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Local Reception of Religious Change under Henry VIII and Edward VI:

Evidence from Four Suffolk Parishes

by

William Keene Thompson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

Thesis Committee:
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Portland State University
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Abstract

From the second half of Henry VIII's reign through that of his son Edward VI, roughly 1530 through 1553, England was in turmoil. Traditional (Catholic) religion was methodically undermined, and sometimes violently swept away, in favor of a biblically based evangelical faith imported and adapted from European dissenters/reformers (Protestants). This thesis elucidates the process of parish-level religious change in England during the tumultuous mid sixteenth century. It does so through examining the unique dynamics and complexities of its local reception in a previously unstudied corner of the realm, the Suffolk parishes of Boxford, Cratfield, Long Melford, and Mildenhall.

This thesis asserts that ongoing alterations in religious policy under Henry VIII and Edward VI reflected an evolution in both governmental tactics and local attitudes toward the locus of religious authority. Contrary to the view that the Reformation was done to the English people, the parish-level evidence investigated herein shows that, at least in Suffolk, the reformation was only accomplished with their cooperation. Furthermore, it finds that while costly, divisive, and unpopular in many parts of England, religious change was, for the most part, received enthusiastically in these four parishes.

Two types of primary sources inform the historical narrative and analysis of this thesis. First, the official documents of religious reform initiated by the crown and Parliament tell the story of magisterial reformation, from the top down. Second, the often-mundane entries found in churchwardens' accounts of parish income and expenditure illuminate the individual and communal dynamics involved in implementing religious policy on the local level, from the bottom up. As agents operating between the

distinct spheres of government authority and local interest, this study finds that churchwardens wielded significant power in the mediation of religious policy. The churchwardens' accounts are also supplemented throughout by analysis of selected parishioners' wills, which provide insight into personal beliefs of key individuals and hint at the formation of early religious affinity groupings within parishes.

Chapter One summarizes the development of the pre-Reformation Sarum liturgy, its Eucharistic theology, and its relation to the late-medieval doctrine of purgatory. It also describes the richly decorated interiors of pre-Reformation English parish churches and their function as centers of community spiritual life. This provides a gauge through which to understand the extensive changes wrought to church liturgy and fabric during the Reformation. Chapter Two focuses on the unsettled nature of religious policy during the second half of Henry VIII's reign and how it set the stage for more severe changes to come. Chapters Three and Four examine the reign of Edward VI, which saw the most radical efforts at evangelical reform ever attempted in England. In these three chapters, official changes in religious policy are interwoven with analysis of local reaction in the four Suffolk parishes, revealing some surprising local responses and initiatives. The conclusion presents a summary of the historical narrative and analysis presented in the preceding chapters, suggests possibilities for further research, and offers closing thoughts about the local experience of negotiating religious change during this period.

Acknowledgments

At the end of what has been a long and often solitary process of research, writing, and revision, it is a pleasure to acknowledge the friends, family, mentors, and others who have supported me along the way. Much of my time at Portland State University has been spent working as a Caroline P. Stoel graduate editorial fellow at the *Pacific Historical Review*. I could not have asked for a more stimulating and encouraging environment in which to work while pursuing my studies. I owe sincere gratitude to Dr. Susan Wladaver-Morgan for sharing her friendship and editorial wisdom with me. Thanks also to Dr. Carl Abbott for proving that it is possible to be a historian and still be cool. Special recognition is due to Dr. David Johnson for his indefatigable leadership of *PHR* and for his wise counsel and personal interest in my success while serving as my second field advisor. Thanks to the support of the John and Laree Caughey Foundation I have also had the opportunity to attend several professional conferences on behalf of the journal.

As a member of the Portland State chapter of *Phi Alpha Theta*, the national history honorary society, I have benefitted from the experience of presenting papers at two regional conferences, both of which formed the basis of chapters in this thesis. Many thanks to Dr. Thomas Luckett, *PAT* faculty advisor, for his helpful comments on my work. I also owe a debt to my fellow graduate students and friends at PSU for their empathy, levity, and willingness to listen to my many thesis status updates.

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I owe my greatest academic and intellectual debt at Portland State to my primary field advisor, Dr. Caroline Litzenberger. She has upheld the highest standards for graduate scholarship and I have no doubt that my comprehension of, and ability to explain, my subject is a direct result of her influence. From the start she championed my thesis topic and has worked tirelessly to push me toward its completion. This thesis has undoubtedly benefitted from her enthusiasm for, expertise on, and insight into the subject and any infelicities that remain are solely my own responsibility.

Finally, it is my pleasure to recognize the encouragement and forbearance of my family. I have been blessed by the support of all my relatives and in-laws, but there are two to whom I owe the most thanks, and to whom this work is thus dedicated. Long before I ever thought about college or graduate studies, my mother, Linda Hibberd Larivee, recognized that I had a love of history and encouraged me in that pursuit. I thank her for all the sacrifices she made for me, for sharing with me her love of learning, and for always pushing me to do my best. Additionally, over the last few months, my wife, Lauren, graciously allowed me to sequester myself amidst stacks of books, notes, and papers, and yet she also had an uncanny sense of when I needed to take a break and relax. Amazingly, she has tied her star to mine and I am ever grateful for her love and support.

For all the family and friends I have left unnamed, you are not forgotten, for each of you is an essential part of the mosaic of my life. Lacking just one of you would make it less than whole. Thank you all.

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Abbreviations and Conventions

Money

£ = pounds s. = shillings d. = pennies

1 pound (£) was equal to 20 shillings (s.) or 240 pennies (d.)

1 shilling (s.) was equal to 12 pennies (d.)

Dates

Original month/day dates have been retained, but the year is taken to begin on January 1, rather than March 25 (as was the practice in sixteenth-century England).

Transcriptions

All quotations transcribed from primary sources (such as wills) have retained original spelling, but punctuation has been silently added, when necessary, to clarify meaning. Primary source quotations taken from contemporary reprints are faithful to the editorial conventions used in that volume.

Terms

This thesis follows the English practice of omitting the period after the abbreviation for a Christian saint, thus Mildenhall St Mary Church, not St. Mary.

Citations

All footnote references to works published in Oxford or Cambridge refer to the cities located in the United Kingdom, unless otherwise noted.

“Few suspect the importance of those documents which are lying entombed
in the Parish Chests of England.”

—John J. Raven, *Cratfield Parish Papers*, 1895

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and
where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,
where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor
steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

—Matthew 6:19–21 (King James Version)

Introduction

This thesis seeks to elucidate the process of parish-level religious change in England from the second half of Henry VIII's reign through that of his son Edward VI, roughly 1530 through 1553. If anyone was well placed to observe the local impact of religious change in sixteenth-century England it was Roger Martin (c. 1527–1615). He witnessed no less than four official changes in religious policy during his lifetime. Martin was a gentleman, born into an established gentry family in the rural Suffolk hamlet of Long Melford. Dwelling in the village since the fourteenth century, the Martins had built their own chantry chapel on the southern side of the parish church in the 1480s.¹ Roger Martin was committed to the old faith and, given his family's status within the community, it is no surprise that he did more than observe the mid-century's religious turmoil. Serving as one of two parish churchwardens from 1554 through 1558, during Mary I's reign, Martin was intimately involved in re-equipping Long Melford for traditional worship following the initial attempt at evangelical reform under Edward VI. Martin was a meticulous record-keeper, even going so far as to annotate the accounts of his predecessors and successors as churchwarden. Unwilling to conform to the reestablishment of Protestant worship and doctrine under Elizabeth I, Martin was prosecuted as a recusant and at various times fined and imprisoned for his beliefs.²

¹ David Dymond and Clive Paine, *The Spoil of Melford Church: The Reformation in a Suffolk Parish*, Suffolk County Council (Ipswich, UK: Salient Press, 1989), vi–vii; referred to hereafter as *Spoil of Melford Church* (Dymond and Paine's names only included for quotations of narrative material and editorial notes).

² Ibid. The term “belief” is somewhat of a misnomer. The Elizabethan injunctions did not require belief in Protestant doctrine, *per se*. However, they did require outward conformity to the form of worship prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer, as well as silent assent to the doctrinal formulations contained in the Thirty-Nine Articles. Conformity was a stumbling block to the more zealous on both sides of the religious divide: both Catholic recusants and the hotter sort of Protestants (Puritans) protested against the Elizabethan liturgy for different reasons. For a summary of Elizabeth's approach, see John Craig,

Martin is best known for the brief, yet detailed, account he left near the end of his life.

“The State of Melford Church and our Ladie’s Chappel at the east end, as I did know it,” is a nostalgic, yet accurate, description of typical rural parish church fabric, ceremonies, and social life prior to the Edwardian and Elizabethan religious changes.³

Although the full extent of his life goes beyond the scope of this study, Roger Martin’s experience is an example of what it was like to live through this turbulent period in English history. Like many throughout England, he was wary of the unsettled nature of religion during Henry VIII’s final years. He watched his beloved parish church stripped bare under the orders of the boy king, Edward VI, and his zealous evangelical ministers. Martin then personally helped restore traditional church fabric and Catholic worship during Mary I’s reign, only to see his work undone with the accession of Elizabeth I, and his own religious freedom thenceforth constrained. Martin’s story represents one side of the religious divide during this time, but there were also those who welcomed the changes in religion as much-needed reform to a church mired in superstition and clerical abuse. Evangelical reformers sought to focus the Christian faith on Jesus Christ and the word of God as contained in the Bible.⁴

Reformation, Politics and Polemics: The Growth of Protestantism in East Anglian Market Towns, 1500-1610 (Rutland, VT: Ashgate, 2001), 26. For more on conservatives who did conform, see Alexandra Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History, vol. 68 (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 1993). For an in-depth study of the broader impact of the Elizabethan prayer book on the English people, see Judith Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³ For an annotated reprint of Martin’s account, see Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, 1–9. It should be noted that the term “fabric,” as used in this study, refers the full scope of the parish church interior and its material possessions. Thus, stonework, windows, rood lofts and screens, wall paintings, pews, cloth hangings, altars, plate, and any other items contained within the church are part of its fabric.

⁴ The pre-Reformation, Henrician, and Edwardian periods are considered pre-confessional, thus this paper will use the terms “evangelical” and “reformer” to describe those who favored religious reform and who would identify as Protestants today. It will use the term “conservative” to describe those who were either

Historians of religion in Tudor England have spilled copious amounts of ink in an attempt to determine the speed, scope, and sincerity with which the English people did or did not embrace the reformation.⁵ First published in 1964, A. G. Dickens' *The English Reformation* was for decades considered the apex of scholarship on the subject. Before it was fashionable to do so, Dickens pioneered the field of local studies, making use of records from all over England, especially northern dioceses and parishes, to show how isolated pockets of enduring Lollard sympathies and trading contacts with Europe influenced early local reception of (or predisposition towards) evangelical principles in some locales. Dickens' view of the early acceptance of evangelicalism was supported by other scholars, such as G. R. Elton, who, due to his focus on the dissemination of official policy, believed England to have been predominantly Protestant by the end of the reign of Edward VI.⁶ On a macro-historical level, Dickens saw in sixteenth-century England a series of events progressing toward the inevitable success of the evangelical/Protestant faith over Catholicism. While Dickens' progressivist thesis (as it is sometimes termed) has been challenged and effectively surpassed by recent scholarship, *The English*

sympathetic toward or supporters of medieval Roman Catholic doctrine and practices. However, owing to a lack of a better substitute, this paper will use the term "Catholic" to describe both the Sarum liturgy and theology behind it, in contradistinction to the evangelical or "Protestant" doctrine and practices contained in the Book of Common Prayer. For similar definition of evangelicalism during this period, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Boy King: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (New York: Palgrave, 1999), 2–4.

⁵ The seminal works on these larger issues of the English Reformation include: A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (1964; repr., Glasgow, UK: Fontana, 1974); J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (1984; repr., Oxford: Blackwell, 1985); Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580* (1992; repr., New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); and Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).

⁶ G. R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England 1509–1558* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 371.

Reformation remains a useful secondary source and is the widely acknowledged originator of the local study approach.

Riding the crest of a revisionist movement made mainstream in the 1980s by J. J. Scarisbrick's *The Reformation and the English People*, Christopher Haigh's 1993 work, *English Reformations*, advanced the idea that there was not one singular English Reformation but several tenuous political and religious reformations running parallel over the course of the sixteenth century. Even when the reformations at last succeeded in changing the official face of English religion they did not necessarily succeed in creating a wholly Protestant population. *English Reformations* was a broader follow-up to Haigh's 1975 monograph *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire*, which used local sources to prove that evangelical/Protestant principles and policies were not readily accepted, and were even actively resisted, in some parts of the realm.⁷

While Haigh was perhaps the most outspoken advocate of historiographical revisionism, Eamon Duffy has been arguably the most influential. First published in 1992, Duffy's magisterial *The Stripping of the Altars* takes for its subject nearly two centuries of religious change in England (1400–1580). In addition to typical, official sources, Duffy utilized local examples to focus on and illustrate traditional, pre-Reformation English religious belief and practice. Duffy brings vividly to life the Catholic doctrines and beloved communal practices that evangelical reformers sought to change and/or eradicate during the sixteenth century. In 2001, Duffy's *The Voices of Morebath* moved in the direction of post-revisionism by focusing entirely on one local

⁷ Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

case study, but retained his previous revisionist methodology by focusing on how the conservative Devonshire community of Morebath sought to maintain its religious identity in the face of the Tudor Reformations.⁸ Taken together, Haigh and Duffy (along with other revisionists) showed that traditional religion was alive and well in England prior to the mid-century religious changes and that the standard, Dickensian progressivist narrative of religious change was much more complex than previously thought.⁹

Given the century-long push toward academic separation from such influences, it should be noted that the historiography of the English Reformation was, for a long time, openly confessional in nature: scholars were seen as favoring either a progressivist (read Protestant, or more specifically Anglican) or revisionist (read Roman Catholic, or at least anti-Protestant) predisposition. This confessionalism led to dichotomization of the field, where scholars were separated into historiographical (and hence confessional) camps. In her monograph on *The English Reformation and the Laity* in Gloucestershire, Caroline Litzenberger has noted that “recent historians did not invent the concept of religious dichotomies.”¹⁰ In fact, they were often led to such distinctions by the highly polemical and fractious nature of their sixteenth-century subject matter. Despite the erudite scholarship of the above-named scholars, they do, at times, succumb to moments of open confessionalism (or at least unacknowledged historiographical presuppositions) in their work. The interpretive hazards inherent in such biases are part of the reason why more

⁸ Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001).

⁹ For an excellent overview of the revisionist movement at its apogee, which also takes in the longer scope of English Reformation scholarship, see Andrew Pettegree, “Re-writing the English Reformation,” *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 72 (1992): 37–58.

¹⁰ Caroline Litzenberger, *The English Reformation and the Laity: Gloucestershire, 1540–1580* (1996; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 3.

recent, post-revisionist, scholars have begun to challenge some of these previously unquestioned dichotomies in the field.

The post-revisionist model is advocated by scholars such as John Craig, Beat Kümin, Caroline Litzenberger, Diarmaid MacCulloch, Peter Marshall, Alec Ryrie, Ethan Shagan, Alexandra Walsham, and others, who espouse no particular creed (or at least do not allow such sympathies to influence their work), but rather, serve to expand and problematize English Reformation scholarship through exploring new types of source material, openness to utilizing theory (a practice previously disdained in the field), and calling for a renewed honesty about the biases inherent in doing religious history.¹¹ While acknowledging their debt to previous scholarship, post-revisionists see the tendency toward a reductionist and myopic viewpoint in both the progressivist and revisionist movements; hence their attempt to both clarify and complicate the field.

Topic and Approach

This thesis does not promote a new theory of the progress of reform, nor does it admit a confessional bias; instead, it operates within the post-revisionist model and proposes to survey the dynamics and complexities of the Tudor Reformations' local reception in one corner of the realm, the Suffolk parishes of Boxford, Cratfield, Long Melford, and Mildenhall. In so doing, it is influenced by Peter Marshall's assertion that "we should see the English Reformation primarily as a crucible of religious identity

¹¹ For a brief historiographical overview of the field from a post-revisionist perspective, see Peter Marshall, "(Re)defining the English Reformation," *Journal of British Studies* 48 (July 2009): 564–586. Perhaps the most notable recent work exemplifying post-revisionist English Reformation historiography is Walsham's comprehensive study of the relationship between religious change and its impact on the environment. See Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Other significant works by the post-revisionist scholars listed above appear throughout this thesis and in the Works Cited section.

formation.”¹² Rather than attempting to cover the well-worn ground of speed, scope, and sincerity of religious change, this study seeks to understand better the process of religious identity formation under the Tudors through the dynamics of policy implementation at the local level. With Marshall, this thesis asserts that the uncertain nature of the English Reformation did not result in creating disaffected laypeople, but instead “had a profoundly catechizing effect, encouraging people to think about their meanings more intensely than they had done before.”¹³ This thesis thus seeks to understand how individuals and communities dealt with the momentous religious changes occurring during this period and how parishioners conceived of religious belief and public worship as a result. For the purposes of this thesis, these four Suffolk communities possess the dual blessings of having surviving records for the Reformation period, and yet never having been considered together in this manner.

Close study of the changes made to the liturgy, the abrogation of the intercessory system, and the reconfiguration of parish church interiors provides a useful vantage point from which to view the larger process of change in religious belief and practice that took place in England during the mid-sixteenth century. This study asserts that ongoing alterations in religious policy under Henry VIII and Edward VI reflected an evolution in both governmental tactics and local attitudes toward the locus of religious authority, from the traditions of the Roman Church in the early 1530s to the centralized, Bible-based faith of the evangelical reformers in Edward VI’s reign. Furthermore, and contrary to the view that the reformation was done to the English people (imposed from above by the

¹² Marshall, “(Re)defining the English Reformation,” 583–584.

¹³ Ibid., 585.

crown and government ministers), the parish-level evidence investigated herein shows that, at least in Suffolk, the reformation was accomplished with the cooperation of the English people. The Tudor monarchs and their state lacked many of the tools of modern coercion: a standing army, a police force, an extensive bureaucracy; thus the only way they could succeed in pushing disruptive, destructive, and often-unwelcome religious changes was through collaboration with those subjects who were willing. Though he prefers to ascribe collaboration to self-interest and political motivations, this thesis generally agrees with Ethan Shagan's incisive observation that "the English Reformation was not done *to* people, it was done *with* them."¹⁴ The more elusive question that must nonetheless be addressed is to what extent cooperation and conformity are adequate measures of consent based on an actual shift in religious belief. If a widespread, or at least regionally concentrated, shift in belief is a viable factor in local reception of changes to religious policy, then how prevalent was evangelical belief during this early period? If not, then what other motivations might have encouraged cooperation and conformity on the local level? This is where Shagan's study is valuable; while it underestimates the importance of religious motivations, it does offer a "backdoor" reason for collaboration, wherein the reformation was "not dependent upon spectacular epiphanies but rather exploit[ed] the mundane realities of political allegiance, financial investment and local

¹⁴ Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), emphasis original. The real issue with Shagan's analysis is that it is based on case studies of significant, representative events in the English Reformation. Thus, without conducting a more broad survey of the period it seems difficult to accept the assertions he makes about religious versus political motivations for compliance and collaboration.

Craig and Litzenberger come at the issue from a different angle than Shagan. They also argue for the importance of dynamic interaction between government and people in effecting religious change but they take more seriously, as does this thesis, the importance of religious conversion and affinity in the local dynamics of policy implementation. See Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, and Craig, *Reformation, Politics and Polemics*.

conflict.”¹⁵ Where this thesis diverges from Shagan is in continuing to see value in the conversion narrative of the reformation. Granted, not everyone cooperated with changes in religious policy because of a genuine experience of conversion (or, on the contrary, resisted change because of conservative religious principle) but as will be shown by will evidence from our Suffolk parishes, religious belief seems just as likely an explanation as political pragmatism. Where Shagan argues that spiritual conversion “often followed political positioning rather than preceding it,” this study has found evidence both for Shagan’s viewpoint and the exact opposite, political positioning as a result of religious affinity.¹⁶ Furthermore, it seems more realistic (and more like human nature) that parishioners and their churchwardens would base their decisions and actions with regard to religious policy on a combination of factors, rather than one or the other.

While the official narrative of changes to religious doctrine, practice, and church fabric tell one side of the story, standard accounts of the reformation have often downplayed the importance of the local contexts in which these changes took place. In contrast, this thesis asserts that observing the ways in which changes to official religious policy manifested themselves on the local level is of paramount importance to gaining a better understanding of the English Reformation as a whole. While lauding the recent proliferation of local studies of the English reformation, John Craig asserts that “the discussion of the relationship between official policy and local practice has seldom penetrated deeper than the level of the gentry.”¹⁷ In attempt to remedy that historiographical oversight in one corner of the realm, this thesis analyzes parish accounts

¹⁵ Shagan, *Popular Politics*, 306.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 304.

¹⁷ Craig, *Reformation, Politics and Polemics*, 5.

and wills made by men and women largely from the middling ranks of society.¹⁸ This approach allows one to read between the lines of the official magisterial reformation to see what things looked like to the average layperson in the pew.

Two types of primary sources inform the historical narrative and analysis of this thesis. First, Parliamentary Acts, Royal Proclamations, ecclesiastical injunctions, and liturgical publications such as the Book of Common Prayer outline the development of official changes to religious policy, especially in terms of public worship and church furnishings. Second, parish records such as churchwardens' accounts and personal wills illustrate local reaction to those official changes. The study thus revolves around local reaction to Parliamentary Acts, royal proclamations, and ecclesiastical injunctions regarding doctrine and church fabric, as well as the introduction and dissemination of the reformed liturgy. The parish records of Boxford, Cratfield, Long Melford, and Mildenhall, from roughly 1530 through 1560, vividly illustrate the radical impact that these official policies had on the local level. Over the course of thirty-plus years parishioners made sweeping alterations to the interior spaces of their parish churches and dutifully worshipped in the manner prescribed by a series of ever more evangelical liturgies. This thesis takes in a longer chronological scope to allow investigation of the state of local religion under Henry VIII prior to the 1534 Act of Supremacy and its

¹⁸ Admittedly, some churchwardens, like Roger Martin, did come from gentry families, but most were tradesmen, merchants, and yeomen. Craig notes that "of the twenty-four men who served as the churchwardens of the parish of Long Melford from 1559 to 1600, only two, Roger Martin... and John Cordell... were gentlemen." John Craig, "Co-operation and Initiatives: Elizabethan Churchwardens and the Parish Accounts of Mildenhall," *Social History* 18 (1993): 362.

For the social background of churchwardens, also see Judith Middleton-Stewart, *Records of the Churchwardens of Mildenhall: Collections (1446-1454) and Accounts (1503-1553)*, Suffolk Records Society (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 2011), lix-lx; referred to hereafter as *Mildenhall CWA* (Middleton-Stewart's name only included for quotations of narrative material and editorial notes).

attendant religious injunctions, as well as looking through the reign of Edward VI to gauge local reception of the 1547 Royal Injunctions and the two Books of Common Prayer issued in 1549 and 1552.

This thesis also seeks to understand local reaction on both collective and (as far as possible) individual levels, recognizing that each parish community responded uniquely based on its parishioners' beliefs and predispositions. When read together the parish records for our Suffolk locales indicate certain common trends in degree of compliance, perceived enthusiasm for change, and/or the financial impact that such changes had on these communities. Local-level primary sources, such as churchwardens' accounts and inventories of church goods, show a general compliance with changes to official policy, albeit with some variation in the speed and degree to which each parish responded. Selected parishioners' wills supplement the picture by further elucidating the religious sentiments of individuals within each community.

This thesis addresses the topic of local reception of changes in official religious policy in several related chapters. The remainder of this Introduction reviews the primary sources and the methodology used in analyzing them. It also provides a survey of the county of Suffolk and each of the four parishes under investigation, with specific discussion of the source sets for each locality. Chapter One provides an excursus on the development of the late-medieval Roman-influenced Sarum liturgy leading up to the mid-sixteenth century, with focus on its attendant Eucharistic theology and its relation to the doctrine of purgatory. It also offers a description of the church fabric one would expect to find in a pre-reformation parish church. This is meant to act as a gauge through which to

understand the enormity of the physical changes made to parish churches during the twenty-plus years under consideration here.

Chapters Two through Four comprise the core of the thesis, including the narrative of religious change and local reception thereof in Suffolk from approximately 1530–1553. Chapter Two covers the reign of Henry VIII, with particular focus on the unsettled nature of religious policy during the second half of his reign (1530–1547). Throughout this section the chronological narrative of official religious change is interwoven with close analysis of local reaction in the four Suffolk parishes. Chapters Three and Four cover the tumultuous reign of Edward VI (1547–1553). As with the chapter on Henry VIII, official changes in religious policy are interwoven with analysis of local reaction in the four Suffolk parishes, revealing some interesting and somewhat surprising local responses and initiatives.

The Conclusion presents a summary of the historical narrative and analysis presented in the chapters on Henry VIII and Edward VI, suggests possibilities for further research, and offers some closing thoughts about the local dynamics of religious change during this period. Although beyond the scope of this thesis, an Epilogue offers a brief summary, contextualization, and analysis of later religious changes undertaken in the four Suffolk parishes under Mary I and during the early years of Elizabeth I.

Primary Sources

Government Documents

The primary sources used in this study come from both governmental and local contexts. Governmental primary sources include Parliamentary Acts, Royal Proclamations and Injunctions, ecclesiastical visitation articles and injunctions, and a host

of different liturgical publications intended to direct public worship in English churches. These documents provide the official narrative of religious change, identifying what exactly government and ecclesiastical leaders sought to change, when, and why. While most of these documents have been heavily studied in the past and carry with them an established corpus of historical and theological baggage, they are essential to a study such as this, since there would be no local reaction without official action in the first place. Due to their enduring national importance, these documents exist in readily accessible printed form, often with scholarly commentary included.

Churchwardens' Accounts and Church Inventories

This study considers two main local-level primary sources, parish accounts of income and expenditures and records of wills and probate from church courts. Parish accounts are more commonly referred to as churchwardens' accounts, after the parish lay-officers who produced them.¹⁹ Churchwardens were usually men, elected or selected by consent of the parish in one way or another, who were responsible for keeping the account books through the year and making an annual report to the community and, increasingly during the 1540s and after, also appearing before crown and ecclesiastical commissioners conducting visitations. While their task was often tedious and sometimes financially costly, Craig asserts that "the office possessed great importance" because "Churchwardens were brokers mediating between two spheres of authority, ecclesiastical and local."²⁰ I would also add to Craig's comparison that, in addition to interacting with

¹⁹ Cox provided the classic, and still relevant, excursus on the office of churchwarden. See J. Charles Cox, *Churchwardens' Accounts: From the Fourteenth Century to the Close of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1913), 1–14.

²⁰ Craig, *Reformation, Politics and Polemics*, 6.

the ecclesiastical authorities, churchwardens also mediated governmental authority in the local setting. Especially during the period under consideration here, churchwardens were constantly required to report to royal commissioners to ensure compliance with official religious policy or to spur dilatory parishes to action. Placed as they were between the two spheres of authority in early modern England, these unassuming parish officers and the accounts they kept are key to understanding local reception of the succession of changes made to religious policy under the Tudors.

Although there is no standard format, Churchwardens' accounts usually consist of hand-written tables or lists of income and expenditure for various parish items. Some accounts are merely entries for total income and expenditure for a given year, while others contain detailed, itemized entries. These itemized accounts are often full of mundane information such as the collection of tithes or bequests and expenditures for candle wax, cleaning vestments, and making routine repairs. Beyond the mundane, however, churchwardens' accounts are reliable records of how local parish leaders responded to official changes in liturgy and church fabric. For example, one can see when a rood loft was built, demolished, and/or rebuilt, or how much money a parish received for selling off their gold and silver plate, and for what those funds were then used.²¹

²¹ A ubiquitous part of the fabric of most late medieval churches, the rood was a structure (of wood or stone) built in the chancel arch to separate parishioners in the nave from clergy in the chancel and sanctuary. Although there was a great deal of local variety in size and embellishment, the rood consisted of three main parts: the screen, the candle beam loft, and the Great Rood. The rood screen had two parts: the bottom had solid panels to waist height, which usually bore painted and gilded representations of the apostles or other saints; the upper part of the screen consisted of tracery windows through which one could see the chancel and the high altar in the sanctuary. The beam and loft sat atop the screen and were accessed through a narrow stairway usually set into the north wall of the chancel arch. Beams were often substantial enough to be used as music lofts and may have contained a small altar as well. Their main purpose was to support the Great Rood and the candles used to light it (hence the term candle beam). The Great Rood (from the Saxon word *rood* or *rode*, meaning "cross") was a carved representation of the crucifixion, flanked on either side by figures of Mary and John the Evangelist and centered above the screen in the

While individual entries are rarely dated with any more specificity than the year, that is often enough to show relative speed of compliance with government policy.

While important for accounting purposes at the time of their creation, and valuable now to historians seeking to understand local adherence to religious policy, detailed churchwardens' accounts do not survive in great numbers. Ronald Hutton estimates that out of the approximately 9,000 parishes in sixteenth-century England and Wales, only about 200 sets of detailed churchwardens' accounts are known to have survived, roughly 2 percent of the whole. Moreover, only eighteen of those 200 sets cover the central part of the reformation in Tudor England, the years from 1535 through 1570.²² Only one Suffolk parish boasts complete printed churchwardens' accounts for this period, Boxford.²³ This dearth of source material could present a challenge to the scholar wishing to use churchwardens' accounts as a source for parochial religion; however, there are some extant Reformation-period churchwardens' accounts for other Suffolk parishes, albeit not in full runs.²⁴ When taken together, these incomplete, yet

midst of the chancel arch. The Great Rood was a focus of devotional prayers during Mass, and the structure served to delineate a literal and figurative separation between the secular and sacred functions of the church. Pounds emphasizes that "the rood and its screen were intended to impress [parishioners] with the majesty and beauty of what lay beyond." N. J. G. Pounds, *A History of the English Parish: The Culture of Religion from Augustine to Victoria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 446–449. For a more focused study of rood screens, see Eamon Duffy "The parish, piety, and patronage in late medieval East Anglia: the evidence of rood screens," in *The Parish in English Life, 1400–1600*, ed. Katherine L. French, Gary G. Gibbs, and Beat A. Kümin (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1997), 133–162.

²² Ronald Hutton, "The local impact of the Tudor Reformations," in Christopher Haigh, ed., *The English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 115.

²³ Northeast notes that the records for Bungay St Mary on the Norfolk border are also complete for the reformation period, but they have yet to be transcribed. See Peter Northeast, ed., *Boxford Churchwardens' Accounts, 1530–1561*, Suffolk Records Society, vol. 23 (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 1982), xi; referred to hereafter as *Boxford CWA* (Northeast's name only included for quotations of narrative material and editorial notes).

²⁴ Hutton provides a useful Appendix in *Merry England* wherein he lists all of the extant churchwardens' accounts for each county. Suffolk parishes with extant, albeit incomplete, records for any part of the period 1530–1547 are: Mildenhall; Brundish; Metfield; Cratfield; Bungay, St Mary; Mickfield; Dennington; and

detailed, accounts are valuable resources for creating an amalgamation of data on local reaction to religious policy in Suffolk. The scope of this study does not allow for in-depth study of all of the parishes for which such records survive, but it will utilize the four most complete sets, from Boxford, Cratfield, Long Melford, and Mildenhall. As it happens, all four sets of churchwardens' accounts for the parishes under consideration here have been previously transcribed, edited, and annotated, and exist in published form.²⁵

Three considerations influenced the decision to use printed (rather than manuscript) collections of churchwardens' accounts for this thesis. First, the parishes with the most complete sets of accounts for this period happen to be those that had been previously transcribed and published. Second, these four account sets were much more readily available than those from parishes where accounts only exist in manuscript form at the Suffolk Record Office (and where copies of the requisite documents would thus be prohibitively expensive to acquire). Third, the use of printed sources was necessary given the time constraints placed on this study; this allowed for more time spent on analysis and contextualization, rather than transcription. The inclusion of will evidence as a supplementary primary source meant that some manuscript materials were transcribed

Long Melford. The survival rate for accounts rises as one moves into the seventeenth century. See Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Year 1400–1700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 286–287.

²⁵ See Northeast, *Boxford CWA*; William Holland and John Raven, eds., *Cratfield: A Transcript of the Accounts of the Parish, from A.D. 1490 to A.D. 1642* (London: Jarrold & Sons, 1895), referred to hereafter as *Cratfield CWA* (Holland and Raven's names only included for quotations of narrative material and editorial notes); Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*; and Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*.

One must acknowledge that using only printed and edited versions of these sources has its limitations, the greatest being that editors may have left out key information or mis-transcribed entries. As noted above, the reason for using printed accounts is mainly for expediency, time not allowing for re-transcription of all of these documents. Most of these parish accounts were transcribed within the last thirty or so years and their editors upheld high standards for scholarship. The limitations of the Cratfield accounts, the only set transcribed earlier, are addressed in the section on that parish below.

and used in this thesis, just not to the same extent as if it had been necessary to do so with churchwardens' accounts. This thesis goes into more depth on each of these sets of published records in the sub-section below entitled "Parish Profiles." For now, it is important to note that due to the sometimes-fragmentary evidence presented in these sources this thesis does not emphasize a quantitative analysis of their data (although, when appropriate, such means have been employed). Instead, most of the analysis and assertions presented herein are qualitative in nature, which means that these four sets of parish financial accounts are taken as representations of abstract, collective attitudes and motivations toward religious change, rather than as purely economic indicators.

