²⁶

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Such a family history is a fairly typical tale of country Catholicism in early modern England: gentry and noble families initially remained important local figures but, as the generations progressed, they were gradually being squeezed out of the higher positions of authority they would once have expected and, in the meantime, shifted into more set patterns of religious expression and observance.²⁷ What is often depicted as something of an inevitable drift for lay Catholics was, in the case of the Petres, more committed, centred as it was round their devotion to the Society of Jesus' way of proceeding. Due to their prominent position locally and strength financially, this had an important impact on Catholicism in the geographical area. However, this 'area', frequently understood in terms of the county community,²⁸ can instead be interpreted around the regional idea of the Jesuit college system rather than strict county boundaries. For a family as deeply Jesuitized as the Petres, it can be argued that, although they very much acknowledged these administrative boundaries and played an active role within the county community, fulfilling expectations surrounding hospitality and the behaviour of the local landowner,²⁹ when it really mattered, it was the wider parameters of the Jesuit area that counted for far more. One could even suggest that a rival Catholic

boundary system was running clandestinely at the same time as those publicly accepted on the national map.

An example of this can be seen in recruitment patterns at the English convents established in mainland Europe from the start of the seventeenth century. Women who originated from Essex generally entered convents with a distinct Jesuit ethos and connection, such as the Augustinian convents at Louvain and Bruges, or the Carmelite foundation at Antwerp. Recruitment from the county was also initially strong at the Brussels Benedictine house but collapsed after a dispute which led to the removal of Jesuit spiritual direction and its replacement with an opposing ethos; following this, recruitment from Essex collapsed and was instead directed at the new Jesuit-leaning offshoot Benedictine foundations at Ghent and Cambrai. Essex recruits were negligible at those convents that were formed under secular clergy direction, such as at the Paris Augustinians. The direction of recruitment is not necessarily surprising when it is remembered that the Petres were the major Catholic family in the county and significant county magnates. However, the effect of the Petres' Jesuit patronage seems to have been geographically wider than that, encompassing the whole of the area covered by the Jesuit College of the Holy Apostles. The recruitment patterns mirrored those for Essex, underlining that, with politically involved Catholics, networks of religious patronage overrode county networks; in this example, the Petres' patronage of the Jesuits set the tone for a wide geographical area with little heed taken of county boundaries.³⁰

Yet for the Petres, this patronage of a particular vision of English Catholicism went further and was the guiding principle behind the family's marriage policy. In turn, this had a major impact on Catholic community formation nationally. As is to be expected, the marriages, particularly from the second baron onwards, were all Catholic. This is frequently where analysis of country Catholic marriages ends, yet, if we examine further the matches of the

Petre offspring, it is clear policy that these are more than just Catholic alliances but specifically ones with other Jesuit-supporting families.

As already mentioned, the 2nd baron Petre married Katherine, daughter of Edward Somerset, 4th earl of Worcester, in 1596. The 1st baron's will amply illustrates the attachment he felt for his daughter-in-law.³¹ Some of this affection can no doubt be explained as the natural reaction to a son's happiness, as well as his making a 'good match' with the daughter of a privy councillor. An additional cause of his evident delight may have been the family's Catholicism and particularly their support for the Jesuits. This bond between the Petre and Somerset families cannot be underplayed; it was arguably the most important marriage alliance the Petres made and would help to set the tone for both the family's immediate survival and, to some extent, a significant strand of the post-Reformation English Catholic community. Like the 1st baron, Edward Somerset, 4th earl of Worcester, was outwardly conformist. Nevertheless, before he succeeded to the title, he had been arrested following the 1580 launch of the Jesuit Mission to England and was considered a Catholic by the government.³² Worcester gave shelter to the Jesuit superior Robert Jones (c.1564–1615) at the family seat of Raglan Castle in Monmouthshire and in 1600 granted the Society some Welsh lands and farms. Jones was to wield huge influence over the Somerset family, reconciling all the earl's children, including his second son and eventual heir, Henry, Lord Herbert, later 5th earl and 1st marquess of Worcester (1577–1646). The first of his 'converts' was the earl's daughter, Frances, who in 1596 had married one of Jones' patrons, William Morgan of Llantarnam.³³ She visited the Petres in August 1613.³⁴ As McCoog states, 'With her assistance, Jones later received her sisters into the Church',³⁵ including, presumably, Katherine Petre. From that point on, the family became known for its commitment to Catholicism.

As was the case with the 2nd baron Petre, Henry, Lord Herbert, was amongst the recusant nobility disarmed in 1625.³⁶ In 1609, a cipher list of Jesuit ‘churches’ named Henry, Lord Herbert, and the Morgans who were still under the charge of Robert Jones, SJ.³⁷ By the time of the intra-Catholic feud known as the approbation affair and the Jesuit-inspired opposition to Richard Smith, bishop of Chalcedon,³⁸ the Somerset clan were firmly on the Jesuit side of the divide. For example, the names Worcester and Herbert were to be found amongst the signatories to the 1628 remonstrance against Smith.³⁹ The 1631 anti-Smith *Protestatio Declaratoria* was signed by Henry, 5th earl of Worcester, his son Edward, Lord Herbert, and the 5th earl’s younger brother, Thomas Somerset, 1st viscount Somerset of Cashel.⁴⁰ That same year, Smith made a list of those laypeople opposed to him and these three were again included.⁴¹

Like the Petres, the family established a Jesuit college. Bossy believes that the Welsh college of St Francis Xavier was initially founded by a bequest made by Lady Frances Somerset, the wife of William Morgan, around 1620. He estimates that the rest of the funds were provided by other members of the family and the house at the Cwm, near Monmouth purchased for the purpose, though McCoog claims that the foundation was squarely the initiative of Henry, 5th earl of Worcester.⁴² During his stay in England, Gregorio Panzani, the unofficial papal emissary sent from Rome to try and dissipate the bad feeling between the religious orders and the secular clergy, visited Sir Charles Somerset, another brother of the 5th earl, on 23 December 1634/2 January 1634/35 in an attempt to ascertain his position on the arguments engulfing the Catholic community. Charles prevaricated but he quickly found his nerve when rejecting the idea of a bishop who would undertake visitations around the country. In fact, he did not believe the Holy Spirit would allow such an extravagant bishop even to be sent.⁴³ A ‘baron’ Somerset, presumably the 5th earl, visited Panzani on 5/15 April