As a corollary to keeping the parish accounts, churchwardens were occasionally required to assemble inventories of church goods for inspection by their Archdeacon, Bishop, Archbishop, or a crown commissioner. These lists were meant to show whether or not a church was in compliance with government orders to remove, destroy, obtain, or build certain liturgical items or church fabric, depending on the way the religious winds were then blowing. Inventories survive in equal paucity to churchwardens' accounts, but where they do exist they provide valuable information regarding local compliance with official policy. For the purposes of this study, several inventories survive for Cratfield, Long Melford, and Mildenhall. We will return to historiographical discussion of churchwardens' accounts and inventories in the section on parish profiles below. Let us now turn to the other local primary source for this study, wills.

Wills as Indicators of Religious Affinity

In the last twenty years wills have gained wide acceptance as a source of information for assessing religious identity, as evidenced by the list of recent publications

utilizing them for that purpose.²⁶ Often a person's final (and most enduring) act in life, medieval and early modern English wills contain several types of information useful for discerning an individual's religious affinity. Will texts were structured in three parts, the bequest of the soul (preamble), the bequest of the body, and the bequest of earthly goods. The traditional bequest of the soul consisted of a brief statement of faith, wherein the testator entrusted their soul to God, the Virgin Mary, and the company of the saints in heaven. In 1518, Laurence Martin, a gentleman of Long Melford (and Roger Martin's grandfather), bequeathed his "soul to almighty God and to our blessed lady saint Mary [the] virgyn and to all the holy company of hevyn."²⁷ Over thirty years later, in 1551, Elizabeth Lane, a widow from Sandhurst in Gloucestershire, made a similarly traditional soul bequest to "Almyghty God to our Lady and to all the hoole Company of Heaven."²⁸

From the 1530s onward, some evangelicals used the bequest of the soul to indicate their personal faith. The overtly Protestant, often-copied, and controversial will preamble of Gloucestershire gentleman William Tracy is one such example.²⁹ In making his soul bequest Tracy asserted that "the fayth that I have taken and rehearsed is

²⁶ Publications using wills as evidence for religious belief include Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 504–523; John Craig and Caroline Litzenberger, "Wills as Religious Propaganda: The Testament of William Tracy," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 44 (July 1993): 415–431; Caroline Litzenberger, "Local Responses to Religious Policy: Evidence from Gloucestershire Wills," in Eric Joseph Carlson, ed., *Religion and the English People, 1500–1640: New Voices, New Perspectives* (Kirkville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1998), 245–270; M. L. Zell, "The Use of Religious Preambles as a Measure of Religious Belief in the Sixteenth Century," *Historical Research: The Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 50 (1977): 246–249; and Christopher Marsh, "In the name of God? Will-making and faith in Early Modern England," in *The Records of the Nation: The Public Record Office, 1838–1988, the British Record Society, 1888–1988*, ed. G. H. Martin and Peter Spufford, 214–249 (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 1990).

²⁷ TNA, PCC PROB 11/19/197.

²⁸ GRO, Gloucestershire Wills, 1551/16, as quoted in Litzenberger, "Local Responses," 245. Litzenberger notes that Elizabeth Lane's will contained what was probably one of the last traditional soul bequests made in Gloucestershire before the reformation changes took hold.

²⁹ See Craig and Litzenberger, "Wills as Religious Propaganda."

sufficient...without any other mans worke or workes.” He went on to state his evangelical belief that Jesus Christ was the only mediator between himself and God (omitting the traditional mention of the Virgin Mary and the saints). Finally, he denied the efficacy of the church’s intercessory system by leaving “no part of my goodes for that intent that any man should say or do to helpe my soule : for therein I trust onely to the promise of God.”³⁰ Tracy’s preamble was also unique in that his statements of faith were based on, and cited from, scripture.

Although there were exceptions on both sides of the theological divide, soul bequests were frequently formulaic and recycled. Individual testators chose the preamble formula and the scribe who would write it based on their religious preference.³¹ These examples show the extremes on both sides of the religious spectrum, but it should be noted that many testators chose to use more ambiguous wording in their preambles, usually leaving their soul only to “Almighty God.” The use of ambiguous language could have been an attempt to lie low during theologically uncertain times, or could have been the preference of a moderate testator who simply did not hold strong religious beliefs.³²

The bequest of the body was usually made to the earth, or stipulated a preferred burial place. In his will of 1524, Thomas Hall of Mildenhall left his body “to be buried within the north porch before the image of Our Lady.”³³ This was a choice plot since

³⁰ William Tracy, *The Testament of Master Wylliam Tracie esquire/expounded both by William Tyndale and John Frith* (Antwerp, 1535), STC 24167, sig. Aviii (v), quoted in Craig and Litzenberger, “Wills as Religious Propaganda,” 423–424.

³¹ Margaret Spufford, “The Scribes of Villagers’ Wills in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and their Influence,” *Local Population Studies* 7 (1971): 28–43.

³² Litzenberger provides a useful explanation (and table) of will preamble categories; see Appendix A in *The English Reformation and the Laity*, 168–178, especially 172.

³³ TNA, PCC PROB 11/22/267. Hall’s will is transcribed and reprinted, without its preamble, in Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 161–162.

parishioners would pass by his inscribed tombstone upon entering for services. On the other hand, parishioners of lesser means left their body “to be buried at the discretion of my executors” as Robert Mason, organ player and clerk of Mildenhall, did in 1558.³⁴ While there was variation in the bequest of the body, it was less indicative of one’s spiritual faith than of one’s earthly wealth and social status.

The bequest of earthly goods fell in-between the first two parts of a will as an indicator of religious identity. Usually comprising the largest part of a will, this bequest divided property among surviving family members, friends, and associates—often not understood as a spiritual practice. However, if a testator also chose to distribute his or her goods in other ways it could be an indicator of one’s religious beliefs. Those holding to a conservative religious sentiment might provide for a chantry priest to say memorial masses or prayers for the benefit of one’s soul and perhaps for those of departed family members and friends. In his will of 1524, Thomas Hopper of Mildenhall requested that “after my decease there be a priest found [funded] for me to sing and pray for me, my father’s and mother’s and all my benefactors and friend’s souls in Mildenhall church as long as £4 will extend and amount to.”³⁵

Another traditional form of bequest would leave money to the parish church to provide certain liturgical items. John Grene, Boxford churchwarden in 1530, left 40 shillings to the parish church, plus three cows to be rented out to provide tallow candles for the church.³⁶ Testators often left money for the poor regardless of religious affinity.

³⁴ SROB, IC 500/2/28/224; see also Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 176.

³⁵ SROB, IC 500/2/14/91–92. Middleton-Stewart estimates that £4 “would have provided prayers for roughly nine months,” *Mildenhall CWA*, 162–163.

³⁶ TNA, PCC PROB 11/26/39.

The difference in religious preference thus lay in the reason behind such a bequest. In a traditional will a testator might leave money to hire poor people of the parish as professional mourners to pray for their soul in purgatory. In his will of November 1504, Mildenhall parish chaplain, Roger Barforth, left “13d. to be given to 13 poor men or women of the town...every Friday, for half a year, they to say Our Ladys sawte for my soul and Sir William Day’s soul, my father’s and my mother’s souls.”³⁷ Conversely, if one left money for poor relief without stipulations requiring prayers, it could be construed as a tacit sign of evangelical faith—although without including stipulations one way or another it could just as easily have been a conservative testator’s attempt to continue a traditional practice by using ambiguous language. As with the bequest of the body, the bequest of earthly goods is thus not always suitable for determining religious affiliation, but there are some clues that may be used in combination with the preamble/bequest of the soul to ascertain an individual’s beliefs. As it is the most consistent aspect of early modern English wills, most of the focus on this source as an indicator of religious affinity will center on testators’ preambles.

Interpretive Methodology

Owing to the fact that source sets consulted in this thesis contain both quantitative and qualitative data and thus bear multiple levels of interpretation, it seems prudent to explain the methodology employed in their analysis. Although we have already outlined above the reasons for using churchwardens’ accounts to measure parochial reaction to

³⁷ Clearly someone who believed in the system he had served as a chaplain, Barforth also left money for “a lawful priest to sing in Mildenhall church for half a year to pray for my soul...having 4 marks [~£2 7s. 4d.] for his stipend.” See the will of Roger Barforth, NRO, NCC Ryxe 27, transcribed in Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 156.

changes in religious policy, it does not necessarily follow that such sources will also reveal insight into communal or individual religious consciousness or motivations for such action. This qualitative aspect, while present, is less readily apparent than the accounts' original quantitative purpose in financial accounting. Craig observes that making the connection "depends upon definitions of the mind and of what it means to know."³⁸ For this reason, this thesis follows the ontological methodology employed by Craig in his study of Mildenhall's later, Elizabethan churchwardens' accounts.

In his study of Elizabethan Mildenhall, Craig makes the distinction between a dualistic, Cartesian ontology for sixteenth-century parishioners and an affective, action oriented consciousness. Craig sees the early-twentieth-century historian C. H. Firth as epitomizing the dualistic viewpoint: he "dismissed 'the labourers and artizans who formed the mass of the nation' as 'simple and ignorant people...[for whom] quarrels about doctrine or ceremonies or church government were over their heads and did not touch them.'" Firth's viewpoint thus assumes a narrowly intellectualist definition of religion.³⁹ Furthermore, it fabricates a Cartesian dualism for early modern people that would have required "acts of articulated understanding" to demonstrate consciousness of the issues at hand. In other words, to Firth common people were not actively involved in the great religious upheavals of the time, because they left no record of articulated intellectual interactions with contemporary theological issues.⁴⁰ As counterpoint, Craig

³⁸ Craig, "Co-operation and Initiatives," 378.

³⁹ Ibid., 378–379, quoting C. H. Firth, "Introduction," in A. Peel, ed., *The Seconde Part of a Register, being a calendar of manuscripts under that title intended for publication by the Puritans about 1593, and now in Dr. Williams's library, London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 1, xv.

⁴⁰ While Craig is making the point that Firth's view is not the only way to conceive of early modern people's consciousness, especially in regard to analyzing churchwardens' accounts, it bears consideration that wills could possibly qualify as articulated intellectual interactions, à la Firth. Perhaps Firth did not

cites Gilbert Ryle, who criticized the Cartesian dualism of Firth and held that “there are many activities which directly display the qualities of mind yet are neither themselves intellectual operations nor yet effects of intellectual operations.”⁴¹ For Ryle this active consciousness is primarily displayed in public behavior, thus moving beyond the Cartesian idea of consciousness existing only in intellectual theorization or the apprehension of truths. Craig summarizes that “for Ryle men’s thoughts are writ large in their actions and behaviour and to know is pre-eminently ‘to know how’ to do something in practice.”⁴² This establishes the precept that early modern parochial behavior with regard to religion (or anything else, for that matter) was not necessarily rooted in Firth’s idea of common people’s “ignorance” or “simple passivity.” English parishioners were not lemmings, blindly following official orders without thinking. Instead, this thesis asserts that parochial action was based on communal and individual initiative (literal “know how”), born of an understanding of and interaction with the larger issues at play in the Tudor Reformations. The financial transactions in churchwardens’ accounts are not mere numerical entries on a page, devoid of all other meaning; each one is connected with specific public, and often religiously significant, actions that were carried out because wardens saw fit to do so in the best interests of their parish.

consider them in his statement but I would argue that common people did produce considered interactions with contemporary theological issues in their will preambles. It seems that most people had the freedom to choose the type of preamble they desired based on their religious beliefs (and/or political expediency). While they were not producing theological treatises on the order of the intelligentsia, most people did have the means and opportunity to express intellectual engagement with religious issues through their will preambles. This does not discount the argument Craig makes for interpreting churchwardens’ accounts based on Ryle’s perspective (for it is the approach used in this thesis), but it does allow for the validity of Firth’s argument being applied to wills. Thus, in some small degree, the two approaches (and source sets) work together to further our understanding of our Suffolk parishioners’ engagement with religious change.

⁴¹ Ibid., 379, quoting Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of the Mind* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1949), 27.

⁴² Ibid., 379.

Figure 1: Regional Context

This map shows the location of Suffolk in relation to the rest of England and continental Europe.

Figure 2: Map of Suffolk Parishes

This map shows the locations of the four parish case studies, Boxford, Cratfield, Mildenhall, and Long Melford, along with two other Suffolk locales mentioned in this thesis, Hadleigh and Mendlesham.⁴³

⁴³ These maps were created using National Geographic MapMaker Interactive; <http://education.nationalgeographic.com/mapping/interactive-map> (accessed May 12, 2012).

Parish Profiles

The diocese of Norwich was in the archdiocese of Canterbury, the Southern Province of the Church within England. Consequently, the Bishop of Norwich reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The diocese included both Norfolk and Suffolk, and the southern jurisdiction of Suffolk was further divided into the two Archdeaconries of Sudbury and Suffolk, encompassing the western and eastern halves of the county, respectively. There were around 500 parishes in sixteenth-century Suffolk, a number that has changed little since then.⁴⁴

Traditionally a center of the wool trade, East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex), especially its seaports and trading centers, had a long history of contact with continental Europe. Interaction with Flemish, Dutch, and German merchants abroad brought new ideas back to Norfolk and Suffolk parishes around the same time that government interests turned to reforming traditional religion along continental lines. Based on these early contacts with continental reforms, and the endurance from the fifteenth century of some Lollard sympathies, Suffolk is considered to have become an early evangelical stronghold.⁴⁵ This study is thus interested in Suffolk for two reasons:

⁴⁴ For a graphic representation of Suffolk's ecclesiastical organization, see Joanna Martin, "Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions," in *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk*, rev. ed., ed. David Dymond and Edward Martin (Ipswich, UK: Suffolk County Council, 1999), 24–25.

⁴⁵ Lollardy was an internal church reform movement based on the teachings of John Wycliffe, a fourteenth-century priest and Oxford don. Lollards denied transubstantiation, criticized clerical celibacy, and promoted vernacular Bible reading. Although the movement died down following Wycliff's death, its principles survived in some areas and may have provided a foundation for later reformation "by providing areas and minds receptive to Lutheranism." E. A. Livingstone, ed., *Oxford Concise Dictionary of the Christian Church*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 354. See also, Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988). For an alternative view on Lollardy's influence, see Richard Rex, *The Lollards* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

John Foxe identified the Suffolk town of Hadleigh as an early evangelical stronghold in his 1563 Acts and Monuments. John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* (1563 edition), ed. Mark Greengrass, David Loades, and Thomas S. Freeman (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011), Book 5, 1134,

first, to see if its reputation as an early evangelical enclave is warranted by the evidence from these four parishes, and second, to see if the generalizations drawn from the Suffolk examples agree or disagree with studies of other parts of England during this time.

Boxford

One of Suffolk's prosperous wool villages, Boxford had over 400 inhabitants in the early sixteenth century.⁴⁶ Located in the southern part of the county on the river Box (a tributary of the Stour), the village lies along the major east-west route from Ipswich to Sudbury, half as far from the former as from the latter. Boxford is also roughly nine miles southeast of Long Melford. Boxford was a relatively autonomous locality in the sixteenth century. Beat Kümin notes that "the manorial lords, who included Sir Robert Peyton, High Sheriff of Cambridge and Huntingdon, left hardly a trace in parochial sources and officeholding was in the hands of clothiers, weavers, yeomen, and husbandmen."⁴⁷ Peter Northeast, editor of the Boxford churchwarden's accounts, observes that "according to the muster roll of 1522, of the 101 persons assessed in Boxford, 11 were clothmakers, 36

<http://www.johnfoxe.org> (accessed January 3, 2011). For a nuanced analysis of Foxe's claim for Hadleigh, see John Craig, "Reformers, Conflict, and Revisionism: The Reformation in Sixteenth-Century Hadleigh," *The Historical Journal* 42 (1999), 2–3. Lynn Botelho echoes this sentiment, stating that under Henry VIII England underwent "what might have been characterized as a reluctant reformation," and that while "much of the country [was] still deeply embedded in the practices of the traditional church... [o]nly East Anglia and London pursued reform with enthusiasm." L. A. Botelho, *Old Age and the English Poor Law, 1500–1700* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2004), 5. MacCulloch presents a similar view, citing both the legacy of Lollardy and commercial ties to continental reformers as evidence for East Anglia's early adoption of evangelicalism. See MacCulloch, *Boy King*, 109–115. Though not concerned with Lollardy, McClendon has written notable study of the process of religious change in the region's major city and diocesan center, Norwich. See Muriel McClendon, *The Quiet Reformation: Magistrates and the Emergence of Protestantism in Tudor Norwich* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

⁴⁶ D. P. Mortlock, *The Guide to Suffolk Churches* (Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2009), 61. According to the Suffolk County Council Boxford had a population of 1,250 in 2009; see "Total Parish Population (SCC Parish Estimates)," Suffolk Observatory website (Suffolk County Council, 2011), <http://www.suffolkobservatory.info/ViewDataView.aspx?Q=NFpkRVdUMFlicFZJbWsyWnpFalpuSU1hdXVOBWfheG1OWUpUNklvazRVeWhxTFpHczdyLzhYak8raUFtb2FxeQ==Xwq81oejymY=> (accessed February 6, 2012).

⁴⁷ Beat Kümin, *The Shaping of a Community: The Rise and Reformation of the English Parish, c. 1400–1560* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1996), 80–81.

weavers, 6 shearmen and 2 fullers.”⁴⁸ As with many other successful merchants of the late-medieval period, the townspeople of Boxford put their money back into their parish church. Hugging the southern side of the river, next to the town’s major bridge (for which it seems to have been responsible) the parish church of St Mary was largely rebuilt in the Perpendicular style during the town’s fourteenth and fifteenth century heyday. The tower and wooden north porch date from the fourteenth century while the body and stone south porch date from the fifteenth century.

As with all of the other parish churches in this study, the pre-reformation interior of St Mary’s no doubt abounded in a variety of different ecclesiastical decorations. Though there is no extant inventory available, one can imagine that, consistent with other churches of this period, St Mary’s would have possessed multiple stone altars, cloths for their covering, silver and gold plate for the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgical rituals, a variety of elaborate vestments for the priest and his assistants, and many didactic and devotional images in sculpture, wall paintings, and stained glass.⁴⁹ The original fifteenth-century baptismal font stands by a pillar near the south door and its seventeenth-century octagonal wooden cover opens to reveal painted scrolls with texts from the Gospel of John. Although it no longer stands in the chancel archway, an upper doorway in the north wall is clear evidence for the existence of a pre-reformation rood loft and screen that would have separated the nave from the chancel and sanctuary.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Northeast, *Boxford CWA*, xii.

⁴⁹ There are two side chapels in Boxford St Mary Church, one at the end of each aisle, evidence of at least two additional altars (devoted to specific saints or the Trinity) that would have stood in the pre-Reformation church.

⁵⁰ Mortlock, *Suffolk Churches*, 62. For commentary on, and photos of, the church interior, see Simon Knott, “Boxford St Mary,” The Suffolk Churches Site, <http://www.suffolkchurches.co.uk> (accessed February 22, 2012).

The churchwardens' accounts for Boxford comprise the most complete printed record for any parish in Suffolk. In 1982, the Suffolk Records Society published the *Boxford Churchwardens' Accounts, 1530–1561*, edited by Peter Northeast. This volume contains full transcriptions of the accounts, a brief introduction to the history of the village and the accounts, plus biographical sketches of parishioners mentioned therein, and a helpful glossary. Northeast's transcription is unabridged and is thus a great deal more useful than some others for seeing the full spectrum of parish finances, both the mundane and the exceptional. For most of the years covered in the printed accounts the practice seems to have been to elect one new churchwarden to a two-year term each year; thus the new one would serve with the previous year's junior officer.⁵¹ Northeast notes that "churchwardens had to be 'substantial men' of the parish, frequently using their own money, at least temporarily, to finance the parish."⁵² The parish derived some income from rent on lands donated to its use, monetary bequests from parishioners, as well as the obligatory dues for wax silver and Romescot.⁵³ However, the main source of income came from communal entertainment such as church ales and, in one instance, a full-scale play staged in the village.⁵⁴ The accounts up to 1547 show spending on routine upkeep of

⁵¹ Northeast, *Boxford CWA*, xii. See also the description of the practice of electing wardens to serve as junior and then senior positions, as in Boxford, in Pounds, *English Parish*, 184.

⁵² Northeast, *Boxford CWA*, xii. This assertion is borne out by the fact that several of the Boxford churchwardens' wills were proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, meaning they held property in multiple jurisdictions or had assets above a certain value.

⁵³ Wax silver refers to the collection taken for the paschal candle and other lights at Easter. Romescot is another name for "Peter's Pence" or papal annates, the traditional tribute of 1d. per household paid by every parish to the Pope annually. See *ibid.*, xiii.

⁵⁴ The church ale was a long-standing method of fund-raising. It "consisted of parish gatherings where food and drink were available and in many other places were frequently accompanied by games, musicians, Morris dancing, play-acting," and other such activities during which a collection was taken for the benefit of the church, see *ibid.*, xiii. For the entries related to the 1535 play, see *ibid.*, 18–20. For women's role in local brewing and ale-making, see Judith M. Bennett, "Conviviality and Charity in Medieval and Early Modern England," *Past & Present* 134 (Feb 1992): 19–41.

the church, churchyard, its various properties, and the nearby bridge. Nothing prior to this date suggests the major changes on the horizon.

Cratfield

The most remote parish in this study, Cratfield lies approximately midway between Lowestoft and Ipswich, but is far from any major thoroughfare. Although its population was larger during the sixteenth century, Cratfield is today the smallest of the four parishes under consideration here.⁵⁵ Cratfield has been described as “about as unknown a place as one could well find” and perhaps because of its remoteness its parish accounts survived into the late nineteenth century.⁵⁶ Until the mid-sixteenth century dissolution of the monasteries, Cratfield was an impropriated vicarage under the patronage of St Neot’s priory in Huntingdonshire, its tithes having been granted to the monastery in the twelfth century.⁵⁷ The most notable feature of Cratfield St Mary Church is its beautiful seven sacrament font. Dating from the fifteenth century, the font’s sides bear scarred but recognizable relief carvings of the church’s traditional sacraments.⁵⁸ The

⁵⁵ According to the Suffolk County Council, Cratfield had a population of 260 in 2009; see “Total Parish Population (SCC Parish Estimates).” Raven notes that in 1841 the population of Cratfield was 720 and had declined to 467 by 1891. He attributed the steady drop during the nineteenth century to “the gradual decay of the agricultural interest,” a result of the industrialization of Britain during the later nineteenth century. Assuming that population in the village had been stable (if not steadily expanding) prior to industrialization, one may surmise from this information that Cratfield had a population between that of Boxford (~400) and Long Melford (~1,140) during the sixteenth century. See Holland and Raven, *Cratfield CWA*, 10.

⁵⁶ Holland and Raven, *Cratfield CWA*, 9.

⁵⁷ The grant came from the ill-fated Queen Matilda around 1100. The impropriation meant that St Neot’s abbot was the rector of the parish and collected its great tithes. He thus had the right to appoint Cratfield’s vicar, who would carry out all priestly duties on his behalf, see Holland and Raven, *Cratfield CWA*, 10–11. Located approximately eighty miles to the west of Cratfield, St Neot’s priory was in Huntingdonshire, one of the traditional counties of England until it was incorporated into Cambridgeshire in 1974. For more on the practice of impropriation in Suffolk, see David Dymond, “Vicarages and Appropriated Church Livings,” in *Historical Atlas of Suffolk*, 72–73.

⁵⁸ Mortlock, *Suffolk Churches*, 129. For commentary and photos of the church interior, see Knott, “Cratfield St Mary,” The Suffolk Churches Site, <http://www.suffolkchurches.co.uk> (accessed February 22, 2012).

village lands were part of the hereditary possession of the Duchy of Norfolk, although they changed hands several times after the fall of the Howard family at the end of Henry VIII's reign.⁵⁹ Regardless, the noble lords of the land seem to have played little part in the religious or social life of the parish church of St Mary, as it was of minimal significance in the context of their vast estates.

During the late nineteenth century Rev. William Holland transcribed the Cratfield churchwardens' accounts for 1490–1642. After his death in 1891, Holland's friend and colleague Rev. John J. Raven edited them for publication.⁶⁰ The edited accounts were first published in 1895 and also contain inventories of church goods from 1528 and 1555. There is much to commend in Holland and Raven's work, for the accounts cover the full range of time under consideration; however, there are also some deficiencies to note. A feature of many late Victorian edited volumes, the Cratfield churchwardens' accounts are heavily selective in what they include. Some years are left out entirely, while others only give a partial list of expenditures for whatever the editors deemed notable. Also, in at least one instance there is an error in Holland's dating of a document, which Raven later amends.⁶¹ The edited Cratfield accounts do not convey the full depth of parish activity when compared with other localities such as Boxford and Mildenhall; however, it should

⁵⁹ Holland and Raven, *Cratfield CWA*, 10–11.

⁶⁰ The extant accounts for Cratfield are held in manuscript form at the Suffolk Record Office branch in Ipswich; their reference numbers are SROI FC 62/A6 and SROI FC 62/E1/3. Holland and Raven compiled their edited volume from these original manuscript sources before they were deposited at the archives. John Raven was vicar of the neighboring parish of Fressingfield to the south.

⁶¹ The dating error relates to one loose, undated account sheet from Mary I's reign. As it notes the re-making of the rood, Holland attributed it to her first regnant year, 1553. He thought this action would have occurred with the return to Roman Catholic worship. However, Raven connects the sheet with a later entry for 1557 where the rood was actually installed. It seems unlikely that it would have taken four years to install the completed rood (although it might have taken that long to finance it). This chronological revision has interesting implications for parish sentiment toward the return to Catholicism under Mary. For more on this see the Epilogue to this thesis. Holland and Raven, *Cratfield CWA*, 83, 85.

be noted that Holland and Raven's volume appears to include most of the key entries concerning religious change. Hence, the accounts are still suitable for use as a gauge for local reaction to changes in religious policy. Gaps in the accounts are supplemented to some extent by the fact that wills have survived for several Cratfield churchwardens. As generally outlined in the above section, early modern wills are useful indicators of religious affinity and may thus be useful to filling out the picture in Cratfield.

Long Melford

Situated along the River Stour in southwestern Suffolk near the Essex border, Long Melford is three miles north of Sudbury and 14 miles south of Bury St Edmunds.⁶² As noted above, it is also about nine miles northwest of Boxford. The Manor of Melford, which included the site of Melford Hall, most of the present town lands, and the church, was for many centuries in the possession of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds to the north.⁶³ In 1234 Henry III granted the abbot a charter to hold a weekly market in Long Melford.⁶⁴ During the late-medieval and early modern periods the town benefitted from both strong agricultural and woolen cloth-manufacturing economies. The present-day Melford Hall was built in the mid-sixteenth century by Sir William Cordell on the site of a medieval building used as a country house by the abbots of Bury St Edmunds.⁶⁵ The nineteenth-century antiquarian William Parker estimated that the town had roughly 1,140

⁶² According to the Suffolk County Council Long Melford had a population of 3,500 in 2009. See "Total Parish Population (SCC Parish Estimates)."

⁶³ Originally, the Saxon Earl Alfric held the town lands and patronage of the parish church. He bequeathed these, along with his manor at Melford Hall, to the Benedictine Abbey at Bury St Edmunds prior to the Norman Conquest in 1066. See William Parker, *The History of Long Melford* (London: Wyman & Sons, 1873), 1–4, 30.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 247–248.

⁶⁵ For more on the Cordells at Melford Hall, see Parker, *Long Melford*, 319–321; and Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, 85.

inhabitants during the mid-sixteenth century, making it, with Mildenhall, one of the larger parishes in this study.⁶⁶

The parish church of the Holy Trinity, largely rebuilt during the later fifteenth century, sits at the north end of town and is considered an excellent example of the late Perpendicular Gothic style. One of the grandest parish churches in Suffolk, Holy Trinity boasted no less than seven altars prior to the reformation.⁶⁷ As a possession of the Abbey, the parish vicarage was in their gift until the dissolution under Henry VIII in 1539. Two major donors financed the fifteenth-century reconstruction of Holy Trinity Church, the family of wealthy wool merchant William Clopton and the Martin family, whose descendant Roger Martin (introduced earlier) played a major role in the church's accounts during Mary I's reign.⁶⁸ The Cloptons lived at neighboring Kentwell Hall to the north of town, while the Martins resided on the south side of town at Melford Place.⁶⁹ During the fifteenth century the Clopton and Martin families both built chantry chapels, on the north and south sides of Holy Trinity Church, respectively. Furthermore, the marble tomb of John Clopton and his wife Alice was given the rare honor of incorporation into the Easter Sepulchre near the high altar.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Parker's estimate is based on a conflation of baptism and burial rates as recorded in the parish registers during this period; see Parker, *Long Melford*, 369–370.

⁶⁷ For known sites of medieval altars in Holy Trinity church, see the "Plan of Melford Church," Fig. 1 in Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, ii.

⁶⁸ An interesting feature of Long Melford's church, the names of the major donors to the reconstruction are "perpetuated in flushwork along the parapet," Pounds, *English Parish*, 408, 410.

⁶⁹ For more on the Cloptons at Kentwell, see Parker, *Long Melford*, 170–179. For the Martins, see *ibid.*, 345–348.

⁷⁰ An Easter Sepulchre was a specially made housing for the Eucharistic elements used only during the days between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. It was meant to symbolize Christ's entombment after his crucifixion. Often a wooden case placed in a niche on the north side of the high altar, to have one's tomb incorporated into the Easter Sepulchre was a rare honor, reserved for those of importance in the community who had significantly contributed to the church. Parker notes the reasoning behind this: "[I]t was coveted

The original churchwardens' accounts for Long Melford are contained in a bound volume called "The Black Church Book of Melford," which is held in the Suffolk Record Office branch at Bury St Edmunds.⁷¹ The volume was bound in the latter part of the seventeenth century and mainly contains parish documents from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including churchwardens' accounts and church inventories, among other things. All documents relevant to this study have been transcribed and reproduced by David Dymond and Clive Paine in *The Spoil of Melford Church: The Reformation in a Suffolk Parish*. The volume includes Roger Martin's "State of Melford Church..." as well as churchwardens' accounts for 1547–1580 (with some editorial gaps in later years), four lists of church goods for 1529, 1541, 1547, and 1559, a special account of the sale of service books in 1549–1550, and several different lists of bequests and payments made to the church. Each document is footnoted to explain context, to give definitions for unusual terms, and to provide further detail. The authors also provide short biographical sketches of important figures who appear frequently in the parish accounts, as well as a glossary and line drawings illustrative of the church fabric as it was during the reformation. The accounts for 1549–1554 and 1558–1559, 1562, and 1570–1580 contain extracts from the originals, not complete transcriptions. As with the Cratfield accounts, the editors seem to have included all of the key entries as they relate to the subject of this study, although this assumption cannot be verified without examining the bound manuscripts held in the

by the pious for their last resting-place, that when the congregation came to pay their devotions to our Lord's Body at the holy seasons, they might be moved to pray for the repose of the souls of those interred in the Easter tomb." Parker, *Long Melford*, 127; see also Martin's "Account of Melford Church," in Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, 4; and fn. 18.

⁷¹ The archival reference number for the "Black Book" is SROB, FL 509/1/15; for a brief description of the history of the documents, see Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, viii.

Suffolk Record Office in Bury St Edmunds.⁷² Furthermore, the existence and inclusion of the four complete inventories from 1529, 1541, 1547, and 1559 allows for deeper analysis of the years with extracts than would otherwise be possible.

Mildenhall

Located on a “chalky promontory” at the edge of the fenland in the far northwest corner of Suffolk, sixteenth-century Mildenhall was the largest parish in the county.⁷³ It is roughly equidistant from Bury St Edmunds (to the southeast), Thetford (to the northeast, in Norfolk), and Ely (to the west, in Cambridgeshire). The size of the parish owed to the fact that much of the land was of poor quality for agricultural production and thus more was needed to support its scattered inhabitants. Most of its inhabitants lived in the High Town, near the southeastern border of the parish, while others lived in the outlying settlements of West Row, Beck Row, Holywell Row, and Cake Street.⁷⁴ John Craig reports that “the parish was second only to the two parishes in Bury St Edmunds in population and the archidiaconal returns of 1603 placed the number of communicants at about a thousand.”⁷⁵ Taking into account some population growth in the intervening

⁷² Based on my reading of *Spoil of Melford Church*, Dymond and Paine have included sufficient information to illustrate the process and context of mid-sixteenth century religious change in Long Melford.

⁷³ By the mid-nineteenth century the parish encompassed nearly 16,000 acres. See Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, xix.

⁷⁴ Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, xix–xx.