1635 and spoke out against the bishop, though very discreetly.⁴⁴ Panzani was known to be favourable towards the secular cause, so a gentle approach was apt.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of a Petre-Somerset Jesuit-inspired bond came from the secular priest John Southcote, a former member of the Petre circle, but later one of the bishop's chief advocates, who told another Smith supporter, on 10 August 1632, that, 'The 3 Som[er]setts are the father, the son, and a brother, to whom you may add the L[or]d Peter a brother in law, all bee one family, wholly and blindly lead by the Jes[uits].'⁴⁵ This statement emphasises the extent to which the two families had become entwined. Certainly, Southcote's claims are borne out by Petre account books, which reveal the amount of time that various members of the Somerset clan spent with them. The connection with the Somersets started during the 1st baron's lifetime,⁴⁶ but it showed no sign of abating during the 2nd baron's. His parents-in-law, Edward, 4th earl of Worcester, and his wife, regularly appear in the 2nd baron's household accounts, they visiting him and *vice versa*.⁴⁷ Particularly notable are William's dealings with his brothers-in-law because, judging by the amount of contact between them, they were evidently close. Those already mentioned as signatories against the bishop of Chalcedon – Henry, Lord Herbert and Thomas Somerset, 1st viscount Somerset of Cashel⁴⁸ – appear to have enjoyed an especially warm friendship with William. Thomas appeared in the 1st baron Petre's will, as did Edward, 4th earl of Worcester, and his countess.⁴⁹ Two younger brothers – Sir Charles and Sir Edward Somerset⁵⁰ – also feature. There was even a Somerset family gathering at Thorndon Hall in July 1614, when Edward, 4th earl of Worcester and his wife, Sir Thomas and Lady Somerset, Sir Edward Somerset and Henry, Lord Herbert, all stayed for a few days.⁵¹ Also present at this family reunion was a sister, Blanche, who had married Thomas Arundell, the future 2nd baron Arundell of Wardour, whose father was one of those arrested in 1580 following the arrival of the Jesuits.⁵²

The Petres and the Somersets had therefore forged a bond that was extremely close and, it can be argued, was more than just a marriage alliance of mutual regard and good companionship. The glue that bound them was their roles as major backers of the Jesuit vision of Catholicism in England, transforming a marriage partnership of religious convenience into a full-blown politically-charged alliance. Intriguingly, in about 1626, William, 2nd baron Petre, and his son and heir, Robert, granted an annuity of £300 a year to Edward Somerset, son and heir of Henry, Lord Herbert.⁵³ That year marks the beginning of the approbation affair and, perhaps, offers ample evidence of what this marriage really signified; namely, two leading pro-Jesuit families cementing their alliance for the fight that was already rumbling within the Catholic community.

The marriage of William Petre to Lady Katherine Somerset was thus a pivotal moment for the Petre family and the formation of a Catholic community. It was a suitably splendid ceremony, immortalised by Edmund Spenser in his *Prothalamion* (1596).⁵⁴ Furthermore, it was a joint affair: Katherine's sister, Elizabeth, married Sir Henry Guildford at the same time, thus creating another key associate for William. Like the Somersets, Guildford was reportedly reconciled by the Jesuits he and his wife entertained, though it should be noted that his father had been arrested following the Jesuits' arrival in 1580 and his mother was a known recusant.⁵⁵ Moreover, the London house of Sir Henry's parents was a Mass centre, as testified by the future priest martyr, William Dean, during an examination after his capture in 1582; he claimed to have lived chiefly with the Guildfords.⁵⁶ The Guildfords also spent a great deal of time with the 2nd baron Petre and his wife.⁵⁷ This was a practice that had begun with the 1st baron Petre, who, as with the Somersets, had welcomed such additions to his wider 'family', even though he was not directly related to them.⁵⁸ Lady Elizabeth Guildford was amongst the gatherings of Somerset women hosted by Lady Katherine Petre.⁵⁹ So well did relationships develop between the two families that the 2nd baron's niece, Katherine,

daughter of Thomas Petre of Cranham, married one of the Guildfords' sons, Edward.⁶⁰ Underscoring the proximity between the two families is the fact that another son, Henry Guildford, travelled to the continent in 1619 with the 2nd baron's sons, Edward and Thomas, and later become a Jesuit.⁶¹ The Petre-Somerset marriage alliance opened up a whole new system of networks, which pulled in various members of the Somerset family, the Guildfords' Jesuit-supporting background explaining why they were 'embraced' into this community to such a great extent.

The Somerset link led to a Petre connection with another Jesuit-supporting family, the Winters. Anne Somerset, the third daughter of Edward, 4th earl of Worcester, had married Sir Edward Winter, one of the largest landowners in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, whose family seat was in Lydney. Anne had accompanied her mother to Thorndon Hall during John Petre's lifetime, as well as dining there with her husband, a habit she continued during the 2nd baron Petre's time as head of the family, no doubt to visit her sister, Katherine Petre.⁶² As such, she was named in the 2nd baron's will; their proximity was notable, Anne described as 'my most loving sister.'⁶³ The couple's eldest son, Sir John Winter (c.1600–76), was lobbying the king against the bishop and the secular cause in 1634.⁶⁴ The unofficial Vatican emissary, Panzani, noted that when he visited the Jesuit provincial Richard Blount, he found him at the home of Sir John Winter.⁶⁵ Sir John Winter also joined his brother-in-law, Henry, 5th earl of Worcester, in speaking out against the bishop in front of Panzani.⁶⁶ His brother, Sir Robert Winter, was no less on the Jesuit side. The former Petre network member turned Smith supporter, John Southcote, wrote in August 1632 that:

M[aste]r Rob[ert] winter the nuns champion, and the Jesuitts brother, and as some say a Jesuitt him self goeth up and down to Cath[olic] houses and there assureth them that although the Pope should confirme the B[isho]p in his authority, yet

they were not bound to obey him. to this effect he spake at S[i]r William Sturtons house in Surrey before much compaghny on the table openly.⁶⁷

As such staunch Jesuit supporters, it is little wonder that members of the Winter family were included amongst the intended recipients of Petre legacy rings following the death of the 2nd baron's wife.⁶⁸ Again, it was a marriage bond that flourished because of similar religio-political aspirations as far as the English Mission was concerned.

Catherine Somerset, another sister of the 2nd baron Petre's wife, married Thomas Windsor, the 6th baron Windsor. Probably due to the Somerset connection, the 2nd baron Petre sent a gift at the birth of Lord Windsor's first child in March 1608, whilst Lady Windsor visited the Petres a few months later.⁶⁹ This link was no doubt strengthened by the Windsors' support for the Jesuits. In 1629, Lord Windsor and his wife were recorded by the pro-Smith faction as Regular-supporting Catholics living in London.⁷⁰ Moreover, Lord Windsor was a signatory of the lay answer to Smith and the 1631 *Protestatio Declaratoria*, whilst Smith included him on a list of his leading Catholics opponents.⁷¹ The Windsors were also amongst the intended recipients of Petre legacy rings.