⁷⁵ Craig, “Co-operation and Initiatives,” 371 fn 82. According to the Suffolk County Council Mildenhall had a population of 10,750 in 2009. See “Total Parish Population (SCC Parish Estimates).” This is a misleading place to start on estimates of previous population, however, due to the fact that Mildenhall is now home to a joint British/American air base, which has greatly increased its population since being established in the 1930s. The 1851 census counted 4,374 residents, down to 3573 in 1891. See T. C. B. Timmins, ed., *Suffolk Returns from the Census of Religious Worship, 1851* Suffolk Records Society (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 1997), 45; and UK Genealogy Archives, s.v. Mildenhall, transcribed from *The Comprehensive Gazetteer of England and Wales, 1894–5*, <http://uk-genealogy.org.uk/england/Suffolk/towns/Mildenhall.html> (accessed February 10, 2012). The nineteenth-century numbers lead one to believe that Mildenhall was probably a substantial town centuries earlier and may have compared in size with Long Melford. This supposition is supported by the general size of St

decades, this would have made its population roughly equivalent to Long Melford under the Tudors. The river Lark runs along the southern border of the parish into the larger river Ouse, which heads north to The Wash. Relatively easy access to the sea thus connected Mildenhall merchants and farmers with products and resources from eastern English ports, as well as offering access to foreign trading partners. Judith Middleton-Stewart explains that “originally a royal holding, Mildenhall manor, including its church, was granted to the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds by Edward the Confessor in 1043.” It continued as an abbey possession until the dissolution in 1539–1540, and was “the single most valuable manor in Suffolk.”⁷⁶ Mildenhall was also a market town, having first been granted the right in 1220, although economic activity began to trail off with the decline of the cloth trade at the end of the fifteenth century.⁷⁷

The economic boom of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries financed much of the reconstruction of the original parish church of St Mary in the Perpendicular style.⁷⁸ As with the other parish churches, Mildenhall St Mary had a wooden rood screen and loft in the chancel arch dividing the nave from the chancel and altar. It must have been an unusually large structure as the outlines of three access doors remain in the north wall.⁷⁹

Another notable feature of the interior are a series of life-sized carved wooden angels that

Mary’s Church, which while somewhat smaller than Long Melford’s Holy Trinity is still much larger than those of Boxford or Cratfield.

⁷⁶ The main economic occupations in Mildenhall were peat extraction from the fens, farming, wool production, and cloth manufacturing. In addition, there was a sizeable rabbit warren in the parish, which provided both food and valuable pelts. As with Long Melford (and Cratfield’s connection with St Neot’s), the abbey at Bury St Edmunds would have had the right to select Mildenhall’s vicar, in addition to collecting its tithes. Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, xxi.

⁷⁷ Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, xxi.

⁷⁸ Construction on the new church had begun in the thirteenth century, with the oldest part of the current church being the c. 1220 vestry on the north side of the chancel, see Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, xxiii.

⁷⁹ For a photo of the blocked doorframes, see Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, xxvii.

jut out from the nave ceiling.⁸⁰ The churchwardens' accounts for Mildenhall survive for the years 1503–1553, albeit with some gaps in that time, and reveal an immense amount of information about the parish and its everyday operations during the first half of the century. Owing to its unusually large area and possibly the geography of the town, the parish of Mildenhall elected four churchwardens each year (rather than the usual two), two from the High Town and one each from West Row and Beck Row.⁸¹ Judith Middleton-Stewart transcribed and compiled the early sixteenth-century churchwardens' accounts for Mildenhall in *Records of the Churchwardens of Mildenhall*.⁸² This volume also includes nine-years' worth of "collections" from 1446–1454, transcriptions of notable wills, and biographical entries for individuals mentioned in the accounts.

Having surveyed each of the four Suffolk parishes above, we now turn to the first narrative chapter of this study. It focuses on the development of medieval Eucharistic theology, the intercessory system built around the doctrine of purgatory, and the liturgy as a public and communal expression of the first two concerns. It also describes the rich didactic and devotional decorations that were contained within pre-Reformation parish churches. Items from earlier parish records, mainly those of Cratfield and Mildenhall, are interspersed throughout this first chapter to aid in contextualizing late-medieval religion as it stood going into the early period of the Reformation.

⁸⁰ Mortlock, *Suffolk Churches*, 344. For commentary and photos of the church interior, see Knott, "Mildenhall St Mary," The Suffolk Churches Site, <http://www.suffolkchurches.co.uk> (accessed February 22, 2012).

⁸¹ Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, lix.

⁸² Middleton-Stewart includes accounts for Mary I's reign in Appendix 1, *Mildenhall CWA*, 133–136. These entries are from extracts published by Samuel Tymms in *East Anglian Notes and Queries*, I (n.p., 1864), 185, 198. The original documents from which he published extracts (covering the years 1554–1569) were suspected to be in Tymms's possession and were lost after publication in *EAN&Q*. With regard to these documents Peter Northeast comments that "if only this volume could be rediscovered, the Mildenhall accounts would be the best set in the county." Northeast, *Boxford CWA*, 79, fn. 2.

Chapter One: The Late Medieval Eucharist, Parish Church, and Sarum Liturgy

The Development of Medieval Eucharistic Theology

In England, as in the rest of Europe, the liturgy stood at the center of medieval religion, and the celebration of the Eucharist (also called the Mass or Holy Communion) was the high point of the liturgy.⁸³ “In the Mass,” Eamon Duffy states, “the redemption of the world, wrought on Good Friday once for all, was renewed and made fruitful for all who believed. Christ himself...became present on the altar of the parish church, body, soul, and divinity, and his blood flowed once again, to nourish and renew Church and world.”⁸⁴ Medieval doctrine held that Christ became physically present under the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine, and as such they represented a conduit of God’s grace to the person(s) who partook of them.⁸⁵ The Mass was not only central to the living

⁸³ The term Eucharist is derived from the Greek verb *eucharisto*, to give thanksgiving or possess gratitude; Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 25.100 and 33.349. Several different terms have historically been used for this liturgical event, including: Eucharist, Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper, Sacrament of the Altar, and the Mass. I will endeavor to use the terms Eucharist and communion throughout this essay unless another term is better suited to the context. Terminology used in quotations will appear unchanged from the original.

The term Liturgy is derived from the Greek *leitourgia*, meaning “public duty, a service to the state undertaken by a citizen.” The word was adapted to the Christian Church and came to mean “the official public service of the Church” as opposed to private devotions. Liturgy thus refers to “the whole complex of official services, all the rites, ceremonies, prayers, and sacraments of the Church.” Charles George Habermann, ed., *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), s.v. Liturgy. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09306a.htm> (accessed February 24, 2011).

⁸⁴ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 91.

⁸⁵ The words of consecration in the Canon of the Mass in the Sarum Missal (the dominant pre-Reformation Catholic liturgy in England) reflect the belief in transubstantiation. See A. H. Pearson, trans. *The Sarum Missal Done into English*, 2nd ed. (1841, repr.; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 310; referred to hereafter as *Sarum Missal*.

Steven Ozment draws from Thomas Aquinas for the common medieval belief in the sacraments as conduits of grace. See Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), 35.

but also played an essential role in remembering the dead. The prayers of the faithful, spurred on by the words of the Mass, plus the Eucharistic oblation performed by the priest, were believed to provide intercession on behalf of the departed, thus aiding them through the trials of purgatory on their way to paradise.⁸⁶

Most recent studies of late-medieval religion assert that people were generally satisfied with this system. While there were occasional reform movements and some noteworthy critics of certain church abuses, for the most part, the religious culture of late-medieval England and Europe was alive and well in the early sixteenth century.⁸⁷ This is especially evident in the churchwardens' accounts of the Suffolk parishes in this study. The years leading up to the reformation changes are full of entries regarding expanding church buildings, re-glazing windows, obtaining new church plate, and washing vestments and altar cloths, as well as mending and decorating the rood, altars, and other church furniture. An enthusiastic culture of communal giving is evident in the steady entry of tithes, wax silver, church ale proceeds, and other special collections into church coffers. Furthermore, many remembered their parish church in death through bequests of money and land.⁸⁸ Often, as in the case of Mildenhall dyer John Jerolde, the money was intended to make up for "tythes and offerings negligentlie forgotten and not payde."⁸⁹

⁸⁶ The most comprehensive treatment of this subject is found in Peter Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford, U.K: Oxford University Press, 2002). In his study, Marshall traces the ways in which theological and popular thought about the dead changed during the English Reformation.

⁸⁷ For in-depth studies asserting the pre-reformation vitality of the Roman Catholic religious culture, see Duffy, *Stripping the Altars*; and Haigh, *English Reformations*.

⁸⁸ The churchwardens' accounts for Cratfield from the 1490s show a series of restoration projects, including a painter hired to create an image of Mary and renew her tabernacle and that of St Edmund, see Raven, *Cratfield*, 20–24. The mid-fifteenth century records (1446–1454) from Mildenhall St Mary reveal a series of special collections undertaken to finance extraordinary church building projects. Middleton-Stewart believes that these funds may have been used to purchase new bells for the recently completed tower; see Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, lxiii–lxv, 2–39. For more on the strength of religious culture in pre-reformation English parish communities, see Hutton "Local Impact," 115–116. For specific

Despite the general stability of traditional religious culture, theological, social, and political factors converged in the early sixteenth century to form a viable movement for religious reform. Beginning in the German principalities and Swiss cantons, the evangelical reform movement was led early on by Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, Ulrich Zwingli, Heinrich Bullinger, and Johann Oecolampadius, among others.⁹⁰ These continental reformers, branded as heretics by the Roman Church, were influenced to differing degrees by the Christian humanist movement championed by the Catholic reformer and scholar Desiderius Erasmus, among others.⁹¹ They based their radical ideas on the humanist ideal of going back to the sources (*ad fontes*). This meant studying the doctrinal writings of the early church fathers, liturgical practices of the early church, and the original Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible. Given this focus, evangelicals often directed their early efforts toward making the scriptures available to all Christians.

Their reading and interpretation of the biblical texts and the writings of the fourth- and fifth-century “fathers” of the early church, unmediated by the traditional interpretations promulgated by the church, led evangelical reformers to challenge

discussion of the way parish officers used land donated to Cratfield St Mary to insulate it from monetary privations during the reformation, see Ken Farnhill, “Religious policy and parish ‘conformity’: Cratfield’s lands in the sixteenth century,” in *Parish in English Life*, ed. French, Gibbs, and Kümin, 217–229.

⁸⁹ SROB, IC 500/1/7/75. Depending on the source of a testator’s wealth, sometimes land was given to the church in lieu of money.

⁹⁰ The foremost recent surveys of the broader European Reformation include: Ozment, *The Age of Reform*; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (New York: Penguin, 2004); and Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). For a more accessible introduction, see Patrick Collinson, *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2004).

⁹¹ Erasmus’ humanist principles and previous criticism of church hypocrisy had inspired reformers, but he was an advocate of internal reform, not the separatism championed by evangelicals. Though many would claim intellectual connections with Erasmus, Luther was not among them. From 1524 to 1527 the two engaged in an intense theological debate on the existence and nature of the human will as it related to salvation and humanity’s relationship with God. For more on this debate, see Ernst F. Winter, trans. and ed., *Erasmus–Luther: Discourse on Free Will*, Milestones of Thought (New York: Continuum, 2002).

numerous aspects of doctrine and worship. It was inevitable that the Continental reformers' ideas would find their way into England, through both the intellectual milieu of the universities and the interactions of merchants engaged in international trade.⁹² As evangelical influences took hold with some Englishmen and mixed with pre-existing Lollard sympathies, some began to question the traditional doctrinal formulations and liturgical practices of the church, such as purgatory, transubstantiation, and the Sarum liturgy with its celebration of the Eucharist.⁹³

The Eucharistic ritual, in its pre-reformation context, had taken shape following a period of intense theological debate and doctrinal revision during the first several centuries of the Christian church; this was due in no small part to the establishment of Christianity as the State Religion and the resulting rush of people to claim membership without any significant knowledge of what they were joining. The medieval rite involved elaborate processions, prayers, and scripture readings, which led to the ultimate focal point of the priest's consecration, offering, and often-solitary consumption of the Eucharistic elements on behalf of the congregation. Lay participation was limited to adoration of the elements from afar, private prayer intended to synchronize with the priest's actions, and (for the literate) reading from vernacular devotional manuals intended to guide them through the service with prayers of spiritual elevation and physical adoration of the elements.⁹⁴

⁹² Felicity Heal notes that "in 1530 Bishop Nykke of Norwich commented to the duke of Norfolk that only merchants and those living near the sea were infected with erroneous doctrines." Felicity Heal, *Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, Oxford History of the Christian Church (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 236.

⁹³ For more on the Lollard influence in East Anglia, see Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 41–62.

⁹⁴ Laypeople were only required to partake of the Eucharist once a year, at Easter, and even then only received the consecrated bread, see Andrew Brown, *Church and Society in England, 1000–1500*, Social

In 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council affirmed what had hitherto been a tacit understanding of the theology behind the celebration of the Eucharist. It stated that during the mass the bread and wine were mysteriously and miraculously transformed into the real body and blood of Jesus Christ, thus establishing the doctrine of transubstantiation.⁹⁵ The Fourth Lateran Council also had an effect on church fabric, as the confirmation and elaboration of the doctrine of transubstantiation stipulated that the sacrament be reserved from the laity and kept safe from desecration, hence the necessity for a physical division (the rood screen) in churches between the nave and chancel.⁹⁶ The monk and theologian Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225–1274), was a seminal figure in the development of this Eucharistic theology. His *Summa Theologica* integrated newly recovered Aristotelian philosophy with Christian theology to provide a straightforward defense of transubstantiation.⁹⁷ Aquinas believed that “the sacraments of the New [Testament] Law really contribute to the reception of grace.”⁹⁸

History in Perspective (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 47; and Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 95, 117–126.

⁹⁵ The first canon of the council stated that Jesus Christ’s “body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine; the bread being changed (*transsubstantiatio*) by divine power into the body, and the wine into the blood.” The Fourth Lateran Council did not create this doctrine *ex nihilo*. This statement merely legitimized a belief that many Christians had adhered to for centuries. “The Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215,” Canon 1, in H. J. Schroeder, ed., *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1937), 236–96. Fordham University Internet Medieval Sourcebook. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.html> (accessed February 12, 2011).

⁹⁶ The Eucharistic host would have been housed in a special housing called a tabernacle or pyx located near the high altar, but the lack of a formal dividing line between sacred and secular space within the church likely necessitated the development of the screen in the chancel arch. The rood beam and loft were thus a separate, yet spatially related development in church fabric.

⁹⁷ Aquinas held that while the outward appearance (accidents) of the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine did not change during the ritual, the internal being (substance) of the elements literally changed into the body and blood of Christ. He explained that the sacraments “really contained and communicated grace” and were thus “indispensible for salvation.” Ozment, *Age of Reform*, 35.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 35–36, quoting an excerpt from Aquinas in Thomas Gilby, ed. and trans., *St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Texts*, no. 596 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), 355.

Pre-Reformation Parish Church Fabric: An Earthly Stage for Divine Drama

As has already been touched on above, the pre-reformation English parish church was far from being on its last legs in the early sixteenth century. Pounds describes the interior of the pre-reformation parish church as “a colourful place. Its walls were painted with moralities and biblical scenes; its windows were glazed with stained and painted glass. Figures of saints and evangelists filled the panels of its rood-screen... [and] there were candles for all occasions.”⁹⁹ Candles were placed before various images around the church, sat on the candle beam to illuminate the Great Rood, required on the high altar for the celebration of Mass, and carried in processions. It is no wonder then that one of the most common expenses in churchwardens’ accounts was for candlewax.¹⁰⁰

The parish church was the center of late-medieval community identity and parishioners contributed to it accordingly. The Mildenhall churchwardens’ accounts show that the community was actively involved in embellishing their rood from 1505 through 1508. Master Paul Geyton, the vicar, and his parishioners began collecting money to paint the solar above the rood loft in 1505. The next year the wardens paid workers 7d. “for stageyng of the rodelofte” with scaffolding, paid £1 6s. 2d. “to the alybaster man for the rode lofte peytyng” (installing carved and painted alabaster panels in the loft), and £1 10s. for “payntyng of the rodelofte.” (This entry refers to painting the wooden members of the rood.)¹⁰¹ In the same year they also paid John Pachet 4d. to make a new Easter

⁹⁹ Pounds, *English Parish*, 430.

¹⁰⁰ This expense is especially evident in the more detailed churchwardens’ accounts edited by Northeast, *Boxford CWA*; and Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*.

¹⁰¹ Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 44–46.

Sepulchre.¹⁰² The next year records entries for further staging of the rood, 8d. to a wood carver, a further £1 9s. to painters.¹⁰³ In 1507 the wardens paid 6s. 8d. for “payntyng of Owr Lady,” no doubt one of many images of Mary in the church dedicated to the Virgin Mother.¹⁰⁴ From personal bequests, to receipts from church ales, and feast day offerings, Mildenhall St Mary did not suffer from congregational penny-pinching. The amount of money spent on decorating the church in this short period, beyond the routine costs of maintaining its fabric, indicates that lay-leaders placed high priority on beautifying the communal worship space. In fact, based on his study of churchwardens’ accounts Hutton asserts that “one has the impression that to the average parishioner what was most disturbing about the local church was the chance that it might become too over-decorated to allow of further elaboration.”¹⁰⁵

Evidence from pre-reformation church inventories reinforces Hutton’s view. For the purposes of illustration, we will look at the 1529 inventory drawn up by Long Melford churchwardens John Dyke and Robert Cawston. Its contents reveal a church richly endowed by its parishioners. There were thirteen communion chalices alone, nearly two for each of the church’s seven altars. “The best chalice” was made of 133 ounces of gilt.¹⁰⁶ In addition to the chalices, it lists eighteen other pieces of gilded plate and accessories, including three gilt paxes, two gilt crosses (for processions), two chrysmatories (for holy oil), two ships (for storing incense), two censers (for burning

¹⁰² Ibid., 46. At this price, the new Sepulchre was presumably made of wood.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 47.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 51. This image was probably not the same as the wooden figure of Mary on the rood beam because that image had already been painted in 1506 (see above).

¹⁰⁵ Hutton, “Local Impact,” 116.

¹⁰⁶ “List of Church Goods, 1529,” in Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, 10. This one Eucharistic chalice, made of artistically rendered precious metal and jewels, weighed more than eight pounds.

incense), a silver pix, two silver basins, two pairs of cruets (for mixing the Eucharistic wine with water), and “A relique of the pillar that our Saviour Christ was bound to, the gift of Sir William Clopton, Knight, inclosed with silver.”¹⁰⁷ The relic would have been a precious possession, undoubtedly drawing prayers from the faithful. Excluding the relic, these pieces were those used in regular services, but there is an additional list of items belonging to the Lady Chapel that lay behind the sanctuary.

Based on the contents of this list, the main feature of the Lady Chapel was an image (probably a wooden sculpture) of the Virgin Mary, “which had attracted many gifts from the faithful.”¹⁰⁸ These gifts included precious jewels, ornaments, and clothing items meant to adorn the image during the different liturgical seasons. For example, the list identifies three coats “belonging to Our Lady,” one for major feast days made of velvet and gold thread bordered in white, one of crimson velvet, and one of white damask bordered with green velvet.¹⁰⁹ The inventory also lists a large collection of clerical vestments for the different liturgical seasons and holy days, as well as ten different Mass books for the various altars. The finest of these books was “called the Red Mass Book, with many relicks on the same, adorned with jewells and stones.”¹¹⁰

The list continues for several more pages, noting various cloths for the high altar, pieces of latten (an inexpensive hard alloy that when polished looked like gold), storage chests, two different Lenten veils for the rood, and altar cloths and accessories belonging

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 11–12.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 12, fn. 62.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 13.

¹¹⁰ Dymond and Paine note that the Red Mass Book was a “particularly ornate service-book [that] carried relics and jewels, and was used as a pax to pass on the Kiss of Peace.” Ibid., 16, and fn. 69. For discussion of the Kiss of Peace, see the section below on “The Celebration of the Eucharist in the Sarum Missal.”

to the side altars. The list concludes by recording cloths that hung before images around the church interior, twenty in total.¹¹¹ Clearly, the interior of Melford Holy Trinity was a feast of religious art and a treasure trove of fine plate and clothes. In addition to the items listed in the inventory, Roger Martin described a “goodly mount, made of one great tree,” which stood behind the high altar. Dymond and Paine explain that “the ‘mount’ was a carved and gilded sculpture...which depicted the death of Christ at Calvary, with bystanders.”¹¹² Stretching from the top of the altar to the clerestory windows, this reredos was probably the largest piece of furniture in the church, save for the rood. Though it possessed many Mass Books, processional, and antiphoners, no Bible is counted among the Long Melford parish books. This is not surprising, however, since at this point only the priest would have been likely to possess a Bible (and even this was not guaranteed), but it is a clear contrast with later evangelical policies regarding biblical literacy.

As noted in the section on wills in the Introduction, it was common for a testator to leave money to purchase a specific liturgical item or devotional embellishment for use in the church. The Long Melford inventory duly records the donors of the various pieces in the church collection, ensuring that their contribution would be remembered. Just as with the desire to be buried in certain places in and around the church, parishioners sought to perpetuate their memory among the living through adding to the church fabric. Thomas Hall, whose 1524 will was cited in the Introduction as containing a traditional bequest of the body, also left 26s. 8d. for “the buying of a vestment to be for the church

¹¹¹ Ibid., 17–25. The images listed were of Jesus, the Virgin Mary (in the Lady Chapel), the Virgin Mary as Our Lady of Pity (in the Martins’ chapel), St Ann, St Leonard, St Edmund, St John the Baptist, St John the Evangelist, St Peter, St Anthony, St James, St Catherine, St Margaret, Mary Magdalen, St “Sythe” [Sitha, Zita], St George, St Thomas, St Christopher, St Andrew, and St “Loy” [Eloi, Eligius]. See *ibid.*, 22–24.

¹¹² Ibid., 1, and fn. 1; see also David Cressy and Lori Anne Ferrell, eds., *Religion & Society in Early Modern England: A Sourcebook* (1996; repr., New York: Routledge, 2001), 11–13.

of Mildenhall...for a priest to sing in it [at] the time of my service and after to remain to the said church for ever.”¹¹³ Likewise, almost every entry in the 1529 Long Melford inventory of church goods lists the parishioner who donated money for its purchase.¹¹⁴ In this way, parishioners’ memories would be further perpetuated in the parish church after their death. Although rural parish churches usually could not hope to rival the great monastic or cathedral churches in decoration, Pounds explains that “in their modest way they sought to convey an image of beauty and remoteness from the drab life of the peasant, and to transport him to a world which contrasted with the meanness in which he lived. And if this led to a kind of exultation, a lifting of the spirit, that was no more than what the church intended.”¹¹⁵ Thus prior to the reformation changes, many parishioners sought to contribute to the haven of beauty and peace that was their parish church.

Late Medieval English Liturgies and the Dominance of Sarum

The form of worship in England varied by region, but eventually the liturgical uses of major cathedral churches took precedence over local practices. Procter and Frere note that while the medieval English service books were all of distinct Roman influence by the thirteenth century, they “differed in detail to a considerable extent; and, indeed, there was no idea of strict liturgical uniformity, either in England or abroad, in mediaeval times.” The idea of uniformity in liturgical practice was a later phenomenon, arising

¹¹³ TNA, PCC PROB 11/22/267; also in Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 161–162.

¹¹⁴ Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, 10–25.

¹¹⁵ Pounds, *English Parish*, 431.

“simultaneously both in England and abroad in the sixteenth century, and issued alike in the Book of Common Prayer and in the Tridentine revision of the Latin Services.”¹¹⁶

From the thirteenth century to the beginning of the religious changes of the mid-sixteenth century, the three main liturgical uses were the cathedral liturgies of Salisbury (Sarum), York, and Hereford. Sarum was the most well-known and widely adopted liturgy in England. Procter and Frere note that by the early sixteenth century “Sarum Use was adopted in whole or in part by Wells, Exeter, Lichfield, London (St. Paul’s), Lincoln, and other cathedral churches besides numbers of collegiate churches and others...it was constantly called ‘the Use of the English Church’, and finally, in 1542, on the eve of the Reformation changes, the Convocation of Canterbury adopted the Sarum Use...throughout the Southern Province.”¹¹⁷

The Celebration of the Eucharist in the Sarum Missal

The Sarum High Mass followed the older Roman form, in that it was structured around specific chants, readings, and prayers handed down through church tradition.¹¹⁸

The Sarum liturgy was conducted entirely in Latin until the latter part of Henry VIII’s

¹¹⁶ “There grew up in the thirteenth century, under the guidance or with the sanction of the Bishop, the Diocesan Use, *i.e.* a species of service emanating from a cathedral, radiating widely throughout the diocese and even spreading into other dioceses.” Francis Procter and Walter Howard Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer* (London: MacMillan, 1949), 12–14. The antecedent parts of Sarum Use are unearthed in Richard W. Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval England: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹¹⁷ Procter and Frere, 14–22; see also, F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*, 2nd ed. (London: Rivingtons, 1970), xvii; and Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainright, and Edward Yarnold, *The Study of Liturgy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 236.

¹¹⁸ For a full description of the Sarum Mass, see Philip Baxter, *Sarum Use: The Ancient Customs of Salisbury* (Reading, UK: Spire Books, 2008), 74–82. While Baxter’s description relates to the liturgy as practiced at Salisbury Cathedral, it would have been adapted for use in all the dioceses and parishes in which it was employed.

reign and was largely sung rather than spoken.¹¹⁹ It began with the priest and his assistants leading an elaborate procession around the church grounds and then through the church interior, during which the side altars and the congregation would be censed and sprinkled with holy water. Once inside, the ritual celebration of the mass involved the singing of specific prayers as well as readings from the Gospels and Epistles as set forth in the Missal.

Prior to beginning the Offertory the priest would perform a prayer in English called the bidding of the bedes. Standing in front of the rood screen, before the congregation, the priest “called on the people to pray for the Pope, the bishops, the clergy, and especially their own priest, for the king, lords, commons,” as well as town authorities, and those in especial need, such as pregnant women, the elderly, and the sick. The priest would continue by asking the congregation to “[pray] for the dead, especially the parish dead,” including “recently deceased parishioners or special benefactors of the church or parish [who] were mentioned by name.” Once a year, at a special requiem Mass, the priest would read every name on the parish bede-roll as a continuance of their memory within the community and for the aid of their souls in purgatory.¹²⁰ Duffy describes how this rite contributed to a sense of community that crossed the boundary of death: “The solemn biddings set the prayer of the parish community within the context of the greater community of ‘the glorious virgyn...and all the company of heven’, who glinted in gold leaf and bright paint from the screens, the tabernacles and the side

¹¹⁹ Procter and Frere, 30–31.

¹²⁰ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 124–125.

altars.”¹²¹ All of this activity was anticipatory of the great act of intercession in the consecration, elevation, and reception of the elements.

All of the actions from this point forward would have taken place at the high altar behind the rood. During the Offertory the priest would have faced away from the congregation toward the altar, and was directed to speak the sacred Latin prayers in a soft, almost inaudible voice, lest the mystery of the ceremony be lost through familiarity with its phrasing. Baxter describes the Offertory as “the offering of the oblations of bread and wine at the altar.”¹²² The Offertory marked the beginning of the liturgical actions meant to reenact the sacrifice of Christ at the high altar in the form of the miraculously transformed elements. The introductory prayers finished with the priest saying the *Sursum Corda* “Lift up your hearts” and the Preface.

The priest began the Canon of the Mass by standing over the elements asking God to “accept and bless...these gi✠fts, these pre✠sents, this ho✠ly immaculate Sacrifice,” following this came prayers for the wellbeing of temporal and spiritual leaders. Then he was instructed by a rubric in the Sarum Missal to “*regard the Host with great reverence*” and delivered the central prayer of consecration: “We beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that thou wouldst...bl✠ess, ap✠prove, rat✠ify, and make reasonable and acceptable, that [the Eucharistic elements] may become to us the Bo✠dy...and the Blo✠od...of Thy most dearly Beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹²³ Just as the priest elevated the host an

¹²¹ Ibid., 129.

¹²² Baxter, *Sarum Use*, 80.

¹²³ *Sarum Missal*, 310. The missal contains instructional rubrics (represented here in *italics* or with crosses ✠), instructing the celebrant in the appropriate manual actions to go along with the words. Making the sign of the cross over the elements while speaking was meant to effect the consecration of the elements.

assistant rang the sanctus bell, which was “fixed outside the Church, frequently on the apex of the eastern gable of the nave” and rung with a line running from a place near the high altar to the rooftop.¹²⁴ The bell signaled to those observing and those who might not have made it to church yet, the imminent elevation of the host. After the prayer of consecration, the celebrant recited Jesus’ words of institution of this sacred meal as recorded in the gospels. During this recital the celebrant was instructed to “*incline to the Host, and with bowed head adore It, and afterwards elevate It above his forehead that It may be seen by the people.*” A rubric added in the midst of this recital reinforces the belief that the elements had been changed—the celebrant was instructed to “*rub his fingers over... [the chalice] in case of any crumbs,*” as one would not want the consecrated host to be scattered on the altar.¹²⁵ In turn, he uncovered the chalice containing the wine and “*elevat[e]d the chalice to his chest, or above his head, saying: ‘As oft as ye shall do this, ye shall do it in remembrance of Me.’*”¹²⁶ The elements were now the body and blood of Jesus Christ, miraculously transformed from their former substance of bread and wine. The elements were elevated so that the congregation could adore the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ made present before them in the ritual.

After elevating the chalice, the celebrant said the *anamnesis*, evoking Christ’s words to effect the ritual sacrifice of Christ under the Eucharistic elements with the words “we...offer...a pu❖re, a ho❖ly, a spot❖less Sacrifice...the holy Br❖ead of eternal

¹²⁴ Holland and Raven, *Cratfield CWA*, 47.

¹²⁵ *Sarum Missal*, 311.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

life...and the Cup ☩ of everlasting salvation.”¹²⁷ The medieval Eucharistic theology of Aquinas and the Fourth Lateran Council asserted that “it was now Christ himself whom the priest, with and on behalf of the church, offered to the Father.”¹²⁸ This was the high point of the medieval Sarum rite, acting as the purifying and reconciliatory sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharistic elements.¹²⁹

The rite then progressed with the celebrant saying more prayers relating to the Eucharistic sacrifice and its efficacy for all Christians, both dead and alive. The celebrant then broke the host into three pieces and he placed one of the pieces in the chalice with the wine to symbolize that the elements, though separated by the unique accidents of the elements, were united through their miraculously changed substance. He then said: “Let this most ☩ holy union of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ be to me and all

¹²⁷ Ibid., 311–312. *Anamnesis* is “a Greek word meaning ‘memorial’ or ‘commemoration’, designating the... ‘Prayer of Consecration’ [of the bread and the wine]...almost certainly developed out of Jewish...forms used by Christ at the Last Supper.” Alan Richardson and John Bowden, eds., *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983), 18.

¹²⁸ Colin Buchanan, *What Did Cranmer Think He Was Doing?* Grove Liturgical Study 7 (Bramcote, UK: Grove Books, 1976), 17. The Old Testament prophet Malachi spoke to a still-unrepentant Israel, warning of impending judgment for their sins. Malachi 1:11 is interpreted as referring to the actions of Israel’s coming messiah, who is the only one worthy to make a pure sacrifice before God. See Albert H. Baylis, *From Creation to the Cross: Understanding the First Half of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 358–363.

¹²⁹ The consecration of the Eucharistic elements was a source of great consternation to later evangelical reformers like Thomas Cranmer, who criticized the medieval ritual for encouraging superstition: “What made the people to run from their seats to the altar, and from altar to altar...peeping, tooting, and gazing at that thing which the priest held up in his hands, if they thought not to honour that thing which they saw? What moved the priests to lift up the sacrament so high over their heads; or the people to cry to the priest, ‘Hold up! Hold up!’ and one man to say to another... ‘This day I have seen my Maker’.... For if they worshipped in spirit only Christ, sitting in heaven with his Father, what needed they to remove out of their seats to toot and gaze, as the apostles did after Christ, when he was gone up into heaven?... Doubtless, many of the simple people worshipped that thing which they saw with their eyes.” Thomas Cranmer, *An Answer to a Crafty and Sophistical Cavillation devised by Stephen Gardiner*, in *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer Relative to the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper*, ed. John Edmund Cox, The Works of Thomas Cranmer, vol. 1. The Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1841), 229; referred to hereafter as *Writings and Disputations*. For further discussion on Cranmer’s view of the medieval rite, see Gordon P. Jeans, *Signs of God’s Promise: Thomas Cranmer’s Sacramental Theology and the Book of Common Prayer* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2008), 45.

who receive It health of mind and body, and a saving preparation for worthily attaining unto eternal life.” After this the celebrant alone partook of the elements for the benefit of the congregation. The celebrant spoke for the congregation when he recited the Communion prayer: “What we have partaken of with our mouth, O Lord, may we receive with a pure heart, and by a temporal gift may our everlasting healing be effected.... Let this communion, O Lord, cleanse us from sin, and make us partakers of a heavenly healing.”¹³⁰ This prayer emphasized the belief that the sacrament enacted a literal transferal of God’s grace not only to the priest celebrating the rite, but also to the congregation observing.

The high level of spiritual preparation required in order to partake was prohibitive, and most laypeople were too wary of the severe consequences of partaking unworthily to risk regular reception.¹³¹ The passing of the “kiss of peace,” which came to be known as the *pax*, developed as a lay substitute for reception of the Eucharistic elements. After mixing the bread and wine, but before partaking of communion the priest kissed the corporas (a gilded plate) on which the Host rested, and the lip of the chalice containing the consecrated wine, then he kissed the paxbred, “a disk or tablet on which was carved or painted a sacred emblem, such as the Lamb of God or the Crucifix.” Paxes were made of various materials: Some were elaborately gilded in silver and gold, inlaid with precious stones, and with carved figures, while others were simple painted or carved

¹³⁰ *Sarum Missal*, 317, 319.

¹³¹ Baxter, *Sarum Use*, 81. Duffy discusses why lay participation in the Eucharist was so rare in *Stripping of the Altars*, 93–94.

wooden panels.¹³² An assistant (minister or clerk) then took the pax from the priest and brought it “to the congregation outside the [rood] screen, where it was kissed by each in turn.”¹³³ Each received the pax in turn, according to their ecclesiastical and social rank.¹³⁴ The kissing of the pax was meant as an act of corporate peace making, wherein the congregation put aside petty squabbles in an affirmation of their unity in Christ.¹³⁵

The service closed with the post-communion recital of the first fourteen verses of the Gospel of John and the simple phrase “*ite, missa est*” (depart, the Mass is ended).¹³⁶ Thus ended the central liturgical ritual of medieval Christianity. The celebrant had performed a miracle in the transformation of the Eucharistic elements and the divine drama of Christ’s sacrifice had been reenacted before their very eyes. Parishioners believed that the priest’s reception of the elements on their behalf had materially added to their own experience of God’s saving grace, as well as benefitting those deceased members of the congregation for whom the Mass had also been said.

¹³² The Boxford churchwardens’ paid 6d. for a pax in 1534. Presumably, 6d. would have bought a pax of wood, which was also either carved and/or painted. See *Boxford CWA*, 14. Compare that with the 2 s. 3d. that the Mildenhall wardens paid goldsmith Robert Stone for a pax in 1542. At more than four times the cost, and employing a skilled metalworker, this item must have been gilded with gold or silver. *Mildenhall CWA*, 91.

¹³³ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 125.

¹³⁴ Along with the pax, the distribution of the holy loaf after the service was an important substitute for communion. Each week a layperson chosen by rotation presented the loaf to the priest prior to the Mass. The priest blessed the loaf and it was later distributed to the congregation after the service. The household that presented the loaf that week was usually included in the bidding of the bedes during Mass. The holy bread “was meant to be the first food one tasted on a Sunday; eaten or simply carried in one’s pocket, it was believed to have apotropaic powers.” *Ibid.*, 125.

¹³⁵ The intended meaning of the pax was sometimes lost on parishioners who were more concerned with maintaining social hierarchy than rehearsing their unity in Christ. John Craig recounts a particular episode: “In 1522 a parishioner of Theydon-Gernon in Essex smashed the pax over the head of the offending clerk who had dared offer it to another man first.” For the full incident, see Craig, “Reformers, Conflict, and Revisionism,” 3; and Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 126–127.

¹³⁶ *Sarum Missal*, 321. Duffy adds an interesting note that “[i]ndulgences were attached to hearing this Gospel read, perhaps in order to encourage the laity to remain to the end of Mass,” which seems to have been a constant problem, both before and after the reformation. Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 124.

The public celebration of the Mass was not the only way in which the dead could benefit from the Eucharistic ritual. During the medieval period a staggering amount of resources were devoted to establishing and perpetuating private altars and chapels meant to provide their benefactors with constant prayer and Eucharistic celebration in death—as well as demonstrating their wealth and social status in life. Wealthy individuals often provided money in their wills to establish a chantry, an office staffed by a chantry priest whose duty was “to sing masses for the souls of his patron and of any others designated in the foundation charter,” or a chantry chapel where such masses would be offered.¹³⁷ If one was not wealthy enough to endow a private chapel, it was common for like-minded individuals to form religious guilds that would pool the bequests of its members to endow a priest to say Mass for its deceased members. As noted in the sketches of the four Suffolk parishes above, it was common for a parish church to have several side altars in addition to the high altar, and perhaps additional endowed chapels, all for the purpose of providing Masses for the members of the families or guilds that sponsored them.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, medieval Eucharistic doctrine and practice seemed firmly entrenched in the hearts and minds of most English people. However, there were those who had begun to think differently about the church’s central rite. Continental evangelicals challenged the Church’s teachings on the Eucharist and its doctrine of transubstantiation, among other things. Ozment explains that “Protestants set out to overcome...a perceived oppressive superstition—teachings and practices that burdened the consciences and pocketbooks of the faithful.” They criticized the Roman Church as an “institution that had become ineffectual in its devotional and liturgical

¹³⁷ Pounds, *English Parish*, 176–177.

practice and barely credible in its doctrinal teaching.”¹³⁸ This message made its way into England, and over the course of two decades (1530–1550) English evangelicals made initial attempts to reform the church. The most far-reaching initiative was the reform of public worship, which would replace the traditional Latin Sarum liturgy with the Bible-based Book of Common Prayer, in English, during the reign of Edward VI.

Evangelical revision of liturgy and doctrine also entailed a change in church fabric. The entries in churchwardens’ accounts for the sweeping changes made to church interiors are some of the most notable indicators of the local impact official changes in religious policy during this period. This thesis now turns to a discussion of the English Church under Henry VIII, focusing on the unsettled nature of religious policy during the latter part of his reign. This will be followed by a discussion of the extensive changes made to liturgy, doctrine, and church interiors during the short-lived reign of Edward VI and the local reception of those more overtly evangelical changes in the four Suffolk parishes that serve as case studies in this thesis.

¹³⁸ Ozment, *Age of Reform*, 210.

Chapter Two:

Religion and Reform during Henry VIII's later years (1530–1547)

Establishing the Royal Supremacy, 1530–1534

In his book on the later English Reformation, Diarmaid MacCulloch asserts that two pillars upheld late-Medieval religious culture: traditional devotional practice (liturgy, church calendar, prayer, sacraments) and papal authority in ecclesiastical and temporal matters.¹³⁹ Henry VIII, aided by Thomas Cromwell, his Chancellor and Vicegerent in spirituals, and Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, rebelled against this system.¹⁴⁰ Together, they destroyed the pillar of papal authority in England and made the first alterations to traditional devotional practice.¹⁴¹ Despite his strong Catholic faith, Henry was an ambitious monarch, and his twin desires for a male heir and for recognition in Europe drove him to separate from Rome and the authority of the pope, declaring himself “the only Supreme Head in earth of the Church of England” in the 1534 Act of Supremacy.¹⁴² Claiming the title of Supreme Head meant that Henry was responsible for the spiritual care of his people, including what they ought to believe and how they ought

¹³⁹ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation In England, 1547–1603*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001), 4.

¹⁴⁰ In 1535 Henry VIII appointed Cromwell his Vicegerent in Spirituals, meaning he held the authority to execute the king's supremacy over the church. Much of the reforming material from this period originated by Cromwell's hand (in consultation with the like-minded Cranmer) and was approved by Henry.

¹⁴¹ Henry VIII was not averse to destroying religious and social institutions such as monasticism and pilgrimages to shrines to suppress what he and his evangelical ministers saw as superstition. For the abolition of pilgrimages and shrines, see Article Four of the “First Henrician Injunctions,” in Gerald L. Bray, ed., *Documents of the English Reformation* (1994; repr., Cambridge: James Clarke, 2004), 176.

For an in-depth study of the dissolution of the monasteries, including analysis and presentation of documentary evidence, see Joyce Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, Historical Problems: Studies and Documents (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971); see also G. W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 243–275, 433–474.

¹⁴² Bray, *Documents*, 114.

to worship. It should be noted that while many surrounding the king were evangelicals and would have pushed for parity with their continental brethren, Henry VIII's reformation should not be called an evangelical (or Protestant) campaign. The king's personal opinions were too unsystematic and the enforcement of reforms to which he agreed was too inconsistent to be deemed a concerted effort at evangelical change. Rather, Henrician Catholicism was a hybrid religion, which took on board some aspects of evangelical teaching, while also holding fast to parts of Catholic doctrine and practice, all the while threatening severe punishment for those who could not walk the King's tightrope between theological extremes.

Henry VIII and his evangelical supporters spent the early part of the 1530s establishing the king's supremacy over the English clergy and denying the pope's assumed suzerainty over all spiritual matters in Western Christendom. This assertion of authority took the form of prosecutions for *Praemunire*, the unlawful encroachment on rights claimed by the English Crown under eponymous fourteenth-century statutes. Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, the king's former Chancellor (and one-time papal nuncio), was one of the first to be charged, with the entire English clergy eventually included. The royal charges "denied the right of any English cleric—high or low—to exercise any form of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the King's dominions without royal permission."¹⁴³ The result of this protracted dispute was the initial acknowledgment by Convocation in 1531

¹⁴³ A. G. Dickens and Dorothy Carr, *The Reformation in England to the Accession of Elizabeth I*. Documents of Modern History (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1968), 47. For the series of acts leading up to the Supremacy, see "Act for the Pardon of the Clergy," 1531; "The Supplication of the Commons against the Ordinaries," 1532; "The Submission of the Clergy," 1532; "Act in Conditional Restraint of Annates and concerning the Consecration of Bishops," 1532; "Act in Restraint of Appeals," 1533; "Act in Absolute Restraint of Annates and concerning the Election of Bishops," 1534; and the "Act forbidding Papal Dispensations and Payment of Peter's Pence," 1534; all excerpted and reprinted in *ibid.*, 47–64.

that the king “was the ‘Protector and Supreme Head of the English Church and Clergy...so far as the law of Christ allows’.” This was the first step to the 1534 Act of Supremacy that dropped the word “Protector” and the entire hedging second clause. This royal posturing had little impact on local religious practice at first, but once established, the Royal Supremacy would form the basis for all the official reforms to follow.

The first result of this policy visible in parishes was the “Act forbidding Papal Dispensations and Payment of Peter’s Pence,” passed in the early part of 1534.¹⁴⁴ This was the penultimate step in severing ties with Rome. It disallowed papal dispensations for holding multiple clerical appointments (on the basis that the pope did not have authority to do so) and stopped payment (and thus collection) of Peter’s Pence. As noted in the Introduction to this thesis, the Boxford churchwardens’ accounts, the only one of the accounts used in this study with entries for this time period, show collection and payments for Romescot (Peter’s Pence) in 1530, 1531, and 1532. The collection also took place in 1533, garnering 2s. 9d., but the wardens did not pass the money on to episcopal authorities.¹⁴⁵ The collection ceased thereafter. Even more telling for this era preceding the initial reformation changes are the series of entries in the 1535 Boxford accounts for a full-scale play that was staged in the town. This play was the only one of its kind ever noted in the accounts and raised over £18 for the church.¹⁴⁶ This money was raised for

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, 60–64. The ending of Peter’s Pence was more of a symbolic act than a real financial sanction. Dickens and Carr note that the total amount had “long since been compounded for a fixed annual payment to the Pope of just under £200.” *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁴⁵ Northeast, *Boxford CWA*, 1–10, especially 10.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 18–20. Unfortunately, Northeast could not find any information on the title or subject of the performance. Furthermore, the extensive and in-depth Records of Early English Drama series does not yet include a volume on Suffolk (although one is in preparation). Meanwhile in Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire parish plays continued into the seventeenth century, another sign of the differences in religious beliefs and practices in Suffolk as compared with other parts of England. See Caroline Litzenberger, *Tewkesbury*

the purpose of repairing the church clock and steeple, the expenses for which are recorded in the entries for 1537.¹⁴⁷

Though the progress of official reform was only in its early stages of development and many parishes continued to follow traditional practices, it is important to note that some evangelicals were already active in Suffolk and the surrounding counties. Thomas Bilney famously preached against images and pilgrimages throughout Suffolk and Norfolk in the later 1520s and 1530 before he was tried for heresy and executed in Norwich in 1531.¹⁴⁸ Bilney's execution set off a rash of iconoclasm in East Anglia during 1531–1532, including the theft and burning of the famed rood of Dovercourt in 1532.¹⁴⁹ So, although the records do not show a great deal of evangelical activity in Suffolk at this early stage, Bilney's incendiary preaching and the actions of his followers after his execution prove the existence of a party of early evangelical sympathizers in the area.

The intricacies of establishing and defending the Royal Supremacy could (and have filled) volumes. Its importance for effecting the religious reformation having been established, this chapter will now explore the various attempts at religious regulation enacted under Henry VIII and the uneven results they produced at the parish level.

Churchwardens' Accounts, 1563-1624, Gloucestershire Record Series, vol. 7 (Gloucester, UK: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1994).

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 24–29.

¹⁴⁸ Bilney's preaching was blamed for instigating a rash of iconoclasm in the Stour valley in the early 1530s. There is some question as to whether Bilney qualifies as an evangelical in the strict sense. Most of his activity revolved around criticizing pilgrimages and idolatry, as well as "the sufficiency of Christ's work of redemption, a high view of scripture and of preaching," thus it seems fair to say that he was closer to Cromwell, Cranmer, and their evangelical circle than to conservative Bishops Stephen Gardiner, Richard Nix, and theirs, see Craig, "Reformers, Conflict, and Revisionism," 5.

¹⁴⁹ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County 1500–1600* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 154–155. For the full narrative of the event, see Foxe, *Acts and Monuments Online*, 1563 edition, Book 3, 551–552; <http://www.johnfoxe.org> (accessed February 15, 2012).

The Ten Articles, 1536

Issued in June 1536, the Ten Articles were the first major piece of evangelical legislation passed after the 1534 Act of Supremacy, and they spelled out major tenets of faith in Henry's new English Church. A doctrinal, rather than liturgical document, the Articles recognized only three sacraments: baptism, the Eucharist, and penance (the same three that Martin Luther initially accepted).¹⁵⁰ Article four contained Eucharistic language vague enough to support Cranmer's then-current position in favor of the Lutheran concept of consubstantiation, while also satisfying Henry's personal belief in transubstantiation.¹⁵¹ While Cranmer would later move away from consubstantiation to a Swiss-reformed spiritual presence position, Henry VIII never waived in his belief in the miraculous physical, bodily presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

The last five articles, developed during consultations with domestic bishops, represented a compromise between conservatives and evangelicals. Articles seven through nine outlined a traditional approach to honoring and praying to saints and maintained the usefulness of rites and ceremonies such as ashes on Ash Wednesday, palms on Palm Sunday, creeping to the cross on Good Friday, and use of the Easter sepulchre. These and "all other like laudable customs, rites and ceremonies [are] not to be contemned and cast away, but to be used and continued as things good and laudable, to put us in remembrance of those spiritual things that they do signify." To this traditional view was added the evangelical proviso that "none of these ceremonies have power to

¹⁵⁰ For text of the Ten Articles, see Bray, *Documents*, 162–174. The first five articles were influenced by the unpublished Wittenberg Articles, which were the product of meetings between English and Lutheran reformers in early 1536, and had been influenced by the Lutheran Augsburg Confession of 1530.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 170. Lutheran consubstantiation asserted Christ's mysterious, "real presence" in the Eucharistic elements, but not through transubstantiation. For a fuller explanation, see Ozment, *Age of Reform*, 336.

remit sin, but only to stir and lift up our minds unto God, by whom only our sins be forgiven.”¹⁵² The tenth article dealt ambiguously with the doctrine of purgatory, stating that it was “a very good and charitable deed to pray for souls departed” as part of the Christian life, but it declined to explain the state of the dead or how exactly prayers helped them, other than that the faithful ought to “remit [prayers] to Almighty God...to whom is known their estate and condition.”¹⁵³ It ended by condemning the former abuses perpetrated by the Bishop of Rome under the name of purgatory, mainly for the divine authority assumed by earlier papal pardons. In surveying the Ten Articles, MacCulloch observes that they “contain[ed] something to please both evangelicals and traditionalists, and something to annoy them both.”¹⁵⁴ In terms of parish activity, this meant that many ceremonies and rites continued for the time being, but at the same time the Ten Articles severely undermined the basis of the Roman Catholic intercessory system.

The First Henrician Injunctions, 1536

Acting in his position as Vicegerent, Thomas Cromwell drew up the First Henrician Injunctions in 1536 and attached them to the Ten Articles “to ensure that the doctrinal provisions of those Articles were adequately translated into Church practice at the parochial level.”¹⁵⁵ The issuance of Injunctions was a bold step in asserting the king’s supremacy. In the past, even in the formulation and approval of the Ten Articles earlier that year, the king had sought Parliament’s approval for changes in religious policy, but in the case of the 1536 Injunctions he decided to proceed with only Cromwell’s advice

¹⁵² Bray, *Documents*, 173.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 173–174.

¹⁵⁴ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 164.

¹⁵⁵ Bray, *Documents*, 175.

and Cranmer's assent as Archbishop.¹⁵⁶ The most curious and controversial item in the Injunctions was an order that every parish obtain "a book of the whole Bible, both in Latin, and also in English," and set it up in the church for parishioners to read.¹⁵⁷ The Bible order was ambitious at best, and, as our Suffolk records show, unrealistic at worst. None of the four Suffolk parishes complied (nor did many in the entire kingdom) until the early 1540s.¹⁵⁸ It was a bridge too far for many people who, had they previously attempted to purchase or even read a Bible would have been charged with heresy for challenging clerical authority over scripture. Clearly, at this early stage evangelical ideals were not always aligned with the thought patterns of the large majority of English parishioners.

Beyond the Bible order, the 1536 Injunctions focused on religious education and the elimination of religious superstition. They stipulated that priests read the Ten Articles to their congregations, "that they may plainly know and discern which of them be

¹⁵⁶ See MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 165. For full text of the 1536 Injunctions see W. H. Frere and W. P. M. Kennedy, eds., *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Period of the Reformation*, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1910), 2:1; referred to hereafter as *VAI*, volume number: page.

¹⁵⁷ See the order in *VAI*, 2:9; for full explanation of the issue, see *ibid*, 2:1–2. There is some controversy over whether or not this item was included in the final list of Injunctions circulated among the bishops and lower clergy in 1536. MacCulloch observes that the order for Bibles "was a curiously impractical trumpeting of evangelical idealism," especially since the only complete English translation at that time was Coverdale's unauthorized quarto. As a result, "many later copies of the injunctions omit it [the order]; nevertheless various [evangelical] bishops tried to follow it up in their own orders during 1537." MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 166, and fn. 95. Even some primary source collections omit this order: see Dickens and Carr, *Reformation in England*, 77–81, and Bray, *Documents*, 175–178. My thanks to Caroline Litzenberger for pointing out this contradiction and steering me to the correct source.

Margaret Bowker noted the same problem in a chapter published several years before MacCulloch's statement in *Cranmer*. She identified discrepancies in two respected collections of primary documents and reasoned that "The diocesan injunctions of 1537 for Worcester and Litchfield and Coventry include the order, and it is highly improbable that a diocesan would proceed in this controversial matter without the backing of a royal injunction." Margaret Bowker, "The Henrician Reformation and the Parish Clergy," in Haigh, *English Reformation Revised*, 76, fn 8. For the 1537 diocesan orders for Bibles, see *VAI*, 2:19–25.

¹⁵⁸ It would take another set of royal injunctions in 1538, and a royal proclamation in 1541 carrying financial penalties for noncompliance to get parishes to obtain Bibles. Most of all, it simply took time for parishioners to become comfortable with the idea that they had the right and the need to read the Bible for themselves.

necessary to be believed and observed for their salvation,” that priests ought not “set forth or extol” images and relics that were the focus of superstition, and that parents ought to teach children the Paternoster, Apostles’ Creed, and the Ten Commandments. The final injunctions required clergymen to give a certain part of their income for poor relief, the education of clergy, and the repair and maintenance of their churches.¹⁵⁹

In terms of the local impact, there is little measurable reaction to the 1536 Injunctions in the four Suffolk parishes. We have already noted that there was no response to the Bible order, indicating a general reluctance to accept the idea that public access to the scriptures was a desirable thing.¹⁶⁰ From 1536 through 1537 the Boxford entries recorded expenses for routine maintenance of the church interior and grounds. In 1536 the wardens paid 3s. for cleaning the ornaments around the interior, while a glazer was paid 2s. 8d. for “mendyng of the glasse wyndowes.” The 1537 accounts show payments to workmen who made major repairs to the steeple.¹⁶¹ The major expenditure of 1536 in Mildenhall was the casting and installation of the “greate bell” in the steeple, a project that ran to £2 14s. 11d.¹⁶² In 1537 the Mildenhall churchwardens also made payments for an artisan to mend liturgical books, running to £1 12s. 5d.¹⁶³ None of the entries for these years give any indication that the newly established Royal Supremacy or

¹⁵⁹ *VAI*, 2:3–11.

¹⁶⁰ Unfortunately, Bishop Nix’s visitation articles for the diocese of Norwich do not survive, so it is not clear whether he chose to include the Bible order. Although as a conservative he would have been unlikely to include it (or if he did, he would have been lax in its enforcement).

¹⁶¹ *Boxford CWA*, 20–29.

¹⁶² *Mildenhall CWA*, 79–80. Another interesting project was the making and installation of a holy water stoup near the north door. This small bowl would have stood by the door for parishioners to cross themselves with holy water upon entering church. The First Edwardian Injunctions of 1547 suppressed the use of holy water, while in 1561 Bishop Parkhurst ordered the destruction of all holy water stoups. See Robert Whiting, *The Reformation of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 110.

¹⁶³ *Mildenhall CWA*, 81–82.

the 1536 Injunctions had any detectable effect on the four parishes under investigation here. Perhaps priests and parents were more diligent in teaching children the Commandments, Paternoster, and the Apostles' Creed (although no records attest to this), but other than the cessation of Peter's Pence, life in our Suffolk parishes remained outwardly unchanged. The same could not be said for all parts of England, as 1536 saw some of the most determined protests to be lodged during Henry's reign.¹⁶⁴ The popular uprisings of 1536 did not halt Henry, Cromwell and Cranmer's reforms, for there was much more to come.

In the midst of its seemingly lethargic, or at least ambiguous, reception, it should be noted that there were, in fact, some evangelical sympathizers in Suffolk at this point. As noted in the Introduction, there were those who, as early as 1530 in the case of Gloucestershire gentleman William Tracy, used their will preambles to express a decidedly evangelical religious sentiment. In 1537 a testator named William Shepherd, a yeoman from the central Suffolk parish of Mendlesham, composed a will that Craig and Litzenberger observe followed Tracy's wording "at every central point, omitting only the scriptural references and quotations."¹⁶⁵ They believe that Shepherd had access to Tracy's

¹⁶⁴ The two major domestic threats to Henry's religious policies both occurred in northern England during 1536; the Lincolnshire Rising was a fierce, yet abortive, attempt at stopping royal commissioners from assessing church property, while the larger Pilgrimage of Grace in the same year posed a legitimate threat to the king's newfound religious authority. Popular concern over the dissolution of the monasteries certainly played a part in stirring these rebellions, especially the latter one, but Fletcher and MacCulloch show that many other factors were in play, including an attempted political power grab by the rebellion's noble leaders and economic concerns due to increased taxation to fund Henry's expensive foreign wars; see Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 5th ed. Seminar Studies in History (Harlow, UK: Pearson Longman, 2004), 26–47. For a more in-depth study of the uprisings, see Geoffrey Moorehouse, *The Pilgrimage of Grace: The Rebellion that Shook Henry VIII's Throne* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002).

¹⁶⁵ Craig and Litzenberger, "Wills as Religious Propaganda," 425–426. William Shepherd's will is found in Samuel Tymms, ed., *Wills and Inventories from the Registers of the Commissary of Bury St Edmunds and the Archdeacon of Sudbury* (London: Camden Society, 1850), 130–132.

will through its publication as *The Testament of Master William Tracie* at Antwerp in 1535. This version also included commentaries by English evangelicals William Tyndale and John Frith. Shepherd's will also illuminates the unique religious situation in Mendlesham, a rural village of no consequence that was nevertheless home to a group of evangelical "Christian Brethren" who held religious meetings in private homes and even challenged the authority of the parish priest. Craig and Litzenberger assert that "the Mendlesham 'Christian Brethren', of whom Shepherd was one, clearly had access to heretical literature and may well have been involved in the larger work of distributing reformist texts in Suffolk."¹⁶⁶ If this was the case, then evangelicals in nearby villages (including the four parishes in this study) may have had early access to reformist texts through this network.¹⁶⁷ Even if their influence does not show up in the churchwardens' accounts at this time, it is important to note the existence of such evangelical groups prior to the more significant reforms undertaken in Edward VI's reign. Thus, the motivations for enacting the later religious changes did not necessarily spring up as a result of royal injunctions alone, but were likely nourished, in part, by small-scale evangelical cells that had been fueled by local distribution networks established much earlier.

The Second Henrician Injunctions, 1538

The most oft-noted feature of this expansion of the earlier 1536 Injunctions is the second item, a reiteration of the order in the 1536 Injunctions, requiring each parish to "provide...one book of the whole Bible of the largest volume, in English, and set up in

¹⁶⁶ Craig and Litzenberger, "Wills as Religious Propaganda," 427.

¹⁶⁷ Mendlesham's central, yet out of the way, location within the county would have made it a convenient place from which to distribute such literature. Incidentally, Mendlesham is roughly equidistant from all four parishes in this study, although slightly closer to Cratfield than the others.

some convenient place” so that parishioners may have access to read it.¹⁶⁸ There were two versions of the English Bible available by 1537; so, practically speaking this order was more feasible than it had been in 1536. Miles Coverdale’s un-annotated quarto-sized 1537 edition did not carry official authorization, while John Rogers’ authorized version, commonly called the Matthew’s Bible (after his pseudonym, Thomas Matthew), was a larger volume more suited to public reading and also contained marginal notes.¹⁶⁹ As before, the order to provide a Bible in each church was a major step in the direction of evangelical reform. The third injunction stated the evangelical belief that the Bible “is the very lively word of God, that every Christian man is bound to embrace, believe, and follow, if he look to be saved.” Making the Bible available to everyone who could read or hear it read negated centuries of doctrinal exposition that had been mediated through the clergy. Lest one think this Injunction allowed for a free-for-all, it also admonished parishioners reading the Bible “to avoid all contention and altercation therein, and to use an honest sobriety in the inquisition of the true sense of the same, and refer the explication of obscure places to men of higher judgment in Scripture.”¹⁷⁰ Clearly, government ministers were wary of the dangers inherent in common people

¹⁶⁸ Injunction II, in *VAI*, 2:35–36. Bibles were ordered to be in place by the next Easter, April 6, 1539. The cost was to be split between the incumbent and his parishioners. Like its predecessor in 1536, the injunction (rather optimistically) did not stipulate a penalty for non-compliance; this omission was remedied in 1541.

¹⁶⁹ William Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament (published in Worms) was the first English translation of scripture available. Tyndale also translated parts of the Old Testament, including the Psalms and Pentateuch. Both Coverdale and Rogers are known to have consulted Tyndale’s work in their later translations. As a Lutheran translating scripture before it was sanctioned, Tyndale’s work was banned in England and he was eventually arrested and executed for heresy in Brussels. For more on the early development of the English Bible, see Donald Brake, *A Visual History of the English Bible*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008), especially 91–140. For the relatively swift authorization of the Matthew Bible in August 1537, see MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 196–197.

¹⁷⁰ Injunction III, in *VAI*, 2:36.

misinterpreting scripture; nonetheless they appeared willing to run the risk for the sake of evangelical principles.

Beyond the Bible order, the 1538 Injunctions included other overtly evangelical policies. They allowed “no candles, tapers, or images of wax to be set afore any image or picture” except for “the light that commonly goeth across the church by the rood loft, the light before the sacrament of the altar, and the light about the [Easter] sepulchre.” Priests were further enjoined to teach parishioners that “images serve for none other purpose but as to be books of unlearned men that cannot know letters” and should they “abuse for any other intent than for such remembrances, they commit idolatry in the same to the great danger of their souls.” In the interest of saving his people from their own superstitious folly, the King reserved the right to further “travail for the abolishing of such images, as might be occasion of so great an offence to God, and so great a danger to the souls of his loving subjects.”¹⁷¹ Whether or not the King intended to pursue further reform is difficult to gauge, but Cromwell and Cranmer certainly wished for such action. Finally, item twelve was a landmark administrative injunction requiring each parish to “keep one book or register, wherein ye shall write the day and year of every wedding, christening and burying made within your parish.”¹⁷² This action was meant to aid in disputes over paternity and inheritance.

The 1538 Injunctions had a more noticeable impact on the Suffolk parishes than their 1536 predecessor. The churchwardens’ accounts of Cratfield, Boxford, and

¹⁷¹ Injunctions VI and VII, in *ibid.*, 2:37–38.

¹⁷² Injunction XII, in *ibid.*, 2:39–40.

Mildenhall for 1538–1539 all record the purchase of books to serve as parish registers.¹⁷³

Interestingly, the Cratfield accounts also show that workmen were paid 15d. in 1538 “for the fellyng of the rowell,” which hung before the rood and contained candles to light it.¹⁷⁴

This action was not required by the Injunctions, which, as noted above, said that the common light could remain. On the other hand, the Mildenhall accounts show that the wardens were still taking collections for the parish’s five papal pardons (indulgences), although they were calling them by another name at this point.¹⁷⁵

Despite their quick compliance with the order to obtain a parish register, none of the three churches purchased a Bible within three years of the 1538 Injunction to do so. Considering that they were first ordered to do so by the 1536 Injunctions (assuming this order was included in the version of the Injunctions promulgated in their diocese), this delay seems even more obstinate. The delay may be attributed to several factors. First, it could have been due to confusion about which version to purchase. Despite the two versions of the Bible already available at the time of the second Injunctions, Henry VIII commissioned a new authorized version shortly after their issuance.¹⁷⁶ The result was the

¹⁷³ *Cratfield CWA*, 57; *Boxford CWA*, 31; *Mildenhall CWA*, 85. The Long Melford church inventory made in July 1541 records a “chest at the quere dore, wherin the Rgyster boke and the churches boke be kepte,” thus it seems that this parish also complied with the injunction sometime between 1538 and 1541, see *Spoil of Melford Church*, 35.

¹⁷⁴ *Cratfield CWA*, 56. The rowell was also known as the “common light.” This is an intriguing action for a parish to take at this point and may indicate a certain desire for religious change, at least among some members of the community.

¹⁷⁵ The significance of this action was that the churchwardens were flaunting the eleventh item in the Injunctions, which stated that any man who was a known “fautor [abettor] of the Bishop of Rome’s pretended power” ought to be reported to the authorities for prosecution, see Injunction XI in *VAI*, 2:39; for the five collections, see *Mildenhall CWA*, 84, and fn. 185.

¹⁷⁶ In commissioning a new translation Henry VIII bowed to pressure from conservative Bishops to provide a suitable volume without the (potentially) confusing annotations contained in the Matthew Bible. This meant that the clergy would retain some level of exclusive expertise in scriptural interpretation. Brake, *English Bible*, 130–131.

more conservative Great Bible, first issued in April 1539. Cromwell had recruited the moderate Coverdale to create the Great Bible. In doing so, Coverdale essentially edited together his version of 1535, the Matthew Bible of 1537, Sebastian Munster's Hebrew Bible, and Erasmus' Latin version, rather than translating from the original languages himself.¹⁷⁷ Second, the delay in parishes acquiring Bibles may have been the result of frugality. The cost of a Bible was about 12s (to be borne equally by the curate and parishioners). The third possibility is delay due to lack of supply. With most of the first 1539 printing probably having been sold to London parishes there may not have been many copies left for rural parishes.¹⁷⁸ Conversely, the delay could have been due to a conservative and persistent lack of desire to make the Bible publically available. While the quick compliance on other issues makes this possibility harder to explain, it is possible that parish priests and officers found it easier to comply with issues they saw as adiaphorous, such as removing candles and buying a register as opposed to the great spiritual risk involved in purchasing and making available the Bible.¹⁷⁹

Possibly anticipating these parochial reservations, Henry VIII asked Cranmer to write a Preface for the second and all subsequent printings of the Great Bible. Cranmer's

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 134–140. It is surprising that Coverdale preferred editing together previous translations to translating the Great Bible afresh. Humanist principle consistently asserted the older the source the more reliable it was; thus, while he utilized Munster's Hebrew Bible and Erasmus' Latin version (which was based on texts in the original languages), had Coverdale been a true humanist he would have returned to the extant original manuscripts to create the Great Bible. Perhaps royal pressure to produce a new version quickly influenced his editorial decision-making.

¹⁷⁸ Richard Grafton, a London merchant, printer, and promoter of the Matthew Bible, certainly thought that he could sell out the initial print run to London parishes. Brigden asserted that "Grafton could soon sell out his first edition of 1,500 copies if Cromwell would insist that every curate have a Bible 'that they may learn to know God', especially if he compelled the 'papistical sort' to buy one. There were enough of these in London alone to 'spend away a great part of them.'" Susan Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 287.

¹⁷⁹ Unfortunately, these options must remain speculative, since the nature of the information contained in the churchwardens' accounts does not allow them to speak to these possibilities.