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That the 2nd baron's religio-political legacy lived on was at least partly due to his own children's marriages. With one exception, they were resoundingly 'Jesuit' matches, the only question being to what extent the new members' families were committed Jesuit supporters beforehand. In other words, was it the Petre-factor that pulled them into the Society's orbit? Traditional historiography has noted how Catholics understandably tended to marry co-religionists. Though never exclusive, it was shared religion that mattered in this market.⁷² To

some extent this is correct but, in forming Catholic communities, the *type* of Catholicism practised by a politicised laity was just as fundamental.

Elizabeth, the 2nd baron's eldest child, made such a match by marrying William Sheldon of Beoley, Worcestershire, in April 1612.⁷³ Sheldon's father, Ralph, had been friendly with the 2nd baron's father, as well as with the Jesuits, most notably Robert Persons.⁷⁴ With such pro-Jesuit credentials, it is hardly surprising that various members of the Sheldon family feature regularly in the Petre household accounts.⁷⁵ Other evidence indicates the high level of Sheldon integration within the Petre network. For example, the couple were bequeathed legacy rings by the 2nd baron Petre's wife and feature in the 3rd baron's will.⁷⁶ Around 1630, they seem to have been housing Benedictines, the order which initially led the charge, in collaboration with the Jesuits, against the Bishop of Chalcedon during the approbation affair and which the couple's son, Edward, later entered.⁷⁷ Likewise, William Sheldon supported the Regulars against Smith, signing the 1631 *Protestatio*.⁷⁸ The 2nd baron's eldest child therefore married into a Catholic family outside Essex and their immediate geography, the match based on strong Jesuit connections.

Lord Petre's second child was Robert, the future 3rd baron, who will be considered later. After him came Mary who, in 1615, married John Roper, later the 3rd baron Teynham.⁷⁹ In 1616, the 2nd baron Petre oversaw the will of Roper's grandfather, the 1st baron Teynham, the bond between the families presumably being solidified by the marriage.⁸⁰ Certainly, following the couple's nuptials, the Ropers were a regular fixture at the 2nd baron's residences.⁸¹ In September 1618, they were at Thorndon Hall at the same time as George Talbot, 9th earl of Shrewsbury, whose house at Clerkenwell was a Jesuit residence.⁸² Thus, the 3rd baron Teynham must have been fully exposed to the ideas of several hard-line Jesuit backers. This appears to have been the case, for in c.1623, Mary Roper played a major role in the establishment of the Jesuit House of Probation of St Ignatius in the London area, which

was based at Shrewsbury's Clerkenwell residence.⁸³ Like the 2nd baron Petre, Roper was amongst the recusants disarmed in 1625.⁸⁴ On his death only two years later, his widow and the 2nd baron Petre applied for the wardship of Roper's son and heir, Christopher, but were refused due to their recusancy.⁸⁵ However, Petre influence had already been exerted and was only to grow stronger. In 1628, a government informant named Lord Teynham's London residence as a Jesuit base.⁸⁶ That same year, the young Christopher, 4th baron Teynham, signed the remonstrance against Smith, whilst by 1631 Smith was including the young peer amongst his opponents.⁸⁷ Smith's supporters were under no illusion as to who to blame for Teynham's firm Jesuit support, describing him in 1635 as:

... of the noble family of Roper in the County of Kent. He is a young man of about twenty years, and under the protection of his mother, who is a daughter of baron Petre, and totally under the influence of the Jesuits.⁸⁸

This was seemingly a case of the 2nd baron overseeing a Catholic marriage for his daughter, but then using this bond to draw the other family firmly on to the Jesuit side. It is difficult to ascertain the Ropers' position over direction of the English mission prior to the Petre match, but, after it, there was no doubt. Moreover, Mary was determined to raise her child in the 'Jesuit' fashion.

Born in 1602, William Petre, who founded the branch of the family in Stanford Rivers, Essex, was Lord Petre's next child. He married Lucy, daughter of Sir Richard Fermor of Somerton, Oxfordshire, in 1629.⁸⁹ Like his son-in-law, Richard Fermor signed the 1631 *Protestatio* against Smith,⁹⁰ underlining that this was an anti-Smith, pro-Regular match. Sir Richard Fermor and his wife were both bequeathed legacy rings following the death of the 2nd baron Petre's wife.⁹¹ Three less notable matches followed this one. William's younger

brother, Edward, married Elizabeth, daughter of Roger Griffith of Flintshire, whilst the next son, John, who founded the branch of the family at Fithlers, near Writtle in Essex, married Elizabeth, daughter of John Pincheon of Writtle, Essex. Next was Thomas Petre, who married Ursula, daughter of Thomas Brooke.

Lord Petre's youngest daughter, Katherine, married John Caryll of Warnham, Sussex, son of Sir John Caryll of Harting. Members of this resolutely Catholic family had earlier had dealings with the Jesuits, though some had oscillated somewhat over their position on the future of the English Mission.⁹² Nevertheless, following the marriage, the family aligned itself more firmly with the Jesuit cause, their Sussex residence being recorded by the secular clergy in c.1630 as lost to the Jesuits.⁹³ Duly aligned, the couple were bequeathed legacy rings in c.1625; the future 3rd baron Petre was recording dealings with 'my brother Carreil' around the same time.⁹⁴ John Caryll also acted as witness to the 2nd baron's will, underlining his 'entry' into the Petre fold.⁹⁵ Subsequently, the Lords Petre provided an annuity for one John Caryll, perhaps either this one or the couple's eldest son, also John, who was partly educated at the Jesuit-run school at St Omers before heading to the English College, Rome. A daughter, Mary, founded the Benedictine convent of the Immaculate Conception at Dunkirk, later becoming its abbess.⁹⁶ This was, once again, a match leaning towards the Jesuit side, this inclination becoming more solid once the family had been fully assimilated into the Petre network.

Katherine Petre's younger brother was Henry, who married Anne, fourth daughter of Sir John Gage of Firle, Sussex, and his wife Penelope, daughter of Thomas Darcy, 1st earl Rivers.⁹⁷ Sir John Gage had signed the 1631 *Protestatio* against Smith.⁹⁸ As for Anne herself, an account of her death was written in 1640, in which it was revealed that she had been educated by Mary Ward and her companions, also known as the Jesuitesses:

At her last return fro[m] Flanders she tould in confidence to a friend that she alwayes had an especial esteeme of Religious Persons w[i]th whome she had been particularly acquainted fro[m] the time she first came to the yeares of discretion till then being about 55 years of age, but now (sayd she) I have had so much further knowledge of them in these 3 moneths journey, that I esteeme them ten times more than ever I did before. She spent a greate part of her meanes in providing Nessessaries for Religious Women, sending yearly to one Com[m]unity of 22 of them a full Provision of cloath, flaxnen, & what this country would afford.⁹⁹

The account records that ‘She bore a exceeding devotion to the Catholik Religion & all things belonging there unto’, noting how she would harbour three to six priests and attempted to attend Mass daily.

Finally, the youngest of the 2nd baron Petre’s sons, George, married Anne, daughter of Sir Henry Fox of Lehurst, Shropshire. From 1639, George oversaw the establishment of what was suspected to be a Jesuit pilgrimage centre near Holywell in Flintshire, a source of great dispute between the regulars and seculars.¹⁰⁰ His wife, Anne, also apparently threw herself into support for the Society. In 1647, her son Edward, from her first marriage to Sir John Mostyn, was admitted to the English College in Rome. Though unsure of whether or not to become an ecclesiastic, it was under his mother and step-father’s orders that Edward had come to Rome, whilst he had two brothers at St Omers and two sisters in a convent at Antwerp.¹⁰¹

In around 1627/28, an anonymous member of the secular clergy made a list of ‘Certaine examples of English Jesuits tyranie over the Cath[olic] laitie in England’. Amongst the claims, seemingly written in Smith’s trademark scrawl, is the following: ‘As for marriges, a

Knight ... fully agreed for a mach betwene his eldest daughter and the sonne of an other prin[cip]al Cath[olic]: because the knight was not addicted to Jes[uits] they broke the mach, and p[ro]cured the Gentleman to marie a daughter of a friend of theirs.’¹⁰² The writer continues with such tales of Jesuit matrimonial control and of their hindering those matches extending outside the ‘magic circle’. Judging by the marriages of the 2nd baron Petre’s progeny, the claims were accurate enough – Jesuit-supporting families ensured that marriages took place to fellow adherents of the Society. However, just because the data is correct, that does not mean that the interpretation placed upon it by the secular clergy is similarly so. In light of the above evidence about the Petres’ strident adherence to the Society’s view of the mission, perhaps it is better to interpret the evidence not as demonstrating Jesuit control of marriage policy, but showing their supporters *choosing* to marry exclusively into like-minded families. The Petre children were not simply marrying the offspring of other Catholic families, treating their religion as a blanket ‘catch-all’, with no discrimination. Rather, this politically-inspired lay Catholicism was the key to community formation and was largely blind to the traditional county network. More than that: when a family appeared to be wavering between the two visions on offer, Petre influence was sufficiently strong to pull them in the Jesuit direction. It is notable that the Petre marriage alliances, though geographically widespread, do not include any families from the north of England. This may have been simply because of distance between different locations but could also be indicative of Christopher Haigh’s assertion that the Jesuit mission was largely focussed on southern counties.¹⁰³

However, there is an exception to the identified marriage pattern: Robert, later 3rd baron Petre, married Mary, daughter of Anthony Maria Browne, 2nd viscount Montague, one of the leading supporters of Richard Smith, bishop of Chalcedon, and his campaign against the Jesuits and religious orders on the English mission.¹⁰⁴ Antony Allison even suggests that

Montague was behind the production of 'The Disclaim of Divers Lay Catholics from the reasons and resolutions of certain lay gentlemen', a work which rejected the anti-Smith proclamations of the Petre circle.¹⁰⁵ Thus, the 2nd baron Petre saw his equally 'Jesuitised' son and heir form a marriage alliance with the daughter of their principal lay 'opponent'. Whereas the Petres were key Jesuit backers, the Brownes were fervent believers in the secular cause, at the opposite end of the Catholic spectrum.

Early Modern English Catholicism was certainly not a uniform entity but it is striking just how limited the contact was between the Brownes and the Petres. The Petres seldom appear in Michael Questier's extensive work on the Brownes, whilst the Brownes' presence in extant Petre documents is negligible compared to that of other families – otherwise exclusively Jesuit-supporting – with which marriages were contracted.¹⁰⁶ Since these were two of the major Catholic families in England and certainly in the south of England, both basic assumption and traditional historiography dictate that they should have allied themselves closely. The lack of contact is marked but is explicable by the notion of community formation being dictated by lay factionalism.

As is the case in all debates, positions adopted by the laity regarding the shape of the English mission were not fixed and there could be slippage between the intra-Catholic groups. At some point between the 1610s and the start of the approbation affair in the second-half of the 1620s, the 2nd viscount Montague was fraternising with the Jesuits.¹⁰⁷ This connection was partly due to hurt pride at his chaplain, Richard Smith, sensibly remaining in France with his patron Armand-Jean du Plessis, later Cardinal Richelieu, but the reason is not of the utmost importance for the issue at hand. That Montague appeared to be siding with the Jesuits is the key point and 1620, the year of the Petre-Browne match, roughly marks the mid-point of his dalliance with that 'wing' of the mission. Montague 'went home' with a vengeance during the approbation affair, but, at the time of the marriage, both families

appeared to be backers of the Jesuit vision of English Catholicism. It could be argued that the reason there was little subsequent mixing between the two families was Montague's 'betrayal' back to the other side. Read in this way, the Petre-Browne marriage is no longer an anomaly.

That lay Catholic politics was essentially 'constructive', in that it shaped these Catholic communities and was fundamental in the development of kinship networks that spread across the country is underlined by other examples involving the Brownes, such as the cooling in the relationship between them and the Wriothesleys, earls of Southampton. Geographically close – the Brownes were based in West and East Sussex, with the Wriothesleys located in Hampshire – one would expect strong ties to have formed between the two families because of their Catholicism. However, the mutual appreciation between them, reaching its zenith in the marriage of Henry Wriothesley, 2nd earl of Southampton, to the 2nd viscount Montague's sister, Mary, soured rapidly. Partly this was due to a deterioration in the couple's relationship, but the cooling also coincided with 'the religious radicalisation of the second earl', who 'was on the fringes of the Persons-Campion agitation in 1580–1' and whose 'following was much more provocatively Catholic than Montague's' more moderate approach.¹⁰⁸

There was a similar 'ideological' rift between the Brownes and another Catholic family with whom a marriage alliance had been entered; the Lacons of Kinlet in Shropshire. Sir Francis Lacon, who married Jane, the 1st viscount's daughter, was an Elizabethan recusant who conformed under James I. However, a split developed between the two families; that the Brownes opposed Jesuit influence whilst the Lacons appear to have been pro-Jesuit seems to have been a cause of this.¹⁰⁹ As Questier suggests, such marriage 'unions were clearly informed and inflected in part by the known Catholic characteristics of these families,'¹¹⁰ but the argument can be taken further than that: the 'characteristics' of that Catholicism did not

just 'inform', but were fundamental in deciding these marital alliances, to which the rapid souring of family relationships bears witness.