Preface both encourages parishioners to read the Bible as “the most healthful medicine” for all Christians, and yet he warns against the danger of erroneous interpretation or using scripture to support their “own willful opinion.”¹⁸⁰ Cranmer’s Preface asserts that the benefits surely outweigh the dangers, but it does retain a sense of religious hierarchy in that there are those who are educated and trained to expound the difficult portions of scripture. Thus the clergy (especially evangelical clergy) are not subverted by making available the Bible; rather, they are an essential part of its public exposition, working in concert with its unrestricted availability.¹⁸¹

Despite the general good order with which our four Suffolk parishes conformed to Henry’s policies, there is evidence that some evangelicals were employing more radical interpretations in other Suffolk parishes. Looking to Wriothesley’s *Chronicle*, Craig notes that “in 1538 ‘at Hadley in Suffolk...the mass and consecration of the sacrament of the aulter was sayd in Englishe by the curats there divers tymes.’” He goes on to state that “this early innovation, if sustained, perhaps marked the beginning of a new emphasis” by evangelical reformers within the town “going beyond iconoclasm to an attack upon transubstantiation and an adherence to justification by faith.”¹⁸² Craig is careful to observe that despite its radical liturgical practices and a reputation attributed to it by John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, the town was not necessarily an evangelical stronghold. In fact, he attributes much of the reforming zeal in Hadleigh to a small circle of evangelicals

¹⁸⁰ Cranmer’s Preface appeared in the second printing of the Great Bible, released in early 1540. MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 258–260. For the full text of the Preface, see John Edmund Cox, ed., *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*. The Works of Thomas Cranmer, vol. 2, The Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), 118–125; referred to hereafter as *Miscellaneous Writings*; quotes are from *ibid.*, 121–122.

¹⁸¹ Subsequent orders attempting to restrict its availability show that Henry VIII had not anticipated the degree to which easy access to the Bible would open a Pandora’s box of religious diversity.

¹⁸² Craig, “Reformers, Conflict, and Revisionism,” 18.

surrounding the parish priest, Rowland Taylor, one of Cranmer's protégés who had been placed in the living, which happened to be a peculiar under the Archbishop's authority.¹⁸³ Lying only five miles west of Hadleigh, the parishioners in Boxford no doubt knew of the radical activities happening in the neighboring village. It is all the more interesting then that the Boxford records indicate no great shift in religious practice during this time; they merely towed the line of Henry VIII's English church.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries, 1536–1540

No narrative of the Henrician Reformation can ignore the dissolution of the monasteries undertaken by Henry VIII, Cromwell, and their agents from 1536 through 1541. Seeing monasteries as centers of religious superstition, corruption, and political opposition (as well as potential sources of royal income), in 1535 Cromwell convinced Henry to survey and suppress the most grievous offenders.¹⁸⁴ The suppression of the smaller religious houses in 1536 dealt a blow to the intercessory system and “further undermined the existence of Purgatory, for monks' lives were, supposedly, dedicated to praying for souls.”¹⁸⁵ For a time the larger monasteries escaped Cromwell's grasp, but by 1540 most of these too had been dissolved and most of their property sold off to raise funds for the crown.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ For more on Hadleigh and Taylor's evangelical circle there, see *ibid.* A peculiar was “a place exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese in which it is situated.” The village of Hadleigh was a peculiar of Canterbury, meaning that Taylor answered directly to Cranmer, and Nix, then Bishop of Norwich, had no authority over him. See Livingstone, *Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 446–447.

¹⁸⁴ See key extracts from the “Act for the Dissolution of the Lesser Monasteries, 1536 (27 Hen. VIII, c. 28)” in Dickens and Carr, *Reformation in England*, 98–102.

¹⁸⁵ Brigden, *London*, 244.

¹⁸⁶ See key extracts from the “Act for the Dissolution of the Greater Monasteries, 1539 (31 Hen. VIII, c. 13),” in Dickens and Carr, *Reformation in England*, 105–107.

The local impact of these actions in Suffolk was that three of the four parishes under consideration here lost the patronage of either the Abbey at Bury St Edmunds (Long Melford and Mildenhall) or St Neot's (Cratfield). The parishes were no longer advowsons of the great abbeys, so the diocesan bishop, archdeacon, or a temporal lord now chose their incumbents. Formerly insulated from official policy by their monastic overlords, the most obvious impact of this change was that these parishes now enjoyed a greater degree of decision-making independence. This meant that they could now exercise their own agency, but also that they would be held responsible for complying with government directives. This is not to say that parishioners or clergy in these parishes immediately embraced evangelical beliefs as a result. However, looking back to Cratfield's early removal of the rood that hung before the rood in 1539, it could be that parish officers felt they had more latitude to act since they were no longer under the authority of St Neot's.

Beyond local concerns, the greatest impact of the dissolution was its tacit abrogation of the doctrine of Purgatory. The dissolution of the monasteries, which had been centers of intercessory prayer, made clear that their purpose was no longer theologically valid under Henry VIII's new religious order. Although the effects of dissolution could not be undone, this outright attack on traditional religion soon prompted a conservative backlash, both in doctrine and politics.

The Act of the Six Articles, 1539

Faced with the possibility of being isolated between Catholics and Protestants on the continent and taken aback by the radicalism that had arisen in some corners as a result

of Cromwell's policies, Henry VIII tried to win conservative support abroad by issuing the Act of Six Articles in June 1539. Henry was also motivated, no doubt, by shifts in political factions at court and his own love interests.¹⁸⁷ Henry's marriage to Catherine Howard in 1540 signaled the ascendancy of the conservative party at court, especially her uncle, the Duke of Norfolk. Ostensibly an attempt to abolish "the diversities of minds and opinions especially of matters of Christian religion," the Six Articles reaffirmed transubstantiation, without explicitly using the word, reinstated reception in one kind only, and upheld the Catholic practice of private masses said for the souls of the dead.¹⁸⁸ Earlier drafts of the Six Articles had included the word transubstantiation, but the final version omitted it. Alec Ryrie points out that the wording of the Act "was virtually a dictionary definition of transubstantiation." By leaving the word out, the government had attempted to remove a non-scriptural vestige of papal power from the English church and arrive at the same doctrinal formulation on its own. "As a result," Ryrie claims, "the complex tradition underpinning established Eucharistic doctrine was being left behind. If traditional forms of doctrinal authority were being questioned, then every scrap of

¹⁸⁷ The discretely evangelical Queen Jane Seymour died giving birth to Prince Edward in 1537 and Henry seems genuinely to have mourned her death, not remarrying until his ill-fated, and short-lived union with Anne of Cleves in January 1540. Henry's growing dissatisfaction with Cromwell's approach to reform, plus the intervention of the conservative Duke of Norfolk, probably inspired passage of the Six Articles in June, and eventually led him to have Cromwell executed for treason in July 1540. Completing the ascendancy of the Howard/Norfolk party, Henry married Catherine Howard on the same day as Cromwell's execution. All of this signaled a religious and political sea change that would last several years (1539–1543), during which time Henry had many sacramentarian evangelicals executed for denying transubstantiation and even Cranmer was threatened by conservative attacks, though he survived. For more on this period, see chapter seven "Salvaging the Cause: 1539–1542," in MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 237–296; for Cromwell's fall, see John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 186–189.

The changing relationship with the German princes and the evangelical merchants of the Schmalkaldic League was yet another potential motivation for Henry's actions in 1539–1540. For more on this, see Rory McEntegart, *Henry VIII, The League of Schmalkalden, and the English Reformation*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2002), especially 131–202.

¹⁸⁸ Bray, *Documents*, 223–24.

doctrinal territory had to be fought for.”¹⁸⁹ The Articles also established a harsh penal code for those who violated them: “On the passage of the Six Articles,” Dickens notes that “more than 500 Londoners were immediately indicted (and many arrested) as notorious disbelievers in its provisions.”¹⁹⁰ As already evidenced by the reaction to Bilney’s execution in 1531, harsh punishments for evangelicals did little to discourage and could even inspire like-minded supporters to action.¹⁹¹ Despite the negative reactions from evangelicals, including Bishops Nicholas Shaxton (Salisbury) and Hugh Latimer (Worcester), who resigned their sees in protest, MacCulloch asserts that the Six Articles were not as drastic as they seemed.¹⁹²

For all its controversy among evangelical divines, there is little evidence in the selected Suffolk churchwardens’ accounts that the Six Articles had a great impact on parochial worship or church fabric. Entries for 1539–1540 cover the usual expenses of upkeep and maintenance and do not betray any major changes in the churches.¹⁹³ In fact, the only entry of note in 1539 is in Boxford where wardens paid for a strongbox in which

¹⁸⁹ Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 36.

¹⁹⁰ Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 268.

¹⁹¹ Bray believes that the harsh punishments aided the evangelical cause: “By pointing out the injustice suffered by those who went to their deaths for relatively minor offences, the Protestants were...able to promote their cause more quickly and more peacefully than might otherwise have been possible.” Bray, *Documents*, 222.

¹⁹² Cranmer may not have agreed with their language, but the Six Articles did not address his recent initiatives to place a Bible in every church, nor did they add back the holy days purged in 1534; for the “Proclamation Restricting the Number of Holy-days, 1536,” see Dickens and Carr, *Reformation in England*, 73–74. Technically, the Six Articles did not “overturn a single one of the concrete reforms achieved by Cromwell over the previous decade, and if they affirmed the Eucharistic presence in language which Cranmer would have felt aggressively conservative, they also did no more than affirm the [Lutheran form of] real presence in which he believed [at that time],” MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 253. However, I would argue however that the fifth article did, in fact, muddy the distinction made by the Ten Articles about purgatory and the efficacy of prayers for the dead.

¹⁹³ For entries for 1539–1540, see *Boxford CWA*, 31–35, and *Mildenhall CWA*, 85. There are no entries in the Cratfield accounts for these two years.

to keep the parish register they had purchased the year before.¹⁹⁴ In the end, the 1538 Injunctions had greater influence on church fabric and worship than the conservative Six Articles; but both documents illustrate the uneasy theological and liturgical compromise created by Henrician Catholicism.

It is worth noting, however, that a Royal Proclamation issued in November 1538 proscribing St Thomas à Becket from the liturgical calendar brought about action in at least one Suffolk parish.¹⁹⁵ Mildenhall churchwardens paid 2s. “for rassyng [erasing] of the bokes of Thomas Bekett.”¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, the same folio page for 1539 shows that they paid a mason for “rassyng owht of the bysschoppys of Rome pardon on the wall.”¹⁹⁷ Although they continued collections on the traditional dates of the pardon feasts, at this point the Mildenhall churchwardens realized the pardons were useless. This interim period of slow religious change came to a close with a flurry of activity during the final years of Henry VIII’s reign.

Final Actions, 1541–1547

Frustrated by the lack of compliance with the directives of 1536 and 1538 to set up a Bible in every parish church, in May 1541 the crown issued a Royal Proclamation ordering churches to obtain a Bible by the Feast of All Saints (Nov. 1, 1541) or else face a 40s. fine “for every month that they shall lack and want the said Bibles.”¹⁹⁸ This new

¹⁹⁴ *Boxford CWA*, 32.

¹⁹⁵ The Proclamation is reprinted in Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds., *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 3 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964), 1:270–276; hereafter referred to as *TRP*, volume number: page(s).

¹⁹⁶ *Mildenhall CWA*, 85, and fn 193.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ The fine for noncompliance with this order was more than three times the price of a 12s. Bible. See the proclamation in *TRP*, 1:296–298. Although it was issued as a Royal Proclamation, it is probable that

incentive seems to have worked because the accounts for Cratfield, Boxford, and Mildenhall show all three parishes purchasing Bibles in 1541.¹⁹⁹ Though they all finally complied in 1541, the five-year gap from the initial 1536 Injunction shows that, at least in this regard, Suffolk parishes were no more advanced than the many other English parishes that also delayed until 1541.²⁰⁰

In addition to the Bible purchase, the Cratfield churchwardens' accounts for 1541 bear entries for several other items suggestive of a parish eager for reform. In the same year a glazer, Nicholas Goodale, was paid 2s. 8d. for mending windows, plus 9d. for three pounds of solder and 3d. for a bushel of lime "spente abowght" the windows.²⁰¹ Looking at the same entries for Cratfield, Ann Eljenholm Nichols believes that "a bushel of lime would have been rather too much 'cementing' mixture for repair of windows that required only three pounds of solder." She goes on to suggest that the lime may have been used to white out offending images in the stained glass.²⁰² Given their apparent zeal to cover over images in glass, it is curious that the wardens make no mention of whitewashing the walls at this time. Perhaps this was implied in the wording of the

Cranmer (acting alone now that Cromwell was gone) was advocating for it behind the scenes. Cranmer the evangelical could use the Bible issue to play on Henry's desire to better educate parishioners and reinforce the Supremacy.

¹⁹⁹ *Cratfield CWA*, 58; *Boxford CWA*, 37. The Mildenhall accounts list 1s. 3d. paid "for the lectronn for the bybyll" but give no entry for the Bible purchase itself. Middleton-Stewart believes this is a result of incomplete record keeping, for obtaining a lectern "for the bybyll" suggests they already possessed a Bible to place on it. See *Mildenhall CWA*, 87, and fn 201. Again, churchwardens' accounts for Long Melford are missing for this year, but an inventory made in 1541 does not list a Bible among the church goods, however it does list the same Mass Books as in the 1529 inventory, see *Spoil of Melford Church*, 26–35.

²⁰⁰ Litzenberger notes a similar tendency to delay Bible purchase in Gloucestershire parishes. See Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 61.

²⁰¹ *Cratfield CWA*, 57.

²⁰² Ann Eljenholm Nichols, "Broken Up or Restored Away: Iconoclasm in a Suffolk Parish," in *Iconoclasm vs. Art & Drama*, Early Drama, Art, and Music Monograph Series, no. 11, ed. Clifford Davidson and Ann Eljenholm Nichols (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1988), 171–172. In a related note Nichols explains that "painting-out offending images was a conveniently inexpensive way of effacing images in glass." She cites precedent at Merton College, Oxford. See *ibid.*, 190 fn 27.

accounts and in the context of the other changes, but it is nowhere explicitly stated. There are also entries on the same page for 100 paving tiles and their transport. Citing precedent at Reading and Winchester, Nichols reasons that this expenditure could be related to a previously unrecorded removal of tabernacles and altars around the church.²⁰³ If true, Cratfield's removal of "its visual ties to medieval devotion" in 1541 would have put the parish well ahead of the official order to remove altars and shrines as set forth by the First Edwardian Injunctions in 1547. In fact, undertaking these actions at such an early date would put Cratfield at the forefront of the Reformation in Suffolk.²⁰⁴

Interestingly though, there is also an entry in 1541 for the "baryng and fetchyng of the rowell" that had been removed in 1538.²⁰⁵ After the reform-minded changes noted above, what does this seemingly conservative action tell us? It is possible that a member of the then ascendant Howard/Norfolk party, who owned much of Cratfield's parish lands, had learned of the rowell's removal and threatened to report the church officials if it was not replaced. There was undoubtedly a power vacuum in the wake of the dissolution in 1539, which would have allowed some degree of latitude in local decision-making. Later backtracking on the rowell was thus likely a result of the changing political situation and the new threat of punishment for those who tried to move too fast.

²⁰³ Ibid., 172–173.

²⁰⁴ It should be noted that while persuasive on most points, Nichols's theory about Cratfield's early removal of ties to medieval devotion, and thus its evangelical sympathies, is based on reasoned speculation. The lack of supporting evidence such as prior entries for removing tabernacles and altars, nor explicit statements explaining the purpose of the paving tiles, casts some doubt on her conclusions. That being said, the accounts do note other expenditures in 1540–1541 that show compliance, such as purchasing the Bible. So, when considered within the surrounding context of the accounts Nichols' conclusions provide perhaps the most likely explanation. Unfortunately, the parish churchwardens for these years are not listed in the accounts, so there is no way to attempt to assess their personal religious beliefs based on will evidence.

²⁰⁵ *Cratfield CWA*, 58.

The Boxford churchwardens' accounts for this period reveal a mixture of traditional practices and compliance with the new orders. In addition to paying for a new lectern "for the bybyl," in 1541 the churchwardens also paid Simon Driver "for mendyng of copys & vestmentys & makyng of stolys" and paid a painter to mend some of the church banners.²⁰⁶ The new Bible and lectern thus took their place in the church alongside the traditionally robed clergy and brightly painted banners. In July 1541 Henry VIII issued a Royal Proclamation "Altering Feast Days and Fast Days," which had visible effects in Boxford. The Proclamation banned the

superstitious and childish observations...observed and kept in many and sundry parts of this realm...[wherein] children be strangely decked and appareled to counterfeit priests [and] bishops...blessing the people and gathering of money, and boys do sing mass and preach in the pulpit, with such other unfitting and inconvenient usages, rather to the derision than to any true glory of God, or honor of his saints.²⁰⁷

In early 1542 the churchwardens recorded the sale of "a motheter [motheaten?] cot of red of saynt necolas" to Richard Clark, for which they received 13d.²⁰⁸ While this entry shows compliance with the order, it also marked the end of the beloved boy bishop tradition in Boxford. The traditional ceremony took place each year from November 6 through December 28 and, as the proclamation summarized, included dressing a boy as Saint Nicholas and having him preside over specific seasonal festivities and liturgical celebrations.²⁰⁹ Peter Northeast notes that the tradition had been in place in Boxford for

²⁰⁶ *Boxford CWA*, 37.

²⁰⁷ *TRP*, 1:301–302.

²⁰⁸ *Boxford CWA*, 38.

²⁰⁹ Hutton asserts that abrogation of the boy bishop tradition had a minor impact on popular piety, as it was not a ubiquitous practice in every parish and was in decline by the time of the 1541 proclamation. See Hutton, "Local Impact," 118–119. Nonetheless, for those parishes that did observe the tradition (such as Boxford and Long Melford) it would have been a blow to traditional communal religious expression. The differences in their speed of adherence provide a useful gauge of parish compliance with religious policy.

many years as “seen by the bequest of John Cowper at the Stone, in 1466, of a ‘decent and convenient crozier’ for the feast of St Nicholas.”²¹⁰ In contrast, the Long Melford churchwardens did not sell their coat, hood, and mitre of St Nicholas until 1547.²¹¹ This delay is perhaps descriptive of the deeper religious divisions within that parish and a conservative party still exercising a significant degree of influence in parish affairs. St Nicholas was not the only saint to suffer under the proclamation. The Feasts of St Mark, St Lawrence, St Catherine, St Clement, and other days of traditional religious celebration were abrogated and their “superstitious observations...clearly extinguished throughout all...[the king’s] realm and dominions, for as much as the same do resemble rather the unlawful superstition of Gentility than the pure and sincere religion of Christ.”²¹²

The proclamation regulating feast and fast days is a good example of the reforms enacted between 1541–1547, policies meant to maintain unity of practice, discourage diversity of belief, and to educate, thus bringing people out of papal-influenced superstition, but not necessarily away from all traditional beliefs and practices. Negotiating Henry VIII’s oscillations between conservatism and evangelicalism taught Thomas Cranmer to be judicious in his pursuit of reform and open to compromise to achieve long-term changes. MacCulloch notes that, “the King was particularly sensitive to the idea that he had been deceived, something which had been at the heart of the downfall of...Cromwell,” as well as Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard.²¹³

²¹⁰ Northeast, “Introduction,” in *Boxford CWA*, xiv.

²¹¹ See *Spoil of Melford Church*, 39, and fn 93.

²¹² *TRP*, 1:301–302.

²¹³ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 280. When Catherine Howard was proven to be an adulteress in 1542, the conservatives were on the way out of favor just as fast as they had risen, see Guy, *Tudor England*, 189.

The final swing of Henry VIII's religious conscience is seen clearly in the choice of his last wife, Katherine Parr, whom he married in 1543. Parr, herself a widow, was an active supporter of the evangelical cause, being more involved in matters of religion than any of Henry's other wives since Anne Boleyn.²¹⁴ After the king's embarrassing episode with Catherine Howard and her conservative in-laws, Cranmer was in a better position than ever before to move forward with judicious reforms. Perhaps signaling a further change in religious climate, Parliament passed a bill limiting the effectiveness of the Six Articles in 1544, thus opening the door to further reforms during Henry's final years. That same year, in a decision based on ego more than prudence, Henry launched his final attempt to conquer France. As a result Henry asked Cranmer to write a set of intercessory prayers to be offered as a litany in procession, as was traditional when praying for English forces about to engage in warfare. Cranmer chose to write this set of prayers in English and the litany thus became the first vernacular liturgical rite ever authorized in England. It later survived intact within the Book of Common Prayer.²¹⁵

There is some evidence that the new English litany was sung in Suffolk parishes during this period. The Mildenhall accounts show that they purchased the new

²¹⁴ Katherine Parr authored two popular works on religion: *Prayers or Meditations* (1545), was the first spiritual devotional to espouse evangelical beliefs, while her spiritual autobiography, *Lamentation of a Sinner* (1547), mirrored and gave voice to the experiences of the nation as it struggled between its traditional Catholic identity and a the new evangelical faith. For in-depth coverage of Parr's role in developing an English Protestant literary culture, see Kimberly Anne Coles, "Representing the faith of a nation: transnational spirituality in the works of Katherine Parr," in *Religion, Reform, and Women's Writing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 45–74. For a study on Parr that includes discussion of her influence on Henry VIII, his court, and the future Queen Elizabeth, see Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr: The Making of a Queen* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1999).

Although not the focus of this thesis, Anne Boleyn's influence on Henry VIII's religious policy during the 1530s has been the subject of much scholarly debate. The two authoritative biographies of Anne, including discussion of this topic, are Eric W. Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004); and Retha M. Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

²¹⁵ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 327–330.

Processional (which included the litany) near the end of 1544.²¹⁶ Mildenhall also purchased their second Bible in four years in 1545.²¹⁷ The Boxford accounts for 1543–1545 show parish leaders’ loyalty to the king and compliance with his religious policies, as well as their taking seriously their responsibility for the fabric of the church: there are payments for mending the Trinity banner, making an inventory of church goods, obtaining two holy water sprinklers, mending the reredos behind the high altar, and making annual contributions to the king’s subsidy for the French war.²¹⁸

In 1546, Henry made peace with France, which allowed him more latitude with regard to reform. It was around this time that Archbishop Cranmer reached his final spiritual presence position on the Eucharist. In a statement made during his later examination for heresy in September 1555, Cranmer credited Nicholas Ridley, his chaplain in 1546, for changing his mind on the issue of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.²¹⁹ This fundamental theological shift near the end of Henry’s reign was a major factor in Cranmer’s altering the ritual of the church in England under Edward VI.

Conclusion

In the end, Henry VIII was too much of a traditionalist to be steered entirely to the evangelical cause. Nevertheless, breaking ties with Rome over the matter of his divorce from Catherine of Aragon had precipitated the creation of an independent entity: the

²¹⁶ *Mildenhall CWA*, 97.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 99. The churchwardens’ accounts offer no explanation for the swift repurchasing of a Bible, but Middleton-Stewart proposes that they may have been replacing an earlier unbosomed volume, since the 1545 accounts show expenses for bossing the new volume.

²¹⁸ *Boxford CWA*, 40–46.

²¹⁹ “I grant that then I believed otherwise than I do now; and so I did, until my lord of London, doctor Ridley did confer with me, and by sundry persuasions and authorities of doctors drew me quite from my opinion,” quoted from, “Examination before Brokes,” in *Miscellaneous Writings*, 218. I owe this reference to Buchanan, 3, fn 4, where I first encountered it. See also, MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 357.

English Church. Despite this, there was much left to do in the eyes of evangelicals. The later years of Henry VIII's reign were focused on enacting policies not opposed to the key doctrines of faith but regulating items and practices deemed extra biblical and superstitious. John Guy asserts that "the objective was a programme of education designed to thwart Protestant advance and defend the royal supremacy. Doctrine was that of the Act of Six Articles, but 'reformed' instruments such as vernacular statements of faith, an English Litany, and an English Primer were used to transmit it."²²⁰

Save for an early reluctance to acquire and make available the Bible, the Suffolk parishes were indeed willing to comply with the government's varying orders regulating religious policy. Among the three, only Cratfield seems to have stepped out ahead of Henry's reforms. The idea of compliance with, but not enthusiasm for, reform during this period is also borne out by the surviving will evidence. None of the Suffolk testators surveyed for this study who made wills during the second half of Henry VIII's reign deviated from the standard forms of traditional soul bequests. For example, in his 1531 will, Thomas Coo, the wealthiest clothmaker in Boxford and a leader in the community, left his "soule to allmyghty god and to his blessed mother marye and to all t[he] holy company of heaven." He also made traditional bequests of 10s. to "the high aultar" for "tythes and offerings negligently forgotton and not payed," £6 for a priest to sing and pray for his and his family's souls, and £4 "to the church of Boxford...to be spent upon such things w[ith]in the same church as shall be thought most expedyent and necessary

²²⁰ Guy, *Tudor England*, 193.

by the descesion of the wardens of the same churche.”²²¹ Similarly, in December 1547 (several months after Edward VI’s accession and his first reforming Royal Injunctions), Richard Cole, a Mildenhall tanner, left his “soul unto allmyghtye godd my maker and redemer and to the celestyall company of all the holly saintes in heven.” Furthermore, in what appears to be a form of perpetuating his memory without endowing masses (which would have been impossible at that point, the chantries having been dissolved), he left £10 to be distributed to the poor of Mildenhall twice a year over the course of ten years.²²² The sentiment and bequests expressed in Coo and Cole’s wills were typical throughout Henry’s reign—they show that while religious policy shifted during this time, and churchwardens in our Suffolk parishes may have been willing to comply, the personal religious beliefs of individuals were less malleable.

In January 1546, a year before Henry’s death, English reformer John Hooper summarized the situation in England in a letter to his mentor, the Zurich reformer Heinrich Bullinger: “As far as true religion is concerned, idolatry is no where in greater vigour. Our king has destroyed the pope, but not popery.”²²³ The Swiss-influenced Hooper lamented that, save for some vernacular prayers, the Sarum Mass was unchanged and the people retained many conservative, ‘popish’ superstitions. While Henry had made some concessions to evangelical principles during the late 1530s, throughout much of the early-to mid-1540s he pulled back, especially in terms of allowing laymen access

²²¹ TNA, PCC PROB 11/24/72. Thomas Coo was also the father of William Coo the elder, and grandfather of William Coo the younger, respectively. Both of whom served as Boxford churchwardens at various times. Northeast, “Notes on Persons,” in *Boxford CWA*, 85.

²²² TNA, PCC PROB 11/32/114; see also Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 170–171.

²²³ John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, from Strasburgh, 27 January 1546, in Hastings Robinson, trans. and ed., *Original Letters Relative to the Reformation written during the reigns of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, and Queen Mary: chiefly from the archives of Zurich*, vol. 1, The Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), 36; referred to hereafter as *Original Letters*.

to the Bible. In a classic expression of his imperious religious policy, in July 1546 Henry issued a proclamation restricting access to the Bible and some heretical evangelical books, as well as regulating the approval process for new religious publications—all of which was enforced upon pain of imprisonment and ruinous fines. This policy came as a result of “sundry pernicious and detestable errors and heresies...[which hath] trouble[d] the sober, quiet, and godly religion united and established under the King’s majesty in this his realm.”²²⁴ Henry tried to rule his kingdom’s conscience to the last; and it was only at the end of his life that the king, influenced by Parr and Cranmer, tipped the scales by selecting an evangelical protectorate council for his underage son and heir, the future Edward VI.²²⁵ With this, Henry VIII ensured that official religious reform would move forward. At the same time, however, it is important to note Dickens’s assertion that religious “[o]pinion in Tudor England was not created by the Acts of Parliament, and its development cannot be gauged by reading the Statute Book.”²²⁶ Try as they might to narrow the options, change liturgical practices, and steer religion in one direction or another with acts, articles, and the like, the Tudor state could not force people to change their beliefs, at least not overnight. That would take time and individuals’ considered reflection upon decades of hearing the Bible read, preached, and sung in parish churches.

²²⁴ *TRP*, 1:373.

²²⁵ The exclusion of the conservative Bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, solidified the evangelical shape of the council. Gardiner would prove to be one of Cranmer’s greatest adversaries during Edward VI’s reign. See MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 77–78, 359. For more on their relationship, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, “Two Dons in Politics: Thomas Cranmer and Stephen Gardiner, 1503–1553,” *Historical Journal* 50 (2007): 265–287. For more on the polemical characterization of Gardiner, see Michael Riordan and Alec Ryrie, “Stephen Gardiner and the making of a Protestant villain,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 34 (2003): 1039–1063.

²²⁶ Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 268.

At the end of Henry's reign the Eucharist was still explained through transubstantiation, although a Lutheran real presence view was possible; church walls and windows contained a vibrant symphony of didactic and devotional images, so long as they were not superstitiously abused; lights stood before the rood and the sepulchre and upon the altar, but not before other images; the rood itself still stood in church chancels, and good deeds were still part of one's salvation. On the other hand, pilgrimages had been abolished, the dissolution of the monasteries had all but jettisoned the doctrine of purgatory, and while chantry priests still (anachronistically) said masses for the dead, the practice would not survive Edward VI's first year. The introduction of the English Bible, Litany, and Primer were meant as edifying aids to faith, but the religion Henry had created by the mid-1540s was, in MacCulloch's words, "a distinctly precarious path which few others seemed capable of treading without his imperious guidance."²²⁷

As noted throughout this chapter, the churchwardens' accounts for our four Suffolk case studies show a general willingness to follow Henry VIII's various religious policies. However, outward conformity does not necessarily mean that the entire population consented to these changes. Standing between government and ecclesiastical authorities and the local community, churchwardens mediated official policy to the parish and played a large role in determining the speed and efficacy with which changes were enacted. They may have been motivated to comply with government policy out of sincere evangelical faith or simply to avoid punishment. Unfortunately, the churchwardens' accounts do not reveal such motivations, and while will evidence has the potential to illuminate individual religious affinities it is not always a reliable gauge. What we do

²²⁷ MacCulloch, *Boy King*, 4.

know is that there were community members in these parishes who held to traditional beliefs throughout this period. At the same time, if the actions of the reformers in Hadleigh and Mendlesham are any indicator, there were also those who hoped for even more radical evangelical reform than the crown had yet allowed. Though he had steered a novel path between conservative and evangelical views, religious belief and practice under Henry VIII still looked more like the old faith than the new. Nonetheless, the changes that Cromwell, Cranmer, and Henry VIII introduced from 1534 through 1547 were important first steps in setting precedent for the more radical program of religious change that would be pursued by Edward VI and his ministers.

Chapter Three: Religion and Reform under Edward VI, Part I (1547–1550)

If reform under Henry VIII had often been uncertain and glacial, reform under his precocious and determinedly evangelical son Edward VI was deliberate and deployed with lightening speed. The Suffolk churchwardens' accounts during Edward's reign are filled with local actions related to changes in theology, public worship, and church fabric. Where previously one or two items in an account folio might refer to religious changes under Henry VIII, Edward's years contain entire sheets devoted to such matters. On the whole, the accounts record a remarkable level of continued compliance with official orders despite increasing theological radicalism during this time. Of course, there are exceptions to this trend that are also important to note in evaluating the reception of religious change in each parish, but first we must attend to the young king and his ministers' formula for religious change.

Archbishop Thomas Cranmer crowned Edward king on January 28, 1547, at the age of ten. King Edward's uncle, Edward Seymour, the Duke of Somerset, staged the coronation. Almost immediately after the old king's death, Somerset had seized control of the evangelical-dominated council that Henry VIII had appointed to rule during his son's minority.²²⁸ Later in 1547, Cranmer sponsored a bill to repeal the Six Articles and almost all of Henry VIII's treason legislation and the restrictions on printing theological

²²⁸ Although Edward VI was king, as a minor he was still dependent on his advisors, most notably his two successive lord protectors, Somerset and Northumberland. Originally, Henry VIII had formed the council to act as a group, with no named leader, but upon his death it came to be dominated successively by two ambitious individuals: first Somerset, and after his fall from power in the summer of 1549, the earl of Warwick, John Dudley, who usurped Somerset's authority on the council and was later named Duke of Northumberland. For more on the makeup of the king's council and Somerset's coming to power, see Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 279–281; and W. K. Jordan, *Edward VI: The Young King; the Protectorship of the Duke of Somerset* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1968).

texts noted above.²²⁹ This set the stage for the most radically evangelical program of religious reform attempted in England either before or since. Having survived Henry VIII's Janus-like religious personality, Cranmer continued as Archbishop of Canterbury under Edward VI and spearheaded the reform movement. Cranmer's plan was not intended to change the face of English religion overnight, although radical evangelicals would have preferred it that way. Instead, the Archbishop and his subordinate bishops sponsored a program of measured change, involving a multifaceted revision of the English liturgy and purging of superfluous church fabric. Cranmer and his allies sought to influence people's beliefs gradually by focusing on liturgy first, rather than doctrinal statements, trying thus to avoid the violent repercussions of dramatic change that had dominated the continental reformation.²³⁰ Doctrinal statements would come later, after the English people had supposedly become accustomed to the new evangelical worship forms and spare church interiors.

The First Edwardian Injunctions, 1547

In July 1547 Edward VI issued his First Royal Injunctions, to be administered in official visitations of every English diocese that fall.²³¹ They sought "the advancement of the true honour of Almighty God, the suppression of idolatry and superstition throughout

²²⁹ See *TRP*, 1:552.