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In conclusion, the Petres played a major role in the intra-Catholic debates that would come to define the character of the English Catholic community, in particular during the approbation affair of the late 1620s/1630s. Loosely about the ecclesiastical clearance required from a bishop for a priest to hear confessions and absolve accordingly, this argument was really about the direction of the English mission and the shape of the lay community. The latter played a vital role in these debates and the Petres – as one of the foremost Jesuit supporting families – were unsurprisingly heavily involved on the Jesuit side of debates. Bearing in mind such political activism helps explain both the Petres' marriage matches and their willingness to look far beyond county boundaries as they sought not merely Catholic survival but a particular vision of Catholic behaviour and even activism. The only match not following this rule of ideological coherence was the high profile one between the Petres and the Brownes. The Viscount Montague was strongly of the secular clergy persuasion, yet he did flirt with the Jesuit side on occasion, seemingly batting his eyelashes elsewhere in an effort to get further attention from his generally favoured clerical clients. The Petre match happened during one of these flirtations. With Montague going back full force into the open, desperate arms of the secular clergy, no further relationship seems to have been built between the two families.

This is not the case with the other marriage matches, when even extended family, including various Somersets, regularly visited the Petres for evening meals and the like. Of course, local neighbours, including non-Catholics, also feature in extant records, as is to be

expected with a family like the Petres and the period's expectations surrounding neighbourliness, hospitality and the behaviour of the local landowner.¹¹¹ However, when it really mattered, when it was about lasting alliances, kinship bonds and family lineage, the people the Petres socialized with were overwhelmingly of one persuasion and the choice to mix with them was politically motivated or, at the least, based on religio-political motives. As has been discussed, the same was true in the case of the vicounts Montague. These networks were not bound by county boundaries or such 'artificial' dividing lines, but saw the wide formation of marriage and other alliances, suggesting the term 'country' Catholicism is descriptive on more levels than just one.

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¹ The surviving archive is currently held at Essex Record Office in Chelmsford. For the period under consideration in this article, it is largely made up of business, legal and financial records, particularly books of household and personal expenses, which also record visitors to the family houses. Some letters survive but these are largely concerned with official matters.

² See F. G. Emmison, *Tudor Secretary: Sir William Petre at Court and Home* (London, 1961).

³ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F147.

⁴ C. T. Kuypers, 'Thorndon: its history and its associations: part III', *Brentwood Diocesan Magazine*, 3 (1920), 80–5, at 80. For contact between Pole and the Petres, see *The Correspondence of Reginald Pole*, ed. T. F. Mayer and C. B. Watts (4 vols., Aldershot, 2002–8).

⁵ *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales from the Earliest Times to AD1831 compiled from documents in the Public Record Office, Lists and Indexes, IX*, compiled by A. Hughes and J. Jennings (London, 1898; New York, 1963), p. 45; *APC 1575–77*, p. 155.

⁶ *Acts of the Privy Council of England 1542–1628*, ed. Dasant, J. R. *et al* (46 vols., London, 1890–1964); *APC 1590–91*, pp. 185–7; *APC 1596–97*, p. 460; *APC 1597–98*, p. 559; *APC 1598–99*, pp. 643, 701; *APC 1601–04*, p. 138.

⁷ E.R.O., MS D/DP/O60.

⁸ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F154 is a general pardon granted by letters patent to John, Lord Petre on James' accession. His son, William, also received one: E.R.O., MS D/DP/F155.

⁹ For an exploration of John Petre's Jesuit involvement and his outward conformity, see James E. Kelly, 'Conformity, loyalty and the Jesuit mission to England of 1580', in *Religious Tolerance in the Atlantic World: Early Modern and Contemporary Perspectives*, E. Glaser (Basingstoke, 2013), pp. 149–70. On church papistry and female recusancy more generally see, for example, J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570–1850* (London, 1975), pp. 155–7; A. Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 1993); A. Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain* (Farnham, 2014), pp. 53–125.

¹⁰ A. C. Edwards, *John Petre: Essays on the Life and Background of John, 1st Lord Petre, 1549–1613* (London and New York, 1975), p. 17; A. Weikel, 'Waldegrave, Sir Edward (1516/17–61)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn., May 2009) <[http://www.oxforddnb.com /view/article/28433](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28433)> [accessed 26 November 2015].

¹¹ N. Briggs, 'William, second lord Petre, 1575–1637', *Essex Recusant*, 10 (1968), 51–65.

¹² Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.334, fos. 50r, 61v.

¹³ F.S.L., MS V.a.334, fo. 65v; V. Houlston, *Catholic Resistance in Elizabethan England: Robert Persons's Jesuit Polemic, 1580–1610* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 71–92; see also Michael C. Questier, 'The politics of religious conformity and the accession of James I', *Historical Research*, 71 (1998), 14–30.

¹⁴ This was the installation of Henry Frederick as prince of Wales in June 1610: Briggs, 'William', p. 59; see F.S.L., MS V.a.334, fols. 66v, 70r, 103r.

¹⁵ E.R.O., MS D/DP/Z30/12.

¹⁶ Briggs, 'William', 60–1; *APC 1625–26*, pp. 288–9. For more on recusant disarming and its context, see B. W. Quintrell, 'The practice and problems of recusant disarming, 1585–1641', *Recusant History*, 17 (1984–85), 208–22; *Stuart Dynastic Policy and Religious Politics 1621–1625*, ed. M. C. Questier, Camden Society, Fifth Series, vol. 34 (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 125–7.

¹⁷ E.R.O., MSS D/DP/F162, D/DP/L36/16. The pardon would seemingly have been part of the 'religious liberties' promised to the French whilst brokering the marriage deal: M. C. Questier, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion, c.1550-1640* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 423. Moreover, William was considered 'one of the leading noblemen' in the country and it was at his London residence on Aldersgate Street that the Venetian extraordinary ambassadors were due to lodge in June 1626: *CSPV, 1625–1626*, pp. 453–4.

¹⁸ E.R.O., MS D/DP/Z30/17. Also E.R.O. MSS Q/SR266/117, D/DP/F163a and Briggs, 'William', 60–1.

¹⁹ Briggs, 'William', 60.

²⁰ *APC 1627*, pp. 197–8.

²¹ W. R. Emerson, 'The economic development of the estates of the Petre family in Essex in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' (unpublished University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1951), p. 226.

²² Bossy, *English Catholic Community*, pp. 232–4; J. Bossy, 'The English Catholic community 1603–1625', in *The Reign of James VI and I*, ed. A. G. R. Smith (2nd edition, London and Basingstoke, 1977), pp. 98–9. See also J. E. Kelly, 'Essex girls abroad: family patronage and the politicization of convent recruitment in the seventeenth century', in *The English Convents in Exile, 1600–1800: Communities, Culture and Identity*, ed. C. Bowden and J. E. Kelly (Farnham, 2013), pp. 36–7.

²³ Briggs, 'William', p. 55. Boys were often named after their godfather and at the time Cecil was continuing to rise rapidly in the queen's favour, having been named Master of the Wards a few months earlier. My thanks to Pauline Croft for this point.

²⁴ See N. Briggs, 'The foundation of Wadham College, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, 21 (1956), 61–81; C. S. L. Davies, 'A woman in the public sphere; Dorothy Wadham and the foundation of Wadham College, Oxford', *English Historical Review*, 118 (2003), 883–911. William Petre later travelled to Spain and his translation of Ribadeneira's *Lives of the Saints* from the Spanish was published at St. Omer in 1669: T. Seccombe, rev. J. Griffiths, 'Petre, William (1602–1678)', *ODNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22048>> [accessed 26 November 2015].

²⁵ For general discussion of wardship, see J. Hurstfield, *The Queen's Wards: Wardship and Marriage under Elizabeth I* (London, 1958); concerning its implications for Catholics, M. C. Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 105ff; M. Jarvis, 'The court of wards and liveries and the Roman Catholic gentry in Yorkshire and Sussex', *Northern History*, 50 (2013), 20–38.

²⁶ J. Callow, 'Petre, William, fourth baron Petre (1625/6–1684)', *ODNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22049>> [accessed 26 November 2015].

²⁷ This could be viewed as a process of 'self confessionalization', different groups becoming more entrenched and self-aware as the processes of the Reformation played themselves out: P. Marshall, 'Confessionalization, confessionalism and confusion in the English Reformation', in *Reforming Reformation*, ed. T. F. Mayer (Farnham, 2012), pp. 43–64, at pp. 55–6, 64.

²⁸ For example, the importance of the county network and community in *Art, Literature and Religion in Early Modern Sussex: Culture and Conflict*, ed. M. Dimmock, A. Hadfield and P. Quinn (Farnham, 2014). The same county has previously received similar treatment: R. Manning, *Religion and Society in Early Modern Sussex* (Leicester, 1969).

²⁹ F. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990); W. Sheils, "'Getting on" and "getting along" in parish and town: English Catholics and their neighbours', in *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands 1580-1720*, ed. B. Kaplan, B. Moore, H. van Nierop and J. Pollmann (Manchester, 2009), pp. 67–83; Susan Cogan, 'Reputation, credit and patronage: Throckmorton men and women, c.1560–1620', in *Catholic Gentry in English Society: The Throckmortons of Coughton from Reformation to Emancipation*, ed. P. Marshall and G. Scott (Farnham, 2009), pp. 69–91; A. Walsham, 'Supping with Satan's disciples: spiritual and secular sociability in Post-Reformation England', in *Getting Along? Religious Identities and Confessional Relations in Early Modern England*, ed. N. Lewycky and A. Morton (Farnham, 2013), pp. 29–55. For the Petres in particular, see A. Schmitt, 'Guess who's coming to dinner? Social networks and religious allegiances at Lord Petre's dinner table, 1606–19', *Recusant History*, 29 (2009), 341–50. Schmitt recognizes the Catholic character of some of the visitors in her short time-frame but instead stresses the family's interaction with those of a similar social status.

³⁰ This paragraph is a very brief summary of Kelly, 'Essex Girls', pp. 33–52. It is notable that the Jesuit college was erected after the Petres had been raised to a barony, which probably helped them have a wider geographical influence than if they had remained members of the higher gentry.

³¹ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F19.

³² The National Archives of the U.K., SP 12/157/90. His father, William Somerset, 3rd Earl of Worcester, was also believed to be a Catholic.

³³ T. M. McCoog, 'Jones, Robert (c.1564–1615), *ODNB* < [http://www.oxforddnb.com /view/article/37615](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37615)> [accessed 26 November 2015].

³⁴ E.R.O., MS D/DP/A27 (5 August 1613).

³⁵ T. M. McCoog, 'The Society of Jesus in England, 1623–1688: An Institutional Study' (unpublished University of Warwick Ph.D. thesis, 1984), p. 287.

³⁶ *APC 1625–26*, pp. 228–9.

³⁷ Questier, *Community*, p. 289.

³⁸ For overviews of the approbation affair, see M. Lunn, 'Benedictine Opposition to Bishop Richard Smith 1625–1629', *Recusant History*, 11 (1971), 1–20; A. F. Allison, 'A Question of Jurisdiction: Richard Smith, Bishop of Chalcedon, and the Catholic Laity, 1625–31', *Recusant History*, 16 (1982), 111–45; A. F. Allison, 'Richard Smith's Gallican backers and Jesuit opponents', *Recusant History*, 18 (1986–87), 329–401, 19 (1988–89), 234–85, 20 (1990–91), 164–205; *Newsletters from the Caroline Court, 1631–1638: Catholicism and the Politics of the Personal Rule*, ed. M. C. Questier, Camden Society, Fifth Series, vol. 26 (Cambridge, 2005).

³⁹ T. Hughes, *History of the Society of Jesus in North America, Colonial and Federal: Text, Volume I – from the first colonialization till 1645* (London, 1907), p. 206.

⁴⁰ Westminster Diocesan Archives, A24 nos.73, 74.

⁴¹ W.D.A., A24 no.76.

⁴² Bossy, *Community*, p. 234; McCoog, 'Institutional Study', pp. 281–90. For the Cwm, the Somerset family and the Jesuits see H. Thomas, 'The Society of Jesus in Wales, c.1600–1679: rediscovering the Cwm Jesuit library at Hereford Cathedral', *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, 1 (2014), 572–88; H. Thomas, 'Missioners on the margins? The territorial headquarters of the Welsh Jesuit College of St Francis Xavier at the Cwm, c.1600–1679', *Recusant History*, 32 (2014), 173–93.

⁴³ G. Panzani, 'Diary of the affair of England entrusted to me by Cardinal Barberini with the consent of the Pope', in Vatican Archives, Nunziatura d'Inghilterra, 3A (translation in the Archives of the Jesuits in Britain, Mount Street) 4 February 1633/34 to 30 March 1637, pp. 101–3. Charles Somerset later reappeared to discuss relief by alms for poor Catholics: Panzani, p. 275.

⁴⁴ Panzani, p. 185.

⁴⁵ W.D.A., A26 no.108.