²³⁰ MacCulloch sums up the reforming ambitions of Edward VI, Cranmer, and his other ministers in this way: "The regime of Edward VI...knew from the start in 1547 exactly what Reformation it wanted: whatever hesitations occurred were primarily attributable to the need to disarm conservative opposition.... There was an essential continuity of purpose in a graduated series of religious changes over seven years. These changes were designed to destroy one Church and build another, in a religious revolution of ruthless thoroughness. Thomas Cranmer was the one man who guaranteed the continuity of the changes, and he was chiefly responsible for planning them as they occurred, although more practical secular politicians decided the pace at which they should be put into effect." MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 365.

²³¹ For the 1547 Injunctions, see *VAI*, 2:114–130; also in *TRP*, 1:393–403.

all [Edward's] realms and dominions, and to plant true religion, to the extirpation of all hypocrisy, enormities and abuses," to which the English people had (according to evangelical opinion) previously been subjected. The 1547 injunctions included re-workings of many of the same orders from Henry VIII's 1536 and 1538 sets of injunctions, as well as some new directives. They reaffirmed Henrician principles of lay access to the Bible (and added a requirement to procure Erasmus' *Paraphrases* of the Gospels), vernacular instruction in the fundamentals of faith (the Creeds, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments), and the banning of pilgrimages and abused images, plus the 1547 Injunctions expanded the use of English-language scripture readings in some parts of the Sarum liturgy, which was still the only authorized use in England at the time.

Though similar to those issued by Henry VIII, the reworded 1547 Injunctions now bore the distinct marks of evangelicalism. Duffy goes so far as to describe them as "a charter for revolution."²³² Item two expressly forbade the "offering of money, candles, or tapers, [to] relics, or images, or kissing and licking of the same, praying upon beads, or suchlike superstition," whereas item number six in 1538 merely forbade doing such things mindlessly.²³³ Similarly, item three ordered the clergy to destroy all images capable of inspiring superstitious devotion and abuse "even by the simple act of censuring." The renewed injunction also "omitted the sentence describing images as 'the books of unlearned men, that can no letters'," a phrase that had hitherto legitimized religious art as

²³² Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath*, 118. As mentioned in the Introduction, Duffy is at the forefront of the revisionist movement and much of his work on early modern English religion is sympathetic to conservative sensibilities. Nonetheless, the 1547 Injunctions were revolutionary in terms of the radical and fundamental changes they ordered for the English Church and its people.

²³³ *VAI*, 2:116, 37; see also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 450.

didactic tool in an illiterate age.²³⁴ The new wording said images were “a remembrance, whereby men may be admonished of the holy lives and conversation of them that the said images do represent.”²³⁵ Item three also closed the loophole for candles in the church; where the Henrician Injunctions had allowed the common light to remain on the rood and before the Easter sepulchre, candles were now only allowed on the high altar.

Another injunction, number twenty-eight, went far beyond previous orders for the removal of idolatrous or superstitious artwork. In addition to requiring removal of pictures, carvings, and wall paintings, it also called for similar artwork in windows to be covered up or removed altogether.²³⁶ This order became the basis for the widespread destruction and/or sale of religious artwork in the following years. The Long Melford churchwardens, William Dyke and William Marshall, mention the injunction by name in the preface to their account of the sale of church goods in 1547.²³⁷ This injunction was not entirely negative, however, as it also required installation of “a comely and honest pulpit...for the preaching of God’s word.”²³⁸ While traditionalists would have seen in it only the wonton destruction of sacred art, evangelicals saw it as sweeping the church clean of idolatry in favor of the straightforward message of the gospel. The dual interpretations of injunction twenty-eight encapsulate well the contrasting views of traditionalists and evangelicals during this time.

The First Edwardian Injunctions were not merely copies or expansions of Henry VIII’s earlier orders, some were entirely new and went beyond what had been attempted

²³⁴ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 450.

²³⁵ *VAI*, 2:116.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:126.

²³⁷ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 36.

²³⁸ *VAI*, 2:126.

before. For example, injunction twenty-four required that parishioners keep the Sabbath day holy by attending church, partaking of the communion, and abstaining from “drunkenness, quarrelling and brawling.” Its main goal was the eradication of superstition and a better knowledge of God’s truth through attending to worship. The injunction also allowed that during the harvest people might do necessary work on the Sabbath or other holy days without fear of divine or temporal punishment.²³⁹ Injunction twenty-three, also new, eradicated the practice of ceremonial procession around the church, churchyard, or parish—a regular feature of the weekly high Mass and services on certain holy days. The reason was “to avoid all contention and strife which...had arisen...by reason of fond courtesy, and challenging of places in procession, and also that they may the more quietly hear that which is said or sung to their edifying.”²⁴⁰ The injunction further ordered “all ringing and knolling of bells shall be utterly forborne...except one bell in convenient time to be rung or knolled before the sermon.” Duffy believes this move was meant to quiet the sanctus bell, which was rung at the elevation of the host.²⁴¹ Adding some nuance to this point, John Craig has observed that the Edwardian repurposing of the sanctus bell, now used to announce the sermon, is a prime example of the evangelical government attempting to ease religious transition through utilizing familiar liturgical items and rituals to support new worship practices.²⁴² Parishes were thus expected to undertake the changes ordered by the new injunctions and report their progress to government and ecclesiastical commissioners.

²³⁹ Ibid., 2:124–125.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 2:124.

²⁴¹ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 452.

²⁴² This observation is based on the author’s personal notes taken at “Bodies at Prayer in early modern England,” a guest lecture delivered by Dr. John Craig at Portland State University on April 18, 2012.

Six sets of royal commissioners, hand-picked by Archbishop Cranmer, conducted the local visitations in late 1547. MacCulloch observes that “a notable feature of the commissions was the presence of outspoken evangelical activists who had been in disgrace in the late King’s reign.”²⁴³ The Suffolk churchwardens’ accounts all note attendance at the 1547 visitations and sale of much of the church goods and widespread destruction of images and shrines that came as a result. The Cratfield churchwardens received £20 for their church plate in 1547, with most of the proceeds paying for improvements to the church tower and roof.²⁴⁴ Boxford churchwardens sold their plate for £47 and loaned out £40 to parishioners at interest.²⁴⁵ In one bald entry, churchwardens Roger Langham and Robert Suckerman reported the sale of Mildenhall St Mary’s church plate and goods for a whopping £72 15s., plus another sale netting £23 10s in 1548.²⁴⁶ Long Melford’s wardens met with the royal commissioners at Bury St Edmunds on September 21, 1547, but their records are somewhat suspect, recording only £11 1s. 6d. in receipts for sale of church plate and goods.²⁴⁷ This number seems extremely low, given that Holy Trinity was surely the grandest of the four churches in this study. One possible explanation for this incongruity is that sympathetic churchwardens sold most of the items to conservative community members at lower prices: men such as Roger Martin and William Clopton, both of whom adhered to the old faith and whose families had invested

²⁴³ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 369–370. Despite my best efforts, I was not able to discover the identities of the 1547 royal commissioners for the diocese of Norwich. Had this been possible it would have offered valuable information on the makeup of the commission and could have further illuminated our parishes’ motivation for pushing evangelical reforms beyond official policy.

²⁴⁴ *Cratfield CWA*, 74. A further sale in 1549 brought £39 16 s., most of which went to building a new Town House. See *ibid.*, 77–79, 81.

²⁴⁵ *Boxford CWA*, 48–49, also fn 51.

²⁴⁶ *Mildenhall CWA*, 103, 105.

²⁴⁷ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 36–39, and fn. 95.

heavily in the church and its interior fabric.²⁴⁸ Martin stated in his memoir that he had removed and kept at his home several items from the parish church and his family chapel (which stood at the altar end of the church's south aisle), awaiting an opportunity to restore them when the religious climate allowed.²⁴⁹ The widespread sale of church plate was one of the starkest indicators that Edward VI's religious policy had inaugurated a new era for the English Church.

With regard to churchwardens' motivations during the stripping of the church interior, the will of William Dyke, one of Long Melford's wardens, reveals some interesting connections within the parish community. It should be remembered that Dyke was one of two men who oversaw the wholesale stripping of the church interior and sale of church goods in 1547–1548. Despite its having been written in 1556, during the reign of Mary I, Dyke's will uses ambiguous language in bequeathing his "soule unto allmightie god and my bodye to be buried where it shall please god."²⁵⁰ He then named William Marshall, his fellow churchwarden in 1547–48, as a witness, along with William Smyth and Thomas Sparpoynt, both of whom served as churchwardens from August 1559 through September 1563 and oversaw the return to reformed worship during Elizabeth I's early years as Queen. Another interesting connection lies in Dyke's having named John Alfounder of nearby Groton as one of his executors.²⁵¹ One suspects that Alfounder was a relative of Robert Alfounder, who was one of the men hired to take

²⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, 37, fn 91. In addition to purchasing items from the church proper, Clopton also removed most of the items from his family's chantry chapel located in the North aisle of Holy Trinity Church.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 8, see also fn 45.

²⁵⁰ TNA, PCC PROB 11/40/122.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

down the images, tabernacles, and altars in the church.²⁵² Although the ideological connection is difficult to substantiate without extant wills for all those involved, it seems clear that Dyke was personally connected with many of those who were active in making sure the parish complied with government religious policy, rather than those who opposed it, such as the Martin and Clopton families.

If one believes the vitriolic marginal comments written against the Edwardian churchwardens by Roger Martin six years later, then Dyke and Marshall were the worst kind of traitors: they sold out their neighbors (and stripped bare their parish church) in their attempt to follow the government's evangelical religious policy. On the other hand, one wonders why the churchwardens realized such low returns on the sale of church goods. Why would Dyke and Marshall, who were later characterized by Martin as evangelical traitors and despoilers of the church, be disposed to sell items for less than they were worth? It is possible that at the time of their selling the church goods Dyke and Marshall were trying to give everyone what they wanted, within their ability. If this was the case, what then should we make of their motivations and Martin's later criticisms? They may have indeed been sympathetic to evangelical policy, hence their relatively early record of whitewashing the walls and removing the rood loft and altars in 1547. At the same time, by selling the treasures of Holy Trinity Church back to their conservative neighbors at low prices they may have been trying to mollify them and diffuse tension within the community. The 1547 Injunctions and the changes they mandated must have been especially distressing to communities as riven by religious disagreement as Long Melford.

²⁵² *Spoil of Melford Church*, 39–40; see also "Biographical Notes," in *ibid.*, 85.

The destructive sale of church plate and other goods was only one side of Edward VI's 1547 Injunctions. For example, Cratfield's accounts show that in 1547 they purchased a new Bible and remade a chalice into a communion cup, and in 1548 they installed the poor man's box near the altar, as required by the twenty-ninth injunction.²⁵³ Churchwardens' accounts for this period show that Long Melford, Cratfield, and Boxford removed tabernacles and images, often selling rather than destroying them, and then paid workers to whitewash their richly decorated church walls and cover them with painted scripture verses.²⁵⁴ Boxford wardens also paid glazers to either remove or whitewash offending glass windows in 1547–1549.²⁵⁵ Mildenhall followed suit on both counts in 1548, paying 17s. 6d. "to the mason for whytyng the churche" and 6s. 5d. "to the glaser for glasse, sowder, leade and for 11 dayes work," as well as installing "the hutche for the pore."²⁵⁶ Long Melford's churchwardens did all of the above, and paid workers to take down their stone font and the high altar.²⁵⁷ Although there is no record of wardens paying for a wooden communion table at this time, it follows that one would have been made to replace the altar. It is curious that they would have removed their font, as the injunctions made no mention of this essential piece of church furniture and baptism was one of the two sacraments accepted by evangelicals. The only possible explanation is that the font in

²⁵³ *Cratfield CWA*, 73, 80. *VAI*, 2:126–127.

²⁵⁴ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40–41; *Cratfield CWA*, 72–73; and *Boxford CWA*, 49, 53. Hutton agrees with this in his survey of churchwardens accounts, noting that between 1547 and 1549 "most of the churches in the sample were reglazed and coated with white lime on the interior, almost certainly to obliterate images in stained glass and wall-paintings." Hutton, "Local Impact," 121. Where our Suffolk parish case studies may have been ahead of the trend was in adding painted scripture verses on the walls in place of the old images.

²⁵⁵ *Boxford CWA*, 51, 53, 55.

²⁵⁶ *Mildenhall CWA*, 103. There is a further entry for 4d. paid for candles used when the mason was whitewashing the church. *Ibid.*, 104.

²⁵⁷ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40.

Holy Trinity Church was of a richly decorated style and was removed because the wardens and/or royal commissioners thought it idolatrous in light of the new injunctions. The churchwardens' actions in 1547–1548 thus put Long Melford Holy Trinity on par with Cratfield St Mary, where records indicate that altars had been taken down in 1541. These actions, when combined with the sale of church plate and removal of most images meant that the church interiors would have looked much different in late 1547 than they had just a few years prior.

The widespread removal of rood lofts was perhaps the most striking change made to church interiors during this time. Long Melford and Boxford had removed their lofts by the end of 1547, and Mildenhall's was gone by late 1549 or early 1550.²⁵⁸ This is all the more remarkable because the 1547 Injunctions contained no explicit order to remove any part of the rood, save for the third injunction to remove candles from the candle beam. This action is clearly a sign of royal commissioners and/or local officials choosing to interpret the new religious policies on their own terms. They must have taken the aforementioned third and twenty-eighth injunctions to mean that the Great Rood, the carved images of the crucifixion, the Virgin Mary, and John the Evangelist were abused images, and thus they had to go.²⁵⁹ Given their earlier reluctance to acquire a Bible in the 1530s, it is remarkable that these parishes now rushed to remove what had been one of the central elements of pre-Reformation church fabric. It should be noted, however, that in both Long Melford and Boxford only the loft was removed, not the rood screen. Still,

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 40–41; *Boxford CWA*, 49; and *Mildenhall CWA*, 110.

²⁵⁹ Duffy asserts that “the pace of reform...varied somewhat, reflecting perhaps as much the zeal of the commissioners as the inertia of the people.” But, as it relates to the focus of this study, “in the Home Counties and East Anglia, the Injunction against abused images was used fairly consistently to remove all imagery.” *Stripping of the Altars*, 481.

the paintings of saints on surviving rood screen dados would have likely been defaced by scraping out key parts such as the eyes, head, and hands, or whitewashed and painted over with scripture verses at the same time as the whitewashing of church walls.²⁶⁰

It is possible, in fact probable, that these actions were not unanimously agreed upon within each parish. Roger Martin's vitriolic commentary in the margins of the Long Melford churchwardens' accounts for Edward VI's reign, added later during his tenure as churchwarden under Mary I, show his open displeasure with "the spoyle of Melford churche & the mynisters chossyn for the same," and point to a factional dynamic within the parish.²⁶¹ In most parishes the fear of punishment for non-compliance likely equaled or outweighed reforming zeal as a factor motivating compliance with official policy. That being said, the fact that the injunctions were open to interpretation meant that the royal commissioners could, and often did, attempt to push policy beyond its original limits. Although we do not have records for the 1547 Suffolk visitation, Duffy makes a similar point when, in his narrative of Morebath, he says that with the noted evangelical and iconoclast "[Simon] Heynes in charge" of the commission for the West Country "it was

²⁶⁰ Duffy, "The parish, piety, and patronage," 159–161. Although it was less common, there is precedent in East Anglia for whitewashing images on rood screen dado panels and painting scripture verses over them. The rural parish church of Binham in Norfolk is one such example. The images were painted over sometime in the 1540s or early 1550s, but over the years the whitewash has flaked off, revealing ghostly images of the saints behind them. For photographs of the panels, see the entry for "Binham St Mary," at The Norfolk Churches Site, <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk> (accessed April 20, 2012); Whiting, *English Parish Church*, 18; and the cover of Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars* (New Edition, 2005).

Although few original rood screens (and no lofts) survive in East Anglia, there are several examples of defaced dado paintings still extant. The parish churches at Eye, Hitcham, Kersey, Ufford (where the rood beam survives in place, but nothing else), Westhall, Woodbridge, and Yaxley all possess telling examples. The enormous triple-wide screen at Southwold is the largest in the county and also shows evidence of defacement. Wyverstone boasts the only surviving dado containing relief-carved images, although many are badly defaced. The colorful twentieth-century restorations of the rood panel images at Kettlebaston, Sotterley, and Woolpit give an idea of how the originals may have appeared prior to the sixteenth-century changes. For images of all these parish churches, see their entries on The Suffolk Churches Site, <http://www.suffolkchurches.co.uk>.

²⁶¹ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 36.

likely that the Injunctions would be interpreted as radically as possible.”²⁶² One expects that the situation was similar in a Suffolk context that, if anything, retained some natural proclivity for religious reform due to the survival of Lollard sympathies among parts of the population, as well as some more recently established religious radicalism such as the community of Christian Brethren in Mendlesham previously mentioned in Chapter Two.²⁶³ The dynamic created by the visitations thus allowed the evangelicals in our four parishes an unprecedented opportunity to press their advantage: murals were whitewashed, scripture verses painted over them, and rood lofts removed along with the rest of the “abused” imagery in their parish churches.²⁶⁴ Whereas in more conservative communities, such as Duffy’s example of Morebath in Devon, the Edwardian visitations were met with resistance (and eventually reluctant conformity), our Suffolk churchwardens seem to have embraced the opportunity for individual and group assertion created by the visitations. This may explain, to a certain extent, the reason why at this early date the four parishes in this study all seemed to be so far ahead of other parts of England in terms of enacting evangelical religious policies. Although they still comprised a minority of the population at this point, it seems probable that Suffolk evangelicals saw an opening in the 1547 Injunctions and took advantage of it, pushing a program of local

²⁶² Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath*, 119. In addition to enforcing the injunctions against images, Heynes’ commission essentially crippled Morebath (and many other West Country parishes) by forcing them to sell off the several flocks of sheep whose wool comprised their main source of income.

²⁶³ Though recently Duffy has challenged some of his conclusions, Dickens provides the classic argument for the survival and importance of the native Lollard heresy in the growth of mid-century evangelicalism. See Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 41–62.

²⁶⁴ Duffy makes a similar point: “The [1547] visitation was thorough, in many places aggressive, and it was consistently used to push through a radical reading of the Injunctions. Everywhere they went the commissioners enforced the destruction of images, the extinguishing of lights, the abolition of ‘abused’ ceremonies.” Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 453.

reform that was even more radical than that envisioned by the cautious Cranmer and his evangelical allies.

Proclamation Against Revilers and for Reception in Two Kinds, 1547

Despite their ascendancy Cranmer and his allies faced severe difficulties in bringing about reform early on.²⁶⁵ The first year of Edward's reign was dangerous for evangelicals, as they tried to sidestep still-influential conservative bishops such as Edmund Bonner of London and Stephen Gardiner of Winchester.²⁶⁶ Cranmer recognized the danger that conservatives such as Bonner and Gardiner still posed to his movement, and in a brilliant maneuver that combined conciliation and evangelical assertion, he issued "A Proclamation concerning the irreverent Talkers of the Sacrament." Released on December 27, 1547, the statute both forbade public debate on the nature of the Eucharist and reaffirmed the scriptural warrant for the sacrament. The proclamation confirmed the importance of the Eucharist and prescribed reception in both kinds, yet it was purposely vague in its definition of the ritual's theological meaning. It recited the traditional view that "the body and blood of Jesus Christ is there," without explaining what that meant. The point of the proclamation was that no one was to question the nature of the sacrament, nor to

contentiously and openly argue, dispute, reason, preach or teach, affirming any more terms of the said blessed sacrament, than be expressly taught in the holy scripture, and mentioned in the aforesaid act...until such time as the king's

²⁶⁵ "Cranmer and his colleagues must cope with the uncomfortable reality that outside the court and the Council chamber, their chief support came from people who did not matter in politics: Cambridge dons, a minority of clergy and a swathe of people below the social level of the gentry, all concentrated in south-east England." MacCulloch, *Boy King*, 59.

²⁶⁶ The slowness of reform at this time was due to evangelical leaders' preoccupation with "conciliat[ing] the bishops, particularly Gardiner, in order to get grudging consent to a step-by-step reformation," *ibid.*, 61.

majesty, by the advice of his highness' council and the clergy of this realm, shall define, declare, and set forth an open doctrine thereof.²⁶⁷

Such language was meant in the short term to keep radical evangelicals mollified by giving the laity the cup; but the proclamation also forced conservatives to approve of it for its hard line against revilers.²⁶⁸ Furthermore, by reiterating the scriptural warrant for the sacrament, and asserting reception in both kinds, Cranmer put conservatives in the delicate position of tacitly affirming both the sacrament and the manner in which it was administered. The proclamation's dual-purpose language ensured that Cranmer and his advisors would have time to formulate a comprehensive liturgical plan that suited their goal of gradual reform.

The First Book of Homilies, 1547

One of the first official movements toward reforming the public worship of the church took place in the summer of 1547, in the midst of all the material changes discussed in the previous sections, when Cranmer published a series of homilies in English to be used in churches throughout England.²⁶⁹ MacCulloch describes them as espousing, “uncompromising assertions on the central importance of justification by faith alone.” The homilies were a vigorous departure from Henry VIII's hybrid Catholicism and his fierce opposition to Luther's theology, and a definite move in the direction of

²⁶⁷ *Miscellaneous Writings*, 506; see also *TRP*, 1:410–412.

²⁶⁸ The proclamation did not actually ensure however that parish priests would offer, nor would most laymen at this point demand, communion in both kinds. Participation at this time was still extremely low, so it did not have much immediate impact but it did leave the door open, in principle, for evangelical clergy and their parishioners to conduct the rite in this manner.

²⁶⁹ For the three homilies noted here, see *Miscellaneous Writings*, 128–49.

continental-style reform.²⁷⁰ Injunction thirty-two required that “all parsons, vicars and curates shall read in the churches every Sunday one of the Homilies.”²⁷¹ This requirement was waived for those evangelicals who had been licensed as preachers by the government. The *Homilies* were thus an insurance policy for parishes where the priest was either not sufficiently educated and/or evangelical enough to preach sermons on his own. In principle, they ensured that parishioners would have access to a regular, doctrinally sound sermon each week. On the other hand, the *Homilies* were a doctrinal yardstick against which to measure whether or not a preacher stepped out of line in a sermon. Curiously, the churchwardens’ accounts of the four Suffolk parish case studies show a reluctance to purchase the *Homilies*. This seems odd, due to their general assent to most of the other injunctions, although it is also strangely reminiscent of their early reluctance to obtain Bibles under Henry VIII. None of them seem to have purchased it during Edward VI’s reign. Boxford was the first to do so, but not until 1559 when Elizabeth I was on the throne and reissued the order in her First Injunctions.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ The Eucharist was meant to be the focus of a second set of homilies, but they did not appear until Elizabeth I’s reign; see MacCulloch, *Boy King*, 67. “Cranmer’s homilies, as Ashley Null says, are ‘the mature public expression of his Protestant Augustinianism’.” Interestingly, Cranmer did not fully express his orthodox view of predestination in these sermons, because he believed it could be a stumbling block. Cranmer thus wrote as though everyone who heard the sermons was a member of the elect. If they were not, it would make no difference, and if they were, then they should be urged on to repentance and away from sin. See MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 374–375; see also Ashley Null, *Thomas Cranmer’s Doctrine of Repentance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

²⁷¹ *VAI*, 2:128–129.

²⁷² *Boxford CWA*, 71. It is possible that the entry for obtaining the first *Book of Homilies* was omitted from the other accounts, although it is difficult to believe that all three parishes would fail to record the purchase. For the order concerning homilies in the 1559 Elizabethan Injunctions, see *VAI*, 3:19. Another possibility is that the priests for these parishes were also licensed preachers, which would have nullified the requirement to obtain the *Homilies*. Unfortunately, the scope of this study precluded the investigation required to determine whether or not this was the case.

The Dissolution of Chantries, 1547

Between 1536 and 1540 Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell had dissolved the monasteries, dealing a disastrous blow to the traditional intercession system of which religious houses had formed the cornerstone. Furthermore, in 1545 Henry had Parliament approve an act that allowed the crown to “confiscate chantry endowments in order to finance his wars with Scotland and France.”²⁷³ In 1547 Edward VI and Protector Somerset finished Henry’s work with an act dissolving thousands of chantries that were endowed to say Masses for their founders’ souls.²⁷⁴ The act had both financial and theological motivations. In financial terms, the government sought to line its coffers through confiscating and selling chantry lands. The trouble with this was that, as with the dissolution of the monasteries, the chantry priests were pensioned off for life, which extended indefinitely the government’s financial liability beyond what they earned from the sale of chantry lands. The theological aim of the act was much more thoroughly thought out and achieved: the abolition of “superstition and errors in Christian religion [which] hath been brought into the minds...of men, by reason of the ignorance of their very true and perfect salvation through the death of Jesus Christ, and by devising...vain opinions of purgatory and masses satisfactory, to be done for them which be departed.”²⁷⁵

Duffy explains that Edward’s government believed “what was wrong with chantries was not any maladministration, but their whole end and purpose.” Recognizing that the money given to chantries and religious guilds only perpetuated superstition and, in

²⁷³ Littenberger, *English Reformation and the Laity*, 63; see 37 Henry VIII, c.4.

²⁷⁴ 1 Edward VI, c. 14. Dickens and Carr offer Camden’s estimate that “some 2,374 chantries, 90 colleges and 110 hospitals, i.e. almshouses,” were dissolved by the 1547 Act; see *Reformation in England*, 127–128.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 128.

their view, a misunderstanding of true religion, the evangelical government sought to end intercessory practices and transfer chantry and gild funds to fund education and poor relief. In so doing, it also eliminated “the remaining institutional framework underpinning the daily round of intercession for the dead in many parishes.”²⁷⁶ At this point it was still possible to leave money for traditional intercessional practices in one’s will, but, as Litzenberger explains, “the mechanism by which such provisions has previously been implemented had been eliminated.” The dissolution of the chantries meant that leaving traditional bequests was essentially a dead letter, since there would be no way to bring about such intercessory actions. Edward VI’s government had learned from his father’s policies and “once again, as when pilgrimages were eliminated, lay pious practices had been curtailed by official religious policy.”²⁷⁷

This action did not mean, however, that conservative-leaning testators were left without options. Margaret Jerold, a widow of Mildenhall, attempted to circumvent the new policies in her 1549 will. In the midst of several bequests to family and friends she also stated “for the poor people I will that there be done for me then 20s. at my month’s day,” plus 6s. 8d. left “to the leading of the market cross.” Finally, she arranged for a £14 mortgage debt owed her to be distributed to the poor people of the town over the five years following her death, as a legacy.²⁷⁸ Although they do not utilize the traditional intercessory system, which had been eliminated by then, the bequests betray a desire to be remembered within the parish community and are similar to those left in earlier times

²⁷⁶ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 454.

²⁷⁷ Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 64.

²⁷⁸ SROB, IC 500/2/21/157; parts reprinted in Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 172.

to mourners, with the unstated expectation that those who benefitted from them would pray for the testator's soul in purgatory.

The Chantries Act was thus meant to remove the doctrine of purgatory from the official doctrine of the English Church. However, whether or not it removed fear of purgatory from the consciousness of the English people is another matter. While the act may have had a negative effect on organized lay religious activity, conservative testators (such as Margaret Jerold above) continued to leave money for the poor with the tacit expectation that they would pray for their souls, as they had under the old religion. In fact, bequests to the poor actually increased under Edward VI. Litzenberger suggests that this was “due to the fact that bequests to the poor were the only pre-Reformation act of charity to continue to be condoned by Protestants.... In the absence of other options, at least this act was still available to those holding on to traditional beliefs, and thus they consolidated their charitable bequests, with the poor being the beneficiaries.”²⁷⁹ This was one instance where the evangelical and humanistic principle of aiding the less fortunate coincided with an aspect of traditional faith, albeit with different underlying motivations. It thus became quite common during Edward VI's reign for both conservative and evangelical testators to provide for the poor in their wills.²⁸⁰

On the other hand, with no more monasteries or chantries left to provide prayers for the dead, the focus of organized public worship and liturgy shifted to Christ's role as

²⁷⁹ Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 80. See also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 505; and Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation*, 177.

²⁸⁰ For example, concern for the poor is evident in the largely traditional 1549 will of Margaret Jerold of Mildenhall, where she instructed that her “executors shall dispose every year £3 unto the poor people for the space of four years next after my decease.” SROB, IC 500/2/21/157; also reprinted in Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 172–173. This practice is also present in the theologically ambiguous 1551 will of Thomas Rolff the elder, of Mildenhall, who left “to the relief of the poor people of this town 40d.” SROB, IC 500/2/13/96; also in Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 173–174.

sole mediator between sinful humanity and a righteous God.²⁸¹ Under Edward VI, the saints were no longer intercessors for the dead or the living. William Tracy's influential 1530 will was even more radical for the fact that it predated this shift in official theology. Once endorsed by the government the practice gained greater currency in the soul bequests of ambiguous and evangelical testators alike.²⁸² In terms of the local impact of the Chantries Act, we know that Long Melford had four chantries and Mildenhall two, all of which were dissolved during this time. Furthermore, each of the four Suffolk parishes had several lay religious guilds that would have been affected as well.²⁸³ The dissolution of the chantries had a dramatic effect on both public and private lay religious activity. The 1547 Chantries Act redirected a large part of parish religious activity from concern for the dead to aiding the poor and providing education for the living.²⁸⁴

Restriction of Traditional Rites and Ceremonies, 1548

Having laid out general instructions in the 1547 Injunctions, Edward VI's protectorate council issued an order in January 1548 banning several traditional liturgical practices that the recent Injunctions had permitted; these included candles at Candelmas, ashes upon Ash Wednesday, and palms upon Palm Sunday. In February a royal

²⁸¹ Although the yet-to-be-released 1549 Book of Common Prayer would more fully express this revised devotional approach, it was not a new concept in Christian theology. Rather, it was a resurrection of the outcome of Patristic-era debates over the person of Christ. For more on this earlier context, see Jon Robertson, *Christ as Mediator: A Study of the Theologies of Eusebius of Caesarea, Marcellus of Ancrya, and Athanasius of Alexandria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

²⁸² Craig and Litzenberger, "Wills as Religious Propaganda." Evangelicals were not the only ones to omit such references, however; Craig and Litzenberger note that many conservatives also created ambiguous preambles in attempt to elude detection. Ambiguous preambles would omit the references to Mary and the saints, but would also not include overtly evangelical language relating to salvation through Christ alone.

²⁸³ The churchwardens' accounts for each of the four parishes are full of entries for religious guilds and the chantries at Long Melford and Mildenhall are discussed in Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, and Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, respectively.

²⁸⁴ For more in-depth treatment of this topic, see chapter three, "'Rage against the Dead': Reform, Counter-reform, and the Death of Purgatory," in Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead*, 93–123.

proclamation confirmed the council's order and added adoration of the rood upon Good Friday (also called 'creeping to the cross'), holy bread (the non-Eucharistic bread blessed by the priest and shared by the congregation after the Mass), and holy water to the list of banned practices and items. Although it was ostensibly meant to prohibit private innovations in ceremonies, Duffy explains that the proclamation "effectively abolished them," at least officially.²⁸⁵ These new prohibitions were no doubt included in the articles for the ecclesiastical visitations conducted in 1548; their local effect, if (or where) compliance was the response, resulted in further distancing from traditional ceremonies and liturgical practices.²⁸⁶

In terms of their effect on the fabric and liturgical rhythm of parish churches, the religious reforms pursued in 1547 and early 1548 were essentially negative, and deeply divisive. The king and his ministers had abolished traditional liturgical ceremonies and practices; royal commissioners enforcing the injunctions had ordered wardens to take down rood lofts, whitewash walls, whitewash or remove stained glass, and take down tabernacles and their statues, and left only two candles in the church, those on the altar. Granted, didactic and devotional wall paintings had been replaced with whitewash and the words of scripture, the Bible was available for all to read, priests were required to preach the gospel regularly, and the laity now received communion in both kinds, but the stark reality of the reformed church interior and the circumscribed liturgical practices performed therein must have been shocking to behold. Despite his apparent desire to enact reform gradually, some of Cranmer's evangelical policies could not help but seem a

²⁸⁵ See the explanatory note in *VAI*, 2:184–185; *TRP*, 1:416–417; and Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 457.

²⁸⁶ Cranmer included items inquiring into these banned practices in articles for his 1548 visitation of the diocese of Canterbury. *VAI*, 1:183.

drastic departure from the old religion. As mentioned above, the divisive and drastic changes wrought in parish communities and churches during this time were no doubt exacerbated by the opportunity for local evangelical initiative allowed (and perhaps even encouraged) by radical royal commissioners who conducted the 1547 visitations.

The Order of the Communion, 1548

After issuing several documents restricting liturgical practices, the first positive official revisions to the public worship of the English Church dealt with the Eucharist. The 1548 Order of the Communion presented a Eucharistic rite largely based on the Latin version found in the Sarum Missal, but prescribed administration in both kinds, with parts of the service now conducted in English.²⁸⁷ One innovation was the inclusion of a general confession of sins, to be made before the administration of the sacrament, “in the name of all those that are minded to receive the holy Communion.” Interestingly, the inclusion of the general confession did not exclude traditional private confession to a priest, or even confession to oneself; instead it admonished “every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men’s minds or acts, where as he hath no warrant of God’s word for the same.”²⁸⁸ Otherwise, it made no changes to the traditional outward forms of

²⁸⁷ For the full text of the 1548 Order of the Communion, see Joseph Ketley, ed., *The Two Liturgies, AD 1549, and AD 1552: With Other Documents set forth by Authority in the Reign of King Edward VI*, The Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1841), 1–8; referred to hereafter as *Two Liturgies*.

²⁸⁸ *Two Liturgies*, 6, 4. The graceful explanation for general confession is deserving of full quotation here: “If there be any of you whose conscience is troubled and grieved in any thing...let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Priest taught in the law of God, and confess and open his sin and grief secretly, that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice, and comfort that his conscience may be relieved, and that of us, as a minister of God and of the Church, he may receive comfort and absolution, to the satisfaction of his mind, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness: requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general Confession, not to be offended with them that doth use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret Confession to the Priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient for the quietness of their own consciences particularly to open their sins to the Priest, to be offended with them

the Sarum Mass as they had existed under Henry VIII. Colin Buchanan believes that “it is clear that the consecration (and presumably therefore the elevation and adoration) at the heart of the mass was undisturbed.” Furthermore, the Order exhibited Cranmer’s newly emerging “devotional approach to the Lord’s table, designed to provoke self-examination, reliance upon Christ for forgiveness, thankful remembrance of his death for us, and thus fruitful reception.”²⁸⁹ The Order stressed a renewed focus on lay participation in the rite. Parishioners were encouraged to repent of their sins in the general confession, trust in God’s mercy, and partake of the elements regularly. The traditional Eucharistic rite outlined in the Sarum Missal contained one supreme moment of liturgical and spiritual climax in the consecration of the Eucharistic elements. The 1548 Order established a second, albeit lower, moment of personal reception in the communion service, subordinate to the still-preeminent moment of consecration.²⁹⁰ The 1548 Order was thus the first step in Cranmer’s evangelical plan to gradually elevate the importance of personal reception and devalue the consecration of the elements.

A Royal Proclamation issued in March 1548 preceded the new communion order and made it clear that Edward’s government intended to continue reforming public worship:

[We will] every man...with such obedience and conformity, to receive this our ordinance, and most Godly direction, that we may be encouraged from time to time, further to travail for the reformation and setting forth of such

which are satisfied with their humble confession to God, and the general confession to the Church: but in all these things to follow and keep the rule of charity; and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men’s minds or acts, where as he hath no warrant of God’s word for the same.” Ibid, 4.

²⁸⁹ Buchanan, 12.

²⁹⁰ Although the establishment of a second liturgical moment of reception is apparent from studying the text of the 1548 Order, I owe the origin and elucidation of this point to Buchanan.

Godly orders as may be most to God's glory, the edifying of our subjects, and for the advancement of true religion.²⁹¹

The Proclamation explained the government's purpose in reforming the liturgy, which was to edify people in the Christian faith and to advance the "true religion" of evangelical Protestantism over what they saw as 'popish' superstition. It also left the door open to implementing further liturgical changes at a later date. From an early stage Edward VI's religious reforms took dead aim at the public worship of the church, a tactic that gained momentum when Parliament approved the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549.

Cranmer's subtle changes to the Eucharistic rite in the 1548 Order were nonetheless enough to agitate conservative bishops. "Some of the Bishops were backward in directing the use of the new form," and some even "declared in their sermons that the real intention of the Government was to lay a tax...upon every marriage, christening, and burial."²⁹² This was a mischaracterization of Cranmer's motives in attempting to reform the communion service, but it does illustrate the kind of polemic conservatives employed in opposing his actions. In April 1548, the government suspended all unlicensed preaching in an attempt to silence criticism of the Order from conservatives such as Gardiner and Bonner.²⁹³ Cranmer's articles published prior to his diocesan visitation of Canterbury provide a good example of the local impact of changes to official religious policy. As noted above, they stipulated, in no uncertain terms, that images, shrines,

²⁹¹ "The Proclamation," in *Two Liturgies*, 1–2; see also *TRP*, 1:417–418.

²⁹² Procter and Frere, 39.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 39–40. For the text of the preaching ban, see "A Proclamation against those that do innovate, &c., and against them which preach without licence," in *Miscellaneous Writings*, 508; and *TRP*, 1:421–423; see a similar order dated September 1548, in *ibid.*, 1:432–433.

candles, artwork, and anything else promoting superstition and idolatry should be removed from churches.²⁹⁴

At the same time that Cranmer was pushing his modifications of the Eucharistic rite, changes of another sort were under way in Long Melford. In July 1548 Edward VI transferred the patronage of Holy Trinity Church from himself to his sister Mary. The parish advowson was now under her control and she presented her former chaplain, Henry Mallet as rector that same month.²⁹⁵ It seems entirely plausible that, although the parish continued to comply with Edward's religious policy, the traditionalist party led by the Clopton and Martin families would have seen this change in patronage as a boon to their cause.

Curiously, there are no explicit entries for purchase of the 1548 communion order in the four Suffolk parish accounts; but based on their seemingly enthusiastic compliance with the 1547 Injunctions it seems likely that they would have obtained the requisite copies and conducted the service as directed. The accounts for 1548 show that Boxford and Mildenhall churchwardens also complied with the new part of the seventh Injunction of 1547, having purchased and set up English translations of Erasmus' *Paraphrases* of the Gospels alongside the Bible.²⁹⁶ This order was likely meant to further entrench

²⁹⁴ "Articles to be inquired of in the visitations to be had within the diocese of Canterbury," *VAI*, 2:176–189.

²⁹⁵ Parker, *Long Melford*, 35; and *Spoil of Melford Church*, 49, fn 118.

²⁹⁶ *Boxford CWA*, 54; *Mildenhall CWA*, 108. The accounts for Long Melford and Cratfield do not mention purchase of the *Paraphrases*. In both instances this could be the result of poor record keeping, or, in Long Melford at least, it could have been the result of its advowson being transferred to the conservative Lady Mary's patronage in July 1548. Ryrie makes a convincing argument however that during Henry VIII's reign the translation of Erasmus's *Paraphrases* into English was a project that appealed to both evangelicals and conservatives alike, including the Lady Mary and Queen Katherine Parr. Perhaps only later, as Edward's reforms took Henry's policies in a more radical direction, did conservative opinion on them shift. Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII*, 196–197.

vernacular scripture within lay consciousness in anticipation of the new Prayer Book, while its prefaces and marginal notes replaced debate among the unlearned as to the meaning of troublesome scripture passages.

The First Book of Common Prayer, 1549

In March 1549, the Spanish reformer and religious refugee, Francis Dryander wrote to his mentor, the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger, from his new post as a Professor of Greek at Cambridge University. Dryander had heard about but not yet seen the new Book of Common Prayer. Nonetheless he wrote excitedly to Bullinger:

It is generally reported that the mass is abolished, and liberty of marriage allowed to the clergy: which two I consider to be the principal heads of the entire reformation, the object of which, as I think, is not to form an entire body of Christian doctrine, and to deliver a fixed and positive opinion without any ambiguity upon each article, but is entirely directed to the right institution of public worship in churches.²⁹⁷

Dryander's evangelical statement of hope goes to the heart of the Edwardian reform movement, the object of which, Dryander observed, was to revise public worship (especially the Eucharist) and the surrounding church fabric to reflect evangelical theology. The Parliamentary Act of Uniformity came into force on Whitsunday (June 9) 1549 and established Cranmer's first Prayer Book as the only legal form of worship for the English Church.

Written entirely in English, the 1549 Prayer Book incorporated translations of the Sarum Missal along with evangelical language supporting justification by faith. It also established a rotational system of scripture readings for each service, removed certain rites and practices that did not fit with evangelical theology such as the bidding of the

²⁹⁷ Francis Dryander to Heinrich Bullinger, from Cambridge, 25 March 1549, in *Original Letters*, 349–350.

bedes, and reduced the seven traditional services of the Canonical hours to the two Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer. Furthermore, the celebration of the Eucharist/Holy Communion now emphasized lay participation and reception in both kinds and used ambiguous language with regard to Christ's presence in the elements.

Churchwardens' accounts for the four Suffolk case studies show quick compliance with the 1549 Act of Uniformity. The Long Melford, Boxford, and Mildenhall records all note purchase of at least one copy of the new Prayer Book in 1549.²⁹⁸ Vexingly, the edited Cratfield accounts contain few notes for the period 1548–1551, but a couple of surviving entries recording the further sale of church plate in 1549 (earning £39 16s.) indicate that the parish was still complying with government orders.²⁹⁹ Based on these entries there is reason to conclude that they also purchased the Prayer Book when required. In fact, this purchase was likely financed through the earlier sale of plate. Long Melford's 1549 records also show receipts for further sale of church goods (including old service books), payments for three new Psalters, and for glazers to replace more stained glass windows.³⁰⁰

The Boxford accounts for 1549 indicate a parish (or at least parish leadership) eager for reform. The folio pages include entries for the sale of 63 pounds of candle wax (made redundant by the 1547 ban on superfluous lights), the purchase of two new Psalters for 4s., payment of 5s. 4d. to "Betts of Wetherden for removynge of the orgaynes," and, intriguingly, payment "for makynge of [2] trestells & a bourde in the

²⁹⁸ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 49; *Boxford CWA*, 55; *Mildenhall CWA*, 109.

²⁹⁹ *Cratfield CWA*, 81.

³⁰⁰ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 48–50.

chauncell” to serve as a communion table.³⁰¹ This last entry is interesting because the instruction to abandon stone altars in favor of trestle tables did not come until the 1552 Prayer Book. It should be noted that while they acquired a communion table in 1549 the Boxford wardens did not take down their stone altars until a year later, when they paid 8d. to a “[Mr.] forbye for havynge down the awlters.”³⁰² Although some evangelical bishops, such as Nicholas Ridley in London and John Hooper in Gloucester, carried out the order against altars and for tables earlier than required (1550–1551), the Boxford entry for a communion table predates even these zealots by a year or more.³⁰³ It is remarkable indeed, although not impossible, to imagine that little Boxford could have been further forward than Hooper and Ridley at this point.³⁰⁴

An emergent evangelical party in Boxford seems even more probable when one looks to evidence from the wills of churchwardens who served during this period.

³⁰¹ *Boxford CWA*, 54–55. In 1546 the Boxford wardens had sold some “oold mettall of the orgayns” to Rychard Radford of Newton, leading one to believe that it was perhaps broken. *Boxford CWA*, 46. Thus, it is not clear if the 1549 removal of the organ was motivated by reforming zeal or because it no longer worked. As it appears in the same list as other, clearly evangelical reforms, it seems fair to view it as another instance of removing instruments of vain ‘popish religion’ from the church. If true, this would be an astonishingly early date at which to remove an organ, with Mildenhall only following suit in 1551, see *Mildenhall CWA*, 115. Although there are no entries for such action in Cratfield, an entry from the same time period in Long Melford reveals that they still had their organs in 1551–1552 and were even paying to repair them. *Spoil of Melford Church*, 54.

For an in-depth discussion of the role of organs in religious practice under Elizabeth, see Jonathan P. Willis, *Church Music and Protestantism in Post-Reformation England: Discourses, Sites and Identities*, St Andrews Studies in Reformation History (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 90–103. Willis notes that the first concerted effort to remove organs did not come until the 1570s, during Elizabeth’s reign, making the early actions in Boxford and Mildenhall even more astounding.

³⁰² *Boxford CWA*, 58. At the same time that they paid to take down the altars (two entries up in the folio) the wardens paid 13s. 8d. “for the Wrytyng on the candlebeme.” Based on the amount, this was no doubt a very elaborate (perhaps gilded in gold leaf) set of scripture verses painted on the candle beam, which still spanned the chancel arch above the rood screen. For the entry, see *ibid*.

³⁰³ For Ridley’s May 1550 action, see “The Council’s Letter to Bishop Ridley to take down Altars, and place Communion Tables in their stead,” in *Miscellaneous Writings*, 524. Hooper went even further than Ridley “in his insistence that the stairs leading to any altar...be removed as well.” Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 69.

³⁰⁴ It is possible, although not verifiable from our sources, that Boxford’s actions were influenced by connections with the afore-mentioned radical evangelical community in Mendlesham, 24 miles away.

Richard Bronde, churchwarden in 1538–39, 1544–45, and 1553–54 left a telling preamble in his 1589 will, stating that “I comende my soule into the hands of almightie god, and me bodie to the earth believing assuredlie that this shal be joined againe together at the laste judgment dais and lyve for ever with my Lorde and Savior Jesus Christe in his kingdome of grace.”³⁰⁵ Richard also left 20s. to be distributed among the poor in Boxford.³⁰⁶ Interestingly, a William Bronde, Boxford churchwarden 1545–46, 1551–52, 1557–58, who was either a son or younger brother of Richard Bronde, left an equally evangelical will preamble in 1599, “I comende my soule to almightie god my maker and redemer, fullie trusting through the deathe of his Son Christe Jesus to have forgiveness of all my synnes and to be an inheritor of his heavenlie kingdome.” If this were not enough, he showed little regard for earthly memorials, directing his “bodie to be honestlie buried att the discrecion of mine executors”; and finally, he left “to the poore people of Boxford to be distributed amongst them the some of twentie shillings.”³⁰⁷ Additionally, Jasper Ryddysdale (churchwarden 1542–43, 1547–48) and his son Henry (churchwarden 1562–63) both left ambiguous, and possibly evangelical, wills in 1552 and 1591, respectively.³⁰⁸ Granted, a few ambiguous or possibly evangelical wills does not a reformation make, but their very existence at this early stage provides a basis to assert that there was some evangelical sentiment within the parish community. The fact that

³⁰⁵ SROB, Goddarde 359.

³⁰⁶ Ibid. Based on the dates of their wills versus the dates they served as churchwardens, Richard and William Bronde lived to quite an old age; an assertion backed by Northeast, in *Boxford CWA*, 84. It should be kept in mind that their theological beliefs may have developed over time, and thus we should not be too surprised that, decades into Elizabeth’s reign, they espoused evangelical language in their wills. However, the reforming actions they oversaw decades earlier during Edward VI’s reign, when combined with their later wills, leads one to believe that they probably held evangelical views for many years.

³⁰⁷ TNA, PCC PROB 11/95/184.

³⁰⁸ SROB, Woode 61; SROB, Bacon 127.

some churchwardens might have had evangelical leanings, when coupled with their duty to implement governmental orders and their recorded actions in this regard, makes Boxford's advanced position by this time more plausible.

Much like the other parishes, Mildenhall bought four new "salters" in 1549 and continued payments to a glazer "for glasse, wages and borde." The wardens also note payments for the destruction of the rood loft, two years after the other parishes had taken the initiative to take down their lofts, and a mere forty years after its costly restoration in the early sixteenth century. Despite their initial tardiness in removing the loft (when compared with the three other Suffolk parishes in this study), the Mildenhall wardens also record payment of 1s. 9d. for "a man for 3 dayes worke for pullynge downe off the altiores and other worke in the churche, hys wages and borde" and a further 2s. 8d. paid to the mason "for pavyng of the churche and other worke there."³⁰⁹ Although there is no subsequent entry for making a wooden communion table, one gathers from these entries that parish officials had all the stone altars removed, perhaps had their steps lowered (as would St Michael's in Gloucester two years later in 1551), repaved the church floor, and consequently replaced the altars with tables.³¹⁰ Based on these entries, by 1549 Mildenhall appeared eager to comply with the new Prayer Book and its services.

There is far less extant will evidence for Mildenhall during this period, with only one churchwarden's testament surviving, that of Robert Thurston. In his 1573 will, Thurston, churchwarden from October 1550 through November 1551, bequeathed his soul "to allmightie god and my bodie to the open sepulchre.... I bequeth to the poore

³⁰⁹ *Mildenhall CWA*, 109–110.

³¹⁰ For the churchwardens' actions at St Michael's Church in Gloucester, see Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 1.

people of Myldenhall twentie shillings to be paid within one year after my death.... I give to the reparacions of the churche of Myldenhall twentie shillings.”³¹¹ The brief soul bequest is ambiguous and the provision of money for repair of the church was a common element of early modern English wills.³¹² The money left to the poor without further stipulation is not surprising, given that fourteen years into Elizabeth’s reign it was unlikely that a testator would request prayers along with a bequest to the poor. Thurston’s will thus does not offer much insight into his actions as churchwarden. Perhaps the most interesting feature of Thurston’s will is that William Clarke is named as one of his witnesses. Clarke served as a churchwarden in Mildenhall from 1547–1548 and thus oversaw the sale of church plate by Roger Langham and Robert Suckerman in 1548, as well as the whitewashing of the church interior. Furthermore, he personally sold off additional church plate totaling £23 10s.³¹³ Although the connection is only one of personal affinity, it is still telling that Thurston and Clarke shared some sort of bond, both were churchwardens during Edward VI’s reign, and they exhibited what appeared to be evangelical behavior, at least in action, if not in writing.

In the midst of all the activity during these years, one should remember that Cratfield may have already completed these changes years earlier. As noted in Chapter Two, the Cratfield accounts for 1538–1541 show payments for glazers and paving tiles that, according to Nichols, indicate the parish removed its abused images, tabernacles,

³¹¹ TNA, PCC PROB 11/56/84.

³¹² Leaving money for the reparation of the church was often prompted by a sense of responsibility for the continued beauty, or at least regular maintenance, of the parish church, or to make up for not having contributed to such a worthy cause while still alive. It was not necessarily tied to one’s religious belief. Thanks are due to Caroline Litzenberger for clarifying this distinction for me.

³¹³ *Mildenhall CWA*, 100–105, 201.

and altars during the reign of Henry VIII.³¹⁴ If this is indeed what the Cratfield records reveal, then halfway through Edward VI's reign all four Suffolk parishes were outwardly (at least) in compliance with religious policy, and had perhaps moved ahead of the official pace of reform in some instances. In order to further illustrate the progress of official reform we now return to discussion of the 1549 Prayer Book, its position on the Eucharist, and its local reception.

Prior to its approval, the draft Prayer Book was put before Parliament in December 1548, with its position on the Eucharist to be the focus of debate.³¹⁵ Although the language in the 1549 Eucharistic rite could be interpreted to imply real presence, during the parliamentary debate it became clear that Cranmer's position had moved beyond Lutheran real presence to a Swiss-inspired concept of spiritual presence, meaning that Christ was only present spiritually (and not corporally) during reception of the elements by the faithful. To defend his new Eucharistic position, Cranmer deployed Augustine's theory of *manducatio impiorum*. In his commentary on the Gospel of John, Augustine had said "the one who does not abide in Christ and in whom Christ does not abide, doubtless neither eats his flesh nor drinks his blood."³¹⁶ This reinforced the idea that only the faithful received the spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist.³¹⁷ In a

³¹⁴ See the section "Final Actions, 1541–1547," in Chapter Two above, and see Nichols, "Broken Up or Restored Away," 172–173. As noted earlier, it is possible, although not verifiable from our sources, that these payments were for more general repairs to the church fabric, but Nichols disputes this possibility due to the amount of lime and number of tiles purchased.

³¹⁵ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 395–98.

³¹⁶ St Augustine of Hippo, *In Ioannis evangelium tractatus* 26.18; I have quoted here from Edward J. Kilmarton, *The Eucharist in the West: History and Theology*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 27.

³¹⁷ *Manducatio impiorum* was a difficult subject for conservatives to tackle from their real presence view. For, if the consecration of the elements effected their transformation into the real presence of Christ, how would this presence, and the saving grace they believed it possessed, not be communicated to the unworthy

letter dated December 27, 1549, in the midst of the Parliamentary debate on the Prayer Book, Hooper wrote to Bullinger: “The archbishop of Canterbury entertains right views as the nature of Christ’s presence in the [Lord’s] supper.... [and] his sentiments respecting the eucharist are pure, and religious, and similar to yours in Switzerland.”³¹⁸ Although generally positive, Hooper still criticized Cranmer for not going far enough. Cranmer’s program of gradual reform meant that 1549 Prayer Book still did not fully express this spiritual presence theology.

The 1549 Prayer Book was meant as an intermediate step in Cranmer’s plan to gradually revise the worship of the Church of England. The service, now entitled “The Supper of the Lord and the Holy Communion, Commonly Called the Mass,” offered a concession to traditionalists by retaining the word Mass.³¹⁹ MacCulloch observes that the “rite of communion” that emerged in 1549 was far removed from medieval Catholic transubstantiation, even if it was still “dressed” in similar garments. The “liturgical engineering was designed to present the Eucharistic theology” of spiritual presence toward which Cranmer had been moving for some time.³²⁰ The ante-communion generally followed the Sarum pattern, although it had been streamlined, and there was now space provided for one of the new homilies to be read. The priest remained in his traditional vestments and position, and several of the familiar hymns and prayers were

who partook of it alongside regenerate Christians? This question shed light on the great divide between the Catholic and Lutheran positions (both of which advocated some form of real presence) and the Swiss-Reformed view on this topic, thus “anyone who believed that only the faithful consume the body of Christ had clearly left behind any notion of real or corporeal presence.... by now [Cranmer] had moved into the ‘Reformed’ camp.” MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 405.

³¹⁸ John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, from London, 27 December 1549, in *Original Letters*, 71–72. MacCulloch and Buchanan also agree that it was during the debate in December 1549 that Cranmer’s position first became public knowledge, see MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 407; and Buchanan, 7.

³¹⁹ See *Two Liturgies*, 76.

³²⁰ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 412.

still included. From this point on, however, things changed, with the priest reading the long exhortation from the 1548 Order. Provision was also made for the priest to further exhort parishioners to participation if they seemed “negligent” in doing so. Buchanan states that “there had been no hint of such ‘negligence’ in the 1548 *Order*, but it recurs constantly thereafter.” A lukewarm public reception of the Order after Easter 1548 had likely “dictated the retreat from a hope of regular communion,” with Cranmer resorting to a “series of shifts and defences to try to keep *some* coming to communion, and to provide for ante-communion on its own when they still obdurately refused.”³²¹ Cranmer’s defensive actions were necessary because the priest was now prohibited from celebrating communion in the absence of at least one parishioner.

Though it is clear from their theology why evangelicals sought to institute the practice, it is also perfectly reasonable to understand the mostly conservative laity’s negative response to regular communion. It was a brand new, and strange, idea that was not supported by the traditional catechism. As explained in Chapter One on the medieval Sarum Mass, regular reception had not existed in England prior to Edward’s policies. Under the old religion, the presence of the laity did not have any effect on what the priest said or did; the priest would say Mass regardless of whether or not people were present to hear him. Attendance by the laity was *adiaphorous* under Sarum and the idea that the new Prayer Book now made it somehow matter would have been a strange concept indeed. General reluctance to participate in the new rite must have inspired evangelicals to develop better explanations for its importance (hence the pre-communion

³²¹ Buchanan, 13; emphasis in original. It is difficult to say whether laymen balked at the increased frequency of communion, conducting the rite in English, or just the idea of change in general, but it is clear that Cranmer had to change tactics as a result of poor attendance.

exhortations), while also hedging the matter by providing for a more well-rounded ante-communion service, as suggested by Buchanan above.

The Offertory preceding the Eucharistic celebration was one area where Cranmer's changes in meaning were useful in expediting the service and removing the old practice of private masses said for the benefit of the dead. Where the Sarum Offertory undertook the oblation of the consecrated Eucharistic elements, the new Offertory of 1549 was a mere collection of money. Thus the Offertory had been separated from the Sarum Canon and was clearly part of the ante-communion in 1549.³²² By redefining the meaning of the Offertory Cranmer created a pretext for parishioners to approach the altar before communion. If it was clear that there were still none disposed to participate (as was often the case), the service would end and the priest would not be forced to conduct what would appear to be a private mass (which was, in any case, now prohibited).

During the consecration of the Eucharistic elements Cranmer kept the two rubrical crosses where the priest entreated God, "with thy holy Spirit and Word vouchsafe to bl~~ess~~ and sanc~~t~~ify these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the body and blood of thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ."³²³ The elements are no longer referred to as "this oblation," as in Sarum, but as "these thy gifts and creatures."³²⁴ Geoffrey Cuming believes that this difference in language asserted Cranmer's view that the elements "are not now offered, nor is God asked to accept them; they are for celebrating and making the memorial which Jesus Christ 'willed us to

³²² As noted above, the 1547 Injunctions ordered the installation of a strong box near the altar for the collection of alms, but it was not until the 1549 Prayer Book that instruction was provided for how the box was to be used. See *Two Liturgies*, 84–5.

³²³ Ibid., 88.

³²⁴ For the wording of the Sarum consecration, see *Sarum Missal*, 310.

make’.”³²⁵ Cranmer’s idea of consecration had moved away from the Catholic idea of consecration effecting transubstantiation, or even the Lutheran view of a real presence under the elements. In answering Gardiner’s later challenge to the new rite, Cranmer stated that “Consecration is the separation of any thing from a profane and worldly use into a spiritual and godly use.”³²⁶ However, Buchanan is careful to point out that Cranmer would not necessarily have been thinking in terms of consecration in writing the 1549 passage. In fact, “the term ‘consecration’ with its cognates is never used” in the 1549 rite. The 1549 Prayer Book emphasized, although not with the same force as the 1552 version, “a ‘consecration’ which looks wholly to reception” and not to any miraculous moment of transformation in the consecration of the elements.³²⁷

It is useful here to contrast the 1549 *anamnesis* with the Sarum version. The Sarum liturgy’s *anamnesis* evoked Christ’s words from the institution narrative of the Last Supper to effect “a pure, a holy, a spotless Sacrifice” under the Eucharistic elements.³²⁸ In contrast, Cranmer’s 1549 *anamnesis* stated that: “We...celebrate and make here...the memorial which thy Son hath willed us to make.”³²⁹ This vague language could support a range of interpretations, essentially implying “whatever form of remembrance Jesus intended by his words, that is the form we intend in our celebration.” While this statement was clearly distinct from the medieval Sarum rite, it still did not

³²⁵ Geoffrey J. Cuming, *The Godly Order: Texts and Studies relating to the Book of Common Prayer* (London: Alcuin Club, SPCK, 1983), 93.

³²⁶ “An Answer to a Crafty and Sophistical Cavillation devised by Stephen Gardiner,” in *Writings and Disputations*, 177.

³²⁷ Buchanan, 16–17.

³²⁸ *Sarum Missal*, 311–12.

³²⁹ *Two Liturgies*, 89.

express Cranmer's spiritual presence view. This rearranging of the *anamnesis* was yet another step in his plan to gradually reform the liturgy. To Cranmer, the 1549 Eucharistic rite did not reenact Christ's sacrifice; following the definition of the Greek word, it was a "memorial" or "commemoration" of thanksgiving for his once-for-all sacrifice.³³⁰ The focus had been shifted from consecration to reception of the elements. The consecration in 1549 symbolized the congregation's act of faith in God to work in and through the elements in a spiritual manner, reinforcing the recipient's relationship with God.

Although much of the phrasing was similar, the 1549 rite had little in common theologically with Sarum. Buchanan asserts that "Sarum is echoed in every line of this section of the [1549] canon, and an echo is exactly what it is—it *sounds* like the original, but does not have the same substance behind it."³³¹ There was no real connection between the theological meaning of the 1549 Eucharistic language and the Sarum rite. By constructing the 1549 rite in this manner, Cranmer attempted to ease parishioners into reformed worship and hoped that through participation they would come to accept the theological meaning behind the new liturgical actions.

Although optimistic in his letter to Bullinger in March, Dryander knew (or hoped) the 1549 Prayer Book was only an intermediate step.³³² The appendix to the 1549 Prayer Book entitled, "Of Ceremonies, why some be abolished and some retained," showed that Cranmer intended further revisions. In it, he explained that the ceremonies removed "did more confound and darken, than declare and set forth Christ's benefits unto us," thus they

³³⁰ Richardson and Bowden, *Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*, 18.

³³¹ Buchanan, 18.

³³² Regarding the debate in Parliament over the 1549 Prayer Book, Dryander wrote "some puerilities have been still suffered to remain, lest the people should be offended by too great an innovation. These however, trifling as they are, may be shortly amended," Dryander to Bullinger, in *Original Letters*, 350.

“did burden men’s consciences without any cause” while others “are retained for a discipline and order, which (upon just causes) may be altered and changed.”³³³ The goal of these changes, as outlined in the Preface, was that “the people...should continually profit more and more in the knowledge of God, and be the more inflamed with the love of his true religion.”³³⁴ The changes made to the public worship of the church in the 1549 Prayer Book, plus the radical changes made to church fabric as a result of the 1547 Injunctions, were meant first to edify parishioners in the scriptures and evangelical theology, second to maintain good order in the church, and third to remove superstitious practices that misdirected worship.³³⁵ Despite these ambitions, there were many on both sides of the religious divide that did not embrace the 1549 Prayer Book. To radical evangelicals it did not go far enough and to traditionalists it was full of unnecessary innovations and questionable theology, and seemed a poor replacement for the Latin Sarum liturgy they knew by heart. In the next chapter, Part II of our study of Edward VI’s reign, we turn to the challenges that the young king’s government faced in attempting to introduce the 1549 Prayer Book. This is followed by discussion of the ensuing revision of the Prayer Book published in 1552, its place in Cranmer’s plan for gradual evangelical reform, and its reception in our four Suffolk parishes.

³³³ “Of Ceremonies, why some be abolished and some retained,” in *Two Liturgies*, 155–157.

³³⁴ “Preface” to the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, in *ibid.*, 17–19.

³³⁵ See “Of Ceremonies,” in *ibid.*, 157.

Chapter Four: Religion and Reform under Edward VI, Part II (1550–1553)

Challenges to Edwardian Reform, 1549–1550

Edward VI's government faced three distinct challenges to its program of religious reform between the introduction of the first and second Prayer Books. The sophisticated criticism Bishop Gardiner and other conservatives laid against the 1549 Prayer Book was the first. The other two challenges came from popular uprisings against innovations in worship and doctrine and challenges from radical evangelicals close to the government who wanted more wide-ranging reform at a faster pace than Cranmer would allow. Gardiner's objections took the form of sarcasm regarding the Eucharistic doctrines he found in the 1549 Prayer Book. Somerset's government had pressured Gardiner to issue a public statement approving of the 1549 Prayer Book and he did so in his 1551 *Explication and assertion of the Catholic faith*. Through its use of unclear language and the compromising attitude towards ceremonial aspects of the liturgy, Gardiner saw how the 1549 Prayer Book could support his own real presence view on the Eucharist.³³⁶ Gardiner's backhanded critique of the 1549 Prayer Book left Cranmer no choice but to move further toward an explicitly stated spiritual presence in developing his reception-focused position in the 1552 Prayer Book.³³⁷ As an intermediate step in the process Cranmer was more precise in his 1551 *Answer* to Gardiner, where he stated that:

³³⁶ In approving the 1549 Prayer Book, Gardiner said “‘he could with his conscience keep it, and cause others in his diocese to keep it’. The reason was that ‘touching the truth of the very presence of Christ’s most precious body and blood in the sacrament, there was as much spoken in that book as might be desired’,” Stephen Gardiner, *Explication and assertion of the Catholic faith*, as quoted in MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 486–87.

³³⁷ Sarum use had communicants receive the consecrated host in their hands, and “many times conveyed the same secretly away, kept it with them, and diversely abused it to superstition and wickedness.” In the

Lest we should forget [Christ's sacrifice]...he ordained...a daily remembrance...in bread and wine, sanctified and dedicated to that purpose, saying 'This is my body; this cup is my blood...' admonishing us by these words...that whensoever we do eat the bread in this holy supper, and drink of that cup, we should remember how much Christ hath done for us, and how he died for our sakes.³³⁸

Gardiner's hijacking of the 1549 Prayer Book's imprecise language proved the necessity of Cranmer's already planned revision of the rite in the 1552 Prayer Book.

Meanwhile, popular uprising related to the ongoing religious changes required attention from the government. The Western rebellion of 1549 is an extreme example of the popular discontent that changes to ingrained religious ritual (and their underlying theological meaning) could provoke. Three of their grievances specifically related to the Eucharist, demanding a return to the old Sarum mass and restriction of communion to the celebrant (as in Sarum), reservation and adoration of the elements, and reversion to laity partaking in one kind. Two further articles dealt with issues relating to the broader public worship of the church, demanding the reinstatement of familiar ceremonies, rituals, and images used "by our mother the holy [Catholic] Church," and rejecting the 1549 Prayer Book and its Eucharistic rite "because it is but lyke a Christmas game." Many of the Western rebels were Cornish "whereof certen of us understand no Englysh," therefore they wished to return all services to Latin.³³⁹ To them, it was better to keep the same familiar rhythm and sound of the service in one unknown language, than to trade it for a

1549 rite, the priest was now to administer "the Sacrament of Christ's body in their mouths." While this was a practical measure to ensure that people did not save the bread to worship it or put it to other superstitious uses, it also reemphasizes the importance of reception in Cranmer's new Eucharistic rite. See *Two Liturgies*, 98–99.

³³⁸ *Writings and Disputations*, 136.