⁴⁶ Various members of the Somerset family continually appear in the Petre papers: for example, E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A21 (diet December 1589), D/DP/A24 (18 July 1593), D/DP/A25 (17 July 1605, 28 September 1605, 13 January 1605/6, 10 April 1606, 30 August 1606, 3 September 1606, 7 May 1607), D/DP/F19.

⁴⁷ F.S.L., V.a.334, fols. 21v, 22r, 33r, 48v, 50r, 70r, 70v, 124r; E.R.O., MS D/DP/A33, f. 37r.

⁴⁸ For Lord Herbert, see FSL, V.a.334, fols. 35r, 38r, 41v, 73v. For Viscount Cashel, see E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A26 (16 July 1608, 12 March 1608/9, 8 April 1610, 2 July 1609), D/DP/A27 (22–23 July 1613, 1 March 1613/14, 7 September 1614); F.S.L., V.a.334, ff. 5v, 72r, 78v. References to ‘mie brother Som[er]sett’ may also refer to him: see F.S.L., V.a.334, ff. 83v, 97r; E.R.O., MS D/DP/A33, ff. 30r, 34v, 36v.

⁴⁹ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F19. The earl of Worcester acted as overseer of the will. There were also land deals between the 1st baron Petre and the earl of Worcester: E.R.O., MS D/DP/E91.

⁵⁰ For Sir Charles Somerset, see F.S.L., V.a.334, fol. 27r. For Sir Edward Somerset, see E.R.O., MS D/DP/A27 (24 September 1614); F.S.L., V.a.334, fol. 100v at his going to Oxford on 1 October 1607.

⁵¹ E.R.O., MS D/DP/A27, 22–25 July 1614.

⁵² E.R.O., MS D/DP/A27, 22–25 July 1614. Lady Blanche was another regular visitor, for example dining at Thorndon with her sisters, Katherine Petre and Lady Guildford in April 1608: E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A26 (19 April 1608), D/DP/A35 (29 September 1619); F.S.L., V.a.334, fols. 93v, 97r, 97v, 98r.

⁵³ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F27.

⁵⁴ G. E. Dawson, ‘A gentleman’s purse’, *The Yale Review*, 39 (1949–50), 631–46, at 631.

⁵⁵ C. Lebon, ‘Notes on selected portions of the Guldeford family history’, *Kent Recusant History*, 3 (1980), 61–3; R. Simpson, *Edmund Campion: a Biography* (2nd edition, London, 1896), p. 236; P. Ryan, ‘Diocesan returns of recusants for England and Wales, 1577’, *Miscellanea XII*, Catholic Record Society, vol. 22 (London, 1921), p. 10; J. H. Pollen, ‘Recusants and priests March 1588’, *Miscellanea XII*, C.R.S., vol. 22 (London, 1921), p. 120.

⁵⁶ T.N.A., SP 12/152/54.

⁵⁷ E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A27 (12–15 June 1613), D/DP/A33, fol. 45r.

⁵⁸ E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A30 (week ending 16 September 1598), D/DP/A25 (15 June 1607). Lady Guildford also appeared in the 1st Baron Petre’s will: E.R.O., MS D/DP/F19.

⁵⁹ E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A25 (7 May 1607), D/DP/A26 (19 April 1608), D/DP/A27 (22–25 July 1614).

⁶⁰ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F253.

⁶¹ E.R.O., MS D/DP/A35 (29 June 1619); Thomas M. McCoog, *English and Welsh Jesuits, 1555–1650. Part I: A-F*, C.R.S., vol. 74 (London, 1994), p. 174.

⁶² E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A25 (30 August 1606), D/DP/A26 (10 June 1609), D/DP/A35 (16 October 1618).

⁶³ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F35. The couple's daughter, Mary ('Who Were the Nuns?' database, BB198), became a nun at the Brussels Benedictine house, a community subsequently riven by disagreements about access to Jesuit or secular clergy confessors.

⁶⁴ W.D.A., A27 no.171; see p. 190.

⁶⁵ Panzani, p. 111. Sir John Winter married Mary, daughter of Lord William Howard: H. S. Reinmuth, 'Lord William Howard (1563–1640) and his Catholic associations', *Recusant History*. 12 (1974), 226–34, at 231. Howard was a hard-line Jesuit supporter, signing the protestations against Smith, though Southcote did not consider him one of the bishop's more troublesome opponents because he was allegedly afraid of his own shadow owing to his fear of losing public position. Nevertheless, he took part in the Jesuit pilgrimage to Holywell in 1629: W.D.A., A24 nos.73, 74, A26 no.108; T.N.A., SP 16/151/13; R. Ovenden and S. Handley, 'Howard, Lord William (1563–1640)', *ODNB* < <http://www.oxforddnb.com./view/article/13947>> [accessed 26 November 2015]. Moreover, in 1606, he had been in contact with the Jesuit, Richard Blount, regarding dealings with Spain: E. L. Taunton, *The History of the Jesuits in England, 1580–1773* (London, 1901), p. 360. If the 2nd baron Petre did not know him through their shared Jesuit allegiance, then he almost certainly did from the pair of them being named executors of the will of John Roper, 1st baron Teynham: E.R.O., MS D/DP/F243.

⁶⁶ Panzani, p. 185.

⁶⁷ W.D.A., A26 no.108. The nuns mentioned were the Mary Ward sisters.

⁶⁸ E.R.O., MS D/DP/Z30/1. In addition to those mentioned in this article, it is marked that the common element between recipients of the Petre legacy rings was their strong Jesuit support, regardless of how distant the kinship links were, such as with the Southcotes, or their being non-existent, such as with Sirs Tobie Matthew and Basil Brooke. For the relationship between the Petres and the Southcotes, see J. E. Kelly, 'Kinship and religious politics among Catholic families in England, 1570–1640', *History*, 94 (2009), 328–43.

⁶⁹ F. S. L., V.a.334, ff. 105r, 109r.

⁷⁰ W.D.A., A22 no.155.

⁷¹ T. Hughes, *History of the Society of Jesus in North America, Colonial and Federal: Text, Volume I – from the first colonialization till 1645* (London, 1907), p. 206; W.D.A., A24 nos. 73, 74, 76.

⁷² For example, J. C. H. Aveling, 'The marriages of Catholic recusants, 1559–1642', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 14 (1963), 68–83. This is echoed by Peter Marshall and Geoffrey Scott, though they point out that intermarriage among Catholic families could look outwards to those who practised occasional conformity or were Protestants: P. Marshall and G. Scott, 'Introduction: The Catholic Gentry in English Society', in *Catholic Gentry in English Society: The Throckmortons of Coughton from Reformation to Emancipation*, ed. P. Marshall and G. Scott (Farnham, 2009), p. 13.

⁷³ E.R.O., MS D/DP/E167.

⁷⁴ J. B. Wainwright, 'Two lists of supposed adherents of Mary Queen of Scots, 1574 and 1582', *Miscellanea VIII*, C.R.S., vol. 13 (London, 1913), p. 98; Pollen, 'Recusants', p. 124.

⁷⁵ F.S.L., V.a.334, fol. 26r; E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A27 (13 July 1613, 17 February 1613/14), D/DP/A31 (29 April–1 May 1614, 9–12 May 1614), D/DP/A33, f. 35r, D/DP/A35 (26 April 1618, 21 July 1618).

⁷⁶ E.R.O., MSS D/DP/Z30/1, 21, 25, D/DP/F35.

⁷⁷ For the Benedictines' early involvement working with the Jesuits in opposition to Smith, see M. Lunn, 'Benedictine opposition to Bishop Richard Smith 1625–1629', *Recusant History*, 11 (1971), 1–20. A daughter, Catherine, entered the Benedictine convent at Cambrai in 1640: WWTN, CB167.

⁷⁸ W.D.A., A24 nos.73, 74.

⁷⁹ British Library, Additional MS 34,812.

⁸⁰ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F243.

⁸¹ For example, E.R.O., MSS D/DP/A35 (7 November 1617, 3 February 1617/18, 11 May 1618, 27 June 1618, 14 October 1618, 5 November 1618, 28 November 1618, 5 December 1618, 13 January 1618/19, 29 April 1619), D/DP/A39.

⁸² E.R.O., MS D/DP/A35 (18 September 1618, 21 September 1618, 23 September 1618). For Talbot's Clerkenwell residence and the Jesuits, see J. G. Nichols, 'The Discovery of the Jesuits' college at Clerkenwell in March 1627–8: and a letter found in the house, (as asserted,) directed to the Father Rector at Bruxelles', *Camden Miscellany*, Camden Society, vol. 55 (London, 1853), pp. 1–64.

⁸³ McCoog, 'Institutional Study', pp. 274–6.

⁸⁴ *APC 1625–26*, pp. 228–9.

⁸⁵ Briggs, 'William', p. 55.

⁸⁶ T.N.A., SP 16/98/122.

⁸⁷ Hughes, *North America*, p. 206; W.D.A., A23 no.29, A24 no.76. Notably, his sister joined the Jesuit-supporting Ghent Benedictine convent: WWTN, GB198.

⁸⁸ W.D.A., A28 no.3. My thanks to Brian O'Higgins for this translation of the original Latin.

⁸⁹ J. Gillow, *A Literary and Biographical History, or Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics from the Breach with Rome, in 1534, to the present time*, vol. 5 (London, 1885–1903), p. 297. A Master Fermor had visited the 2nd baron on several occasions in the company of various members of the Somerset family in the wake of the 1st baron Petre's death: E.R.O., MS D/DP/A27 (11 August 1613, 2 March 1613/14, 24 September 1614).

⁹⁰ W.D.A., A24 nos.73, 74.

⁹¹ E.R.O., MS D/DP/Z30/1.

⁹² Questier, *Community*, pp. 50–6.

⁹³ W.D.A., A24 no.41.

⁹⁴ E.R.O., MSS D/DP/Z30/1, D/DP/A40, (part Our Lady Day 1623–1631) f. 4r.

⁹⁵ E.R.O., MS D/DP/F35.

⁹⁶ E.R.O., MS D/DP/Z30/29, 30; *The Responsa Scholarum of the English College, Rome. Part II: 1622–1685*, ed. A. Kenny, C.R.S., vol. 55 (London, 1963), pp. 478–9; WWTN, GB040. Five other daughters became women religious: WWTN, BA045, BA046, AC024, DB027, DB028.

⁹⁷ Anne's older sister, Elizabeth, married the 2nd baron Petre's nephew, Sir Francis Petre of Cranham in Essex. Three of their daughters became Benedictine nuns, whilst three of their sons became Jesuits, including Edward Petre, alleged confessor to James II: WWTN, GB176, GB177, DB124.

⁹⁸ W.D.A., A24 nos.73, 74.

⁹⁹ W.D.A., A29 no.132.

¹⁰⁰ P. Phillips, 'St. John Plessington, priest and martyr', *Recusant History*, 28 (2007), 424–33, at 426; McCoog, 'Institutional Study', p. 286. For the importance of Holywell, see Alexandra Walsham, 'Holywell: contesting sacred space in Post-Reformation Wales', in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 209–36; amended version in Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain*, pp. 177–205, p. 185 for rumours that George Petre was attempting to erect a Jesuit college there.

¹⁰¹ *Responsa*, ed. Kenny, pp. 507–8; WWTN, AC095, AC096.

¹⁰² W.D.A., A21 no.49.

¹⁰³ For example, C. Haigh, 'Catholicism in Early Modern England: Bossy and beyond', *Historical Journal*, 45 (2002), 481–94, especially 482 n. 2.

¹⁰⁴ The marriage settlement was made by the 2nd baron Petre upon the marriage of Robert to Mary Browne for her jointure and in satisfaction of dowry in November 1620: E.R.O., MS D/DP/F21.

¹⁰⁵ Allison, 'Jurisdiction', 124.

¹⁰⁶ E.R.O., MS D/DP/A40 (part Our Lady Day 1623–1631) fols. 4r, 5r, 18v, (part Michaelmas 1632–1637) fol. 2r; see Questier, *Community*. These entries only appear in the 3rd baron's accounts before he succeeded his father. There is no mention in any of the extant account books belonging to the 2nd baron Petre, suggesting little to no mingling between the families.

¹⁰⁷ Questier, *Community*, pp. 442–70.

¹⁰⁸ Questier, *Community*, pp. 82–3.

¹⁰⁹ Questier, *Community*, pp. 95–6.

¹¹⁰ Questier, *Community* p. 87.

¹¹¹ On neighbourliness see, for example, W. J. Sheils, 'Catholics and their neighbours in a rural community: Egton Chapely, 1590–1780', *Northern History*, 34 (1998), 109–33; A. Milton, 'A qualified intolerance: the limits and ambiguities of early Stuart anti-Catholicism', in *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts*, ed. A. F. Marotti (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 85–115; M. Wanklyn, 'Catholics in the village community: Madeley, Shropshire, 1630–1770', in *Catholics of Parish and Town, 1558–1778*, ed. Marie B. Rowlands, C.R.S. Monograph Series, vol. 5 (London, 1999), pp. 210–236; A. Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England 1500–1700* (Manchester, 2006), pp. 269–80.