³³⁹ Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 151–52. Regarding the rebels' comparing the 1549 Eucharistic rite to a "Christmas game," changing the Offertory from its role in the old mass to a mere collection of money, whereby parishioners were 'tricked' into approaching the communion table, could have been seen as dubious and thus inspiring this criticism. The practice was dropped in the 1552 revision.

new and unfamiliar tongue. In response, Cranmer penned a vitriolic refutation of the rebels' demands, accusing them of ignorance in wanting to return to the 'superstitions' of the old ways; the government then crushed the rebellion by military force. The destruction of the rebels "acted, no doubt, as a clear object lesson to the rest of England."³⁴⁰ Buoyed by ending the insurgency, Edward VI and Cranmer continued with their program of liturgical changes, now aided by John Dudley, the Earl of Warwick and soon-to-be Duke of Northumberland, who, by the end of the summer of 1549, had usurped Somerset's position and named himself Lord President of the Council.³⁴¹

While Cranmer was busy refuting his conservative opponents and dealing with popular uprisings, he also faced challenges from within his own party. Several outspoken evangelicals had hoped for a more severe break from the old ways in Cranmer's 1549 liturgical reforms. MacCulloch notes that the breadth and speed of reform "was a common concern among émigrés," including many of the continental reformers Cranmer had recruited at the beginning of Edward's reign. Cranmer now had his hands full with those same refugees.³⁴² John Hooper was one of those disgruntled evangelical reformers. He had spent several years living abroad in Switzerland and after returning to England often corresponded with his friend, the Zurich reformer Heinrich Bullinger. Hooper had criticized the 1549 Prayer Book for not going far enough in reforming the public worship of the church, especially in the wording of the Eucharistic rite. When he was appointed to the bishopric of Gloucester in 1550, he intended to make a point by refusing to use the new 1550 Ordinal, which stipulated that he wear the traditional garments of the office at

³⁴⁰ Procter and Frere, 58.

³⁴¹ MacCulloch, *Boy King*, 55.

³⁴² MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 469; see also *ibid.*, *Later Reformation*, 14.

his investiture and swear the oath of supremacy which referenced the saints. Cranmer and Ridley blocked Hooper's installation until he agreed to follow the prescribed dress.³⁴³ Nevertheless, Hooper notched a victory when Edward VI personally struck out the words referring to the saints in the oath of supremacy administered to Hooper during his confirmation as Bishop of Gloucester in July 1550.³⁴⁴ In truth, Cranmer probably agreed with much of what Hooper wanted, but as Archbishop, charged with administering a divided English church, he was unwilling to follow the precarious path to immediate parity with the continental reformation that Hooper demanded. Cranmer's pragmatic program sought to maintain decency and order in reforming the public worship of the church, principles not present (or at least not emphasized) in the often-violent clashes that characterized the continental reformation. Cranmer had to take into consideration larger concerns, such as how best to gain and maintain support for his program.³⁴⁵

Parish Actions from 1550–1551

Churchwardens' accounts for 1550 show continued compliance with government policy in the four Suffolk parishes. The only notable entry for Cratfield was the purchase

³⁴³ Hooper relays much of the argument over vestments and oath-taking at his investiture to Bullinger in a letter dated June 29, 1550, see *Original Letters*, 86–87; see also MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 473–474.

³⁴⁴ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 471–472.

³⁴⁵ It is useful here to quote MacCulloch at length to explain Cranmer's position: "Hooper and Laski... offered one vision for the future of the English Church: purged of all past corruption and moving straight to parity with the most thoroughly reformed of civic churches in Switzerland. There was little in the content of their programme to which Cranmer and Ridley objected: what made the two bishops put up such intransigent and ruthlessly pragmatic opposition was the source of the authority for the programme, and the pace which it sought to set. From the moment of old King Henry's death, the evangelical establishment of King Edward's England had known precisely what it wanted: a future of root-and-branch reform.... That vision was to be accomplished in a strictly regulated series of steps taken with the authority of the Crown and the consent of Parliament.... The aim of this graduated progress was change accomplished with decency, order and the maximum possible degree of popular consent.... Cranmer and Ridley maintained this principle against the achievement of immediate ideological purity, the governing principle for Hooper and Laski. In the name of decency and order, they were prepared to see paradise postponed." Ibid., 483.

of a new Bible, only three years after their last purchase in 1547 and the third since 1541.³⁴⁶ Clearly there was a demand for publicly available Bibles in the parish: it seems that they were so heavily used that they had to be replaced every few years. In contrast to Cratfield, the more complete Boxford accounts are full of activity during 1550. They note the first instance of interest earned from investing plate money and its distribution to the poor, as well as the purchase of another Prayer Book. They paid for repairs to the top of the rood screen where it had been connected to the loft and repurposed the candle beam as a canvass for painted scripture verses. Most importantly, the Boxford wardens recorded payment for “havyng down the awlters” in the church, a year after they had paid to make a wooden trestle table. At this point all four parishes had removed their stone altars prior to the official order to do so in the 1552 Prayer Book.³⁴⁷

Having removed their rood loft and altars the year before, in 1550–1551 the Mildenhall churchwardens paid to remove their organ and purchased another Psalter and three new communion cups. Though their action came after Boxford’s even earlier removal of their organ in 1549, the Mildenhall wardens were still well ahead of most English parishes in carrying out this clearly evangelical reform during Edward’s reign.³⁴⁸ There is some interesting will information related to one of the churchwardens during this period, William Childerston. In 1568, a widow named Katherine Childerston (possibly William’s sister-in-law) made a telling soul bequest: “I most humblie comende my soule

³⁴⁶ *Cratfield CWA*, 81.

³⁴⁷ *Boxford CWA*, 57–58.

³⁴⁸ *Mildenhall CWA*, 115. For Boxford’s even earlier removal of an organ, see the section on “The First Book of Common Prayer, 1549,” in Chapter Three above; see also *Boxford CWA*, 55. Also noted in Chapter Three, Willis states that the first concerted effort to remove organs did not come until the 1570s. Willis, *Church Music and Protestantism*, 90–103.

into the hands of allmyghte god my maker & redeemer by merytte of whose bitter passion by sheding of his moste precyous blood I truste to obteyne the kyngdome of heaven there to be preserved both body and soule for ever.”³⁴⁹ This is an evangelical understanding of salvation, relying on the merits of Christ’s passion alone and omitting mention of Mary or the saints. William Childerston is also named as a witness and perhaps this lends some filial connection to the actions he undertook during his 1550–1551 term as churchwarden. Interestingly, and despite their outward conformity, an inventory of goods made at that time still lists processional bells and a wealth of cloth hangings that remained in the church (or were at least stored there) until well into Elizabeth’s reign.³⁵⁰

Where the Western rebels of 1549 had vigorously opposed the new Prayer Book for theological and cultural reasons, the churchwardens’ accounts from these four Suffolk parishes show no obvious opposition to the new liturgy or the other innovations introduced in the first three years of Edward’s reign. All of the parishes under consideration in this study had stepped out ahead of increasingly evangelical religious policy in one way or another during this time, thus evidencing at least some local desire for reform as well as the individual latitude allowed crown commissioners in terms of interpreting the 1547 Injunctions during local visitations. On the other hand, it is certain that conservatives living within these parishes felt the sting of loss at the stripping of church interiors and the subtle changes made to public worship services in the 1549 Book

³⁴⁹ SROB, IC 500/1/2/82.

³⁵⁰ *Mildenhall CWA*, 111–113. Middleton-Stewart notes that “there was little destruction of these items until the reign of Elizabeth. Ibid., 111, fn 292. For further explanation on the necessity of obtaining new communion cups when the church already possessed chalices, see *ibid.*, 113, fn 305.

of Common Prayer. For example, we know from his later writings that the conservative Roger Martin was vexed over the changes made to Holy Trinity Church in Long Melford. Martin's neighbor, William Clopton, who purchased much of the church fabric early on to save it from destruction, must have been equally stunned and saddened by the changes taking place in his parish church. At the midpoint in Edward's reign these four parishes were moving steadily in the direction of evangelical reform, but at least in some cases were still struggling with internal religious divisions (especially in Long Melford). With that in mind, we now turn to the 1552 Book of Common Prayer that would be the culmination of Thomas Cranmer's plan for reforming the public worship and interior fabric of the English Church, and which contained the full expression of his "spiritual presence" Eucharistic position.³⁵¹ The second Prayer Book's even more radical evangelical liturgy and the 42 Articles of Faith that followed it in 1553 stood at the apex of officially sanctioned reformed religion in England for over a century, until the rise of the short-lived Puritan movement in the seventeenth century.

The Second Book of Common Prayer, 1552

In April 1552, Parliament passed the new Act of Uniformity authorizing the revised Book of Common Prayer. Revision of the 1549 version had begun almost as soon as it was published, with the biggest issue being the "possible real-presence implications of the words of administration at communion and nationwide variety in administering communion." In early 1551, Cranmer's ally, the religious émigré Martin Bucer, had been asked to draw up recommendations for revised and more overtly evangelical Eucharistic

³⁵¹ There is evidence to suggest that Cranmer was preparing a third version of the Prayer Book to follow 1552, but regardless of whether or not that is true, circumstances beyond his control permanently halted that plan with Edward VI's death in 1553. For more on this, see Buchanan, 21, n. 1.

language; his critique was entitled *Censura*.³⁵² The Royal Proclamation preceding the 1548 *Order of the Communion*, as well as the essay, “Of Ceremonies,” appended to the 1549 Prayer Book, made it clear that “the 1552 rite was no accident, no afterthought, and no overreaction” to the various challenges noted above, for these earlier statements had indeed made provision for future revision to the liturgy.³⁵³ The practical reality of non-communication alluded to in the 1548 *Order of the Communion* and addressed in the first Prayer Book, was still an issue in 1552. As noted in Chapter Three, Cranmer was thus already at work reformulating the ante-communion to be a more well-rounded and complete service, as it seemed necessary with no rise in communicants. This situation is not surprising, considering that many parishioners still harbored fear of divine punishment for partaking unworthily.³⁵⁴ Furthermore, the new requirements for partaking every week asked a lot of parishioners who, prior to these innovations, were only used to partaking once a year, at Easter.³⁵⁵ Old habits died hard. In response to this situation, the 1552 Prayer Book placed greater emphasis on the non-Eucharistic services of Matins and Evensong. A new rubric added at the end of the Eucharistic service stipulated thrice-yearly participation for all parishioners, rather than once per year as in 1549.³⁵⁶ Both the change in the requirements for lay participation, and altering the rite in an attempt to

³⁵² MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 504–505. Peter Martyr also contributed an essay (now lost) on revising the Prayer Book; see *ibid.* For a detailed summary and analysis of Bucer’s *Censura* and Cranmer’s use of it, see Jeans, *Signs of God’s Promise*, 226–229.

³⁵³ Buchanan, 21; see previous citations for the location of these proclamations in *Two Liturgies*.

³⁵⁴ MacCulloch summarizes Cranmer’s quandary: “Cranmer and his colleagues had intended their communion service to be the centre-piece of the regular weekly worship of the Church, but this was not happening; people did not want to make their communion on such a frequent basis. One problem may have been the fierce exhortations to self-examination which were already part of the prescribed rite in 1549: conscientious or shy potential communicants may have felt that they were not worthy to receive,” MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 510.

³⁵⁵ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 94–95.

³⁵⁶ *Two Liturgies*, 283.

make it more appealing to parishioners, align with the argument that Cranmer's revisions to the public worship of the English church under Edward VI were intended to influence personal beliefs through promoting the practice of evangelical worship forms.

The 1552 Eucharistic rite turned the focus away from the elements and toward the participants—this change signified an explicit move away from the medieval Sarum liturgy. Procter and Frere note that “the alterations in 1552 were designed to facilitate and foster the view that the prayer of consecration had reference...to the persons [rather] than to the elements, and that the presence of Christ was not in the Sacrament but only in the heart of the believer.”³⁵⁷ The sacrament had thus become an outward sign, or confirmation, of the inward theological reality that Christ indwelt believers through the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit.³⁵⁸ Having altered and reordered the 1549 communion service Cranmer thus used the 1552 rite to communicate this important shift in theological emphasis: Administration of the Eucharistic elements at communion now immediately followed the institution narrative.³⁵⁹ Cuming sees this shift in emphasis from the elements to the participants:

The stress is now laid on the communicants rather than the elements; “that we, receiving these thy creatures...may be partakers of his body and blood” instead of “whosoever shall be partakers of this holy communion may worthily receive the most precious body and blood.” The 1552 rite is indeed an uncompromising statement of Protestant Eucharistic doctrine.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁷ Procter and Frere, 82–83. The distinction, made clear in the 1552 rite, that Christ is not present in the Sacrament, but in the heart of the believer at *reception* of the Sacrament is key to Cranmer's Eucharistic theology of spiritual presence.

³⁵⁸ For an explanation of what is meant by the idea of “sacrament as a sign,” see Charles C. Hefling and Cynthia L. Shattuck, eds., *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 30.

³⁵⁹ *Two Liturgies*, 279.

³⁶⁰ Cuming, *The Godly Order*, 111.

The clearest example of the “uncompromising statement” to which Cuming refers in the service is in Cranmer’s new use of the *anamnesis* in connection with the institution narrative.³⁶¹ In 1549 the *anamnesis* followed the institution narrative and began by stating, in imprecise terms, that the communicants “celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty...the memorial which they Son hath willed us to make.”³⁶² To Cranmer, these words had been clear enough: he understood them to mean making the memorial by the drinking and eating of the elements. However when his opponents used the 1549 wording to justify a conservative real presence position this all but guaranteed their alteration in the 1552 revision.³⁶³

The wording of the 1552 *anamnesis* was much more explicit: gone were the intervening prayers of thanksgiving for receiving the elements, the Lord’s Prayer, the prayer of repentance, and the ‘comfortable words’ from Scripture that had previously preceded administration.³⁶⁴ In the 1552 Prayer Book the *anamnesis* had been converted into the very words of administration. The rite thus moved seamlessly from the institution narrative into administration. It simply stated: “Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving,” and “drink this in remembrance that Christ’s blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.”³⁶⁵ The change in usage and wording of the *anamnesis* was the culmination of the position

³⁶¹ I owe my understanding of this point’s significance to Buchanan, 21–23, where I first encountered it.

³⁶² *Two Liturgies*, 89.

³⁶³ See the discussion above concerning Gardiner’s challenge to Cranmer in his *Explication*, based on MacCulloch’s text, in *Cranmer*, 486–487.

³⁶⁴ These elements of the service had either been moved up to the ante-communion or removed completely; the intention in this rearrangement, as noted above, was to create a more complete service if there were none willing to partake of the Eucharistic elements at the end of the service.

³⁶⁵ *Two Liturgies*, 279.

Cranmer had asserted during the Parliamentary debates on the Prayer Book in late 1548 through early 1549 and had continued to refine since then.³⁶⁶ Buchanan believes that this change in the use of the *anamnesis* was not meant to combine the moments of consecration and reception into one; rather, “it is far more internally consistent to read 1552 as having no consecration at all. The *only* possible action with the bread and wine is reception.”³⁶⁷

While Buchanan’s analysis regarding the use of the *anamnesis* in 1552 is insightful and shows Cranmer’s attempt to clarify his earlier formulation, it may go too far away from Cranmer’s original intent. For, while Cranmer does not use the word consecration in the 1552 rite one must take into account his earlier, somewhat general statement that “consecration is the separation of any thing from a profane and worldly use unto a spiritual and godly use.” He elaborates on this to say that the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine do “not...have any holiness in them, but that they be used to an holy work,” meaning that “they may be called holy and consecrated, when they be separated to that holy use by Christ’s own words, which he spake for that purpose, saying of the bread, ‘This is my body’, and of the wine, ‘This is my blood.’” Furthermore, the elements do not retain consecration beyond the “holy work” of being received at communion, thus “they *represent* the very body and blood of Christ, and the holy food and nourishment

³⁶⁶ Regarding the new *anamnesis*/administration, Buchanan notes that “there is no need to look for any doctrinal motivation whatsoever in that change—the liturgical exactness of the words needed in the new position for the administration is ample reason in itself,” Buchanan, 22. MacCulloch offers similar analysis: “Most noticeable for communicants was the substitution of entirely different words when they were offered the Eucharistic bread and wine: no longer statements that the elements should preserve their bodies and souls to everlasting life, but directions to think on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross,” additionally, MacCulloch states that noted liturgist F. E. Brightman “could find no precedent for either of these [administration] formulae; and they are likely to be brand-new,” *Cranmer*, 506.

³⁶⁷ Buchanan, 22; emphasis in original.

which we have by him,” but only for the duration of the rite.³⁶⁸ This is the essence of Cranmer’s position in 1552 and shows that through using Christ’s words of administration (and not the priest’s agency) he did, in fact, and in contrast to Buchanan’s analysis, combine the moments of consecration and administration in the 1552 Prayer Book—but with a wholly different idea of consecration than that expressed in the earlier Sarum Mass.

Cranmer emphasized the temporary and spiritual consecration in the 1552 rite through a rubric added at the end of the communion: “To take away superstition, which any person hath, or might have in the bread and wine, it shall suffice that the bread be such, as is usual to be eaten at the table with other meats.... And if any of the bread and wine remain, the curate shall have it to his own use.”³⁶⁹ Here, Cranmer explicitly affirmed that the left over elements were mere bread and wine, to be used after the service as any other food and drink. Through using Christ’s words of administration from the *anamnesis*, the only moment at which the bread and wine represented the body and blood was at reception, and only then through the faith of the recipient and mysterious work of the Holy Spirit, not through the priest’s ministrations.

In one final act of measured reform, Cranmer responded to the criticism of Scottish reformer John Knox, who, as a favorite of the Duke of Northumberland, had preached a sermon in September 1552 criticizing Cranmer’s preference for kneeling when receiving communion. Knox claimed that the practice was a vestige of popish superstition that encouraged adoration of the Eucharistic elements, and that it had no

³⁶⁸ Thomas Cranmer, “An Answer to a Crafty and Sophistical Cavillation devised by Stephen Gardiner,” in *Writings and Disputations*, 177–178, emphasis added.

³⁶⁹ *Two Liturgies*, 282–283; see also MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 506.

Biblical warrant in the first place. Knox had all but convinced the Privy Council to amend the instruction in the 1552 Prayer Book (which was already in production), but Cranmer outfoxed him with a series of arguments showing the danger of taking a “scripture only” view of liturgical reform, namely that it could lead to misinterpretation and radicalism, which was the common criticism leveled against the hated Anabaptists. Cranmer sealed his triumph through the inclusion, at the last moment, of an explanatory note defending, rather than eliminating, kneeling. This came to be known as the “black rubric” because it was printed in black ink (rather than the usual red ink used for rubrics) on a separate sheet of paper inserted into the Prayer Book on the appropriate page. It explained that kneeling was “a signification of the humble and grateful acknowledging of the benefits of Christ given unto the worthy receiving, and [reiterated the practice] to avoid the profanation and disorder which about the Holy Communion might ensue” if each were to follow his own preference. It went on to explain that kneeling did not equate with adoration of the elements, since “concerning the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ, they are in heaven and not here.”³⁷⁰ Cranmer reasoned that one could not adore what was not present; in so doing he reiterated the spiritual presence view espoused by the 1552 Eucharistic rite.

The 1552 Prayer Book changed the practical arrangement of the church as well, ordering that stone altars be replaced with wooden trestle tables. The new wooden communion tables were appointed to “stand in the body of the Church, or in the chancel,”

³⁷⁰ *Two Liturgies*, 283. For a more complete explanation of the context of Knox’s challenge and Cranmer’s response, see MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 525–528.

where the services of Morning and Evening Prayer were said.³⁷¹ As noted above, and seemingly acting on their own initiative, the four Suffolk parishes had already removed stone altars and, in some cases, set up trestle tables for the communion service.³⁷² This apparent eagerness to pull down altars in the late 1540s and 1550 stands in stark contrast to the general sluggishness with which the same Suffolk parishes complied with the various Bible orders in the 1530s under Henry VIII and the order to purchase the *Homilies* early in Edward's reign. As noted earlier, their radical enterprise with regard to replacing altars with communion tables had gained some legitimacy when in 1550 Bishops Ridley and Hooper did the same in London and Gloucester, respectively.³⁷³ Surveying a sample of churchwardens' accounts for this time period, Hutton observes a general compliance with this unofficial requirement by the end of 1550.³⁷⁴

The issue of replacing stone altars with tables is a prime example of local initiative influencing wider religious policy. While it was not officially required until 1552, Hutton believes that the early actions of Ridley and Hooper, along with individual parishes elsewhere (such as ours in Suffolk), led the Privy Council to write to the bishops in November 1550, stating that since most of the altars had been taken down, they ought

³⁷¹ The text is from a rubric prefaced to the 1552 "Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion," see *Two Liturgies*, 265.

³⁷² According to Nichols, Cratfield may have removed its altars as early as 1541, see *Cratfield CWA*, 57–58, and Nichols, "Broken Up or Restored Away," 172–173; Long Melford did so in 1547–1548, *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40; Boxford made a communion table in 1549 and took down altars in 1550, *Boxford CWA*, 54–55; and Mildenhall took down its altars in 1549–1550 and built a communion table in 1551–1552, *Mildenhall CWA*, 110, 118.

³⁷³ Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, ordered altars taken down in May 1550; the quote and full text of the order are found in "The Council's Letter to Bishop Ridley to take down Altars, and place Communion Tables in their stead," *Miscellaneous Writings*, 524. Bishop Hooper was another early adopter of tables, and went even further than Ridley "in his insistence that the stairs leading to any altar...be removed as well." Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 69.

³⁷⁴ Hutton, "Local Impact," 125–126.

to see to the removal of the rest to “avoid disputes.”³⁷⁵ According to the official instruction in the 1552 Prayer Book, the location of the communion table only depended on the size of the congregation gathered for worship.³⁷⁶ Buchanan believes that this flexibility of location for the table indicated “no special ‘sanctuary’ reserved for holy communion, but that there is to be the same space or area used for non-sacramental and sacramental services alike.”³⁷⁷ With these material changes, Thomas Cranmer finished his reconstruction of the Eucharistic rite, having made it clear in the words of the Prayer Book and in the layout of the worship space that things had indeed changed in the English Church. The new Eucharistic ritual had been designed as an act of personal and corporate thanksgiving and devotion—it was focused on participants’ reception of the elements as spiritually nourishing, and no longer acknowledged a physical change in the elements, nor a transferal of God’s grace. Cranmer’s vision for a reformed English Church was not meant to be achieved overnight, but gradually, utilizing a worship-focused method and a measured pace. This approach was meant to ease the transition from the medieval Sarum rite to the reformed liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer—while also maintaining good order, thus avoiding the violent social upheavals that had accompanied many of the continental reform movements.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 126; citing *Acts of the Privy Council of England*, III, 168–169.

³⁷⁶ *Two Liturgies*, 265.

³⁷⁷ Buchanan, 29.

³⁷⁸ Cranmer’s concern with maintaining “good order” in the process of enacting real reform to the church is evident in his writings throughout this period. For examples, see the first ban on unlicensed preaching in Cox, ed., *Miscellaneous Writings*, 512–513; the Prefaces to the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books, in *Two Liturgies*, 17–19, 193–196; and the rubrics at the end of the 1552 Prayer Book, in *ibid.*, 282–283.

Local Reaction to the 1552 Prayer Book

Given the pattern already established during the first three years of Edward's reign, it is not surprising that the Suffolk churchwardens' accounts show continued compliance with religious policy, even the more radically evangelical worship forms put forth in the 1552 Prayer Book.³⁷⁹ The Boxford accounts for 1552 show that the wardens paid 4s. 6d. "for a boke to the churche," likely the new Prayer Book, as well as two payments for wine and bread, totaling just over 1s.³⁸⁰ The entries for the Eucharistic elements were a new item in the accounts and show that the wardens were following the Prayer Book's order to provide enough bread and wine for regular participation in communion. Whether or not this provision meant that parishioners were actually partaking of the sacrament is not evident, but the parish officers made (and recorded) the effort nonetheless. The Boxford accounts also show receipts of general collections for the poor, a new occurrence in the parish that continued thenceforth.³⁸¹ Mildenhall's 1552 accounts show that their churchwardens followed a similar path to Boxford's, purchasing "a new boke of service" (the new Prayer Book) and recording several payments for "bread and wyne to the comunecantes," plus the construction of a new wooden communion table.³⁸² They had sold the wood from the banned Easter sepulchre for scrap earlier that year, fetching 9d. and more importantly showing that they were no longer

³⁷⁹ Unfortunately, Holland and Raven's *Cratfield CWA* is either silent and/or unreliable during the second half of Edward's reign and into the beginning of Mary's. Entries are sparse and the editors make some questionable attributions and inclusions for 1551–1553. For the sake of accuracy, these years are thus not considered in this particular section of this chapter.

³⁸⁰ *Boxford CWA*, 60–61.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 61ff.

³⁸² *Mildenhall CWA*, 118–119. The five payments recorded for bread and wine in 1552–1553 totaled 11s. 10d, indicating both a larger parish population and perhaps a more frequent need to replenish supplies.

superstitiously revering the elements during the Easter season. They also paid 6d. to repair their Bible, indicating that it must have been well-used by the parishioners. At the same time that all of the new worship changes were coming into effect, Mildenhall wardens also had to pay to re-roof the vestry, a project that ran to over £9.³⁸³

The Long Melford churchwardens' accounts during this period show evidence of the continuing sale of church goods and equipping the church for evangelical worship, as well as continued religious factionalism. In 1552 the wardens purchased the new Prayer Book, made a key for the poor man's box, made four new surplices for the clergy, and "payd for the reparacyons of the glasse wyndows in the church," which presumably had been removed for containing abused images. The records also show payment for a new baldric for the sanctus bell (which would not have been necessary under the new communion service in the Prayer Book), and repairs made to the church organs.³⁸⁴ When compared to Boxford and Mildenhall, both of which had removed their organs by this time, Long Melford was dragging its feet on this issue (although it was not slow in comparison with the rest of England).³⁸⁵ As discussed in the section on the 1547 Injunctions in Chapter Three, the sanctus bell could have been outfitted with a new baldric as a result of its being repurposed for ringing prior to the sermon. However, lacking first-hand accounts of parish services, we cannot be sure to what end the bell was used at this time.

³⁸³ Ibid., 115–117.

³⁸⁴ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 53–54.

³⁸⁵ For the removal of Boxford's organ in 1549, see *Boxford CWA*, 55; and for a similar action in Mildenhall in 1551, *Mildenhall CWA*, 115.

As discussed above, there was clearly a factional division within Long Melford parish, with conservatives and evangelicals vying for influence over religious matters. Some of the more conservative expenses noted above (such as repairing the organ) may have been made possible because in 1548 Edward had granted patronage of Holy Trinity Church to his half-sister, the conservative Lady Mary. Nonetheless, the accounts show that the churchwardens attended the royal commissioners at Sudbury and presented their remaining church goods for inspection, as did officers for all other parishes during 1552. They were allowed to keep two chalices (as communion cups) and had to purchase (or repurchase) a lectern from the commissioners for £1.³⁸⁶ As with the earlier period of Edward's reign and that of his father, Henry VIII, during the second half of the boy king's reign the four Suffolk parishes complied with official orders regarding worship forms and church fabric. Although there were some exceptions, most notably the conservative expenditures mentioned in the Long Melford accounts, for the most part, all four of these parishes had stepped out ahead of the magisterial reformation and through their own initiative reshaped their communal worship spaces to serve evangelical religion. Although it retained its organ, Long Melford was still in compliance with government orders, since by 1552 they had broken down their altars, whitewashed walls, and removed offending stained glass images. While perhaps not as keen as the other Suffolk parishes under investigation here, Long Melford was certainly ahead of the norm in England regarding changes that reflected evangelical sensibilities.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 54. Dymond and Paine do not explain why the churchwardens would have to repurchase their lectern from the commissioners, but I expect that it was a form of tax or fee levied on them for perceived offences (either in hiding church goods or selling them under value).

In May 1553, during the frenzied final weeks of Edward VI's young life, Cranmer finally defined his reformation in an explicit doctrinal statement—the Forty-Two Articles of Faith, which were appended to a new evangelical catechism. The articles had been born out of earlier royal and episcopal visitation articles and agreed upon by “an ad hoc committee of bishops and senior clergy” led by Cranmer and Ridley.³⁸⁷ Nonetheless, the Forty-Two Articles contained the first clear and systematic statement of faith for Edward VI's evangelical English Church.³⁸⁸ They dealt with a range of doctrinal issues from justification by faith alone to predestination. They also officially confirmed evangelical doctrinal changes that had been asserted by the 1552 Prayer Book, thus eliminating transubstantiation and the mass, as well as recognizing only two sacraments: baptism and the Eucharist. Based on this evidence, it is fair to say that by 1552 the English Church was unquestionably evangelical in doctrine (theology) and practice (worship). Whether or not the same could be said for the English people is another matter. Summarizing Edward VI's reign, Christopher Haigh asserts that “the available, admittedly imperfect, indicators do not suggest that Protestantism swept the country, rather that it created small cells of committed adherents,” while leaving a great many conservatives disaffected from the church.³⁸⁹ This is borne out by the sense that (our Suffolk sources aside) many English parishes merely complied with official orders, exhibited little or no zeal in doing so, or (in some cases) ignored official orders altogether.³⁹⁰ In any case, the Articles' influence

³⁸⁷ I owe this observation to MacCulloch's discussion in *Cranmer*, 536–537.

³⁸⁸ For full text of the Forty-Two Articles and comparison with Elizabeth I's Thirty-Nine Articles, see Bray, *Documents*, 284–314.

³⁸⁹ Haigh, *The English Reformation Revised*, 213.

³⁹⁰ In *Stripping of the Altars*, Eamon Duffy illustrated a general lack of interest in evangelical reform and in *The Voices of Morebath* he identified specific opposition to it in the West Country. Christopher Haigh

was limited by Edward's death in June 1553. Despite their brief tenure, the Forty-Two Articles set a precedent for future doctrinal statements issued under Elizabeth I.

Having surveyed the changes made to the public worship, church fabric, and doctrine in England over the course of Edward VI's reign, this chapter concludes by considering how these initiatives were intended to bring about a general change in belief among the English people and what conclusions, if any, can be garnered in this regard through the local reactions to those changes noted above.

Conclusion and Analysis of Edwardian Religious Changes and Local Reception

By 1553 the worship and liturgical traditions of the English Church had changed a great deal. The Eucharistic rite celebrated by the 1549 Prayer Book still included a consecration, but had looked to reception as its high point. Its ambiguous language attempted to, but often did not satisfy both conservatives and evangelicals. Cranmer remedied this fault in the revised 1552 Prayer Book, presenting a rite that was unambiguously evangelical in theology and action. Furthermore, the great variety of festivals and traditions such as Ashes on Ash Wednesday, Palms on Palm Sunday, and creeping to the cross on Good Friday, had all been banned. No longer an obscure priestly ritual conducted in Latin, the purpose of the new liturgy was to edify parishioners through hearing the Bible read in English and the repeated celebration of reformed liturgical rituals. Other than the switch to English-language worship and its new biblical focus, the biggest change was the virtual eradication of the doctrine of purgatory and all the traditional practices and church fabric that went with it. There were no more

identified similar attitudes among Lancashire parishes in *Reformation and Resistance*, see especially Part Two "Reform and counter-reform," 98–208.

monasteries, chantries, or gilds to maintain chapels or endow private Masses. As evidenced by will preambles, most testators chose to omit references to the Virgin Mary and the saints, acknowledging (at least outwardly) that the traditional intercessory system was no longer valid.

Churchwardens' accounts from our Suffolk parishes show a great deal of change in this regard. In order to prevent superstitious devotional abuse, the 1547 Injunctions had ordered that the vibrant symphony of didactic and devotional images on church walls be covered over with whitewash and painted scripture verses. Likewise, images in stained glass had been removed or at least obscured with paint.³⁹¹ The 1547 Injunctions had removed lights from before the rood, the Easter sepulchre, and any other image, only allowing them to survive upon the altar. Moreover, despite their not being specifically mentioned by the injunctions, each of the four Suffolk parishes had removed their rood lofts and stone altars by 1550, further nullifying the candle issue. While rood screens remained, the images of the saints painted on them had either been defaced or painted over, usually at the same time as the church walls.³⁹²

Through all of these changes Suffolk churchwardens' accounts confirm their willingness to obey official orders—and in many instances they seem eager to step out ahead of the new requirements. It should be noted, however, that outward conformity (and even zealotry) does not necessarily mean that the entire population consented to the changes. As evidenced by Roger Martin's later actions as churchwarden it is clear

³⁹¹ See the afore-mentioned 1547 Royal Injunctions of Edward VI, especially number 28, which ordered wardens and curates to "take away...and destroy all...pictures, paintings, and all other monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry, and superstition: so that there remain no memory of the same in walls, glass-windows, or elsewhere within their churches or houses." *VAI*, 2:126. The manner in which they were removed (whitewashing) was probably motivated by expedience and frugality.

³⁹² Duffy, "The parish, piety, and patronage," 159–161.

that there were those within each community who still held to the old faith. The changes noted above were still fresh in 1550, and most adults could remember practicing the old religion under Henry VIII. What was needed more than anything for these changes to take hold was time. People needed to practice, hear, and internalize the new liturgy in order to embrace its evangelical theology. Unfortunately for evangelicals, time turned out to be the one thing Edward VI did not have. Nonetheless, by 1553 Edward VI and his evangelical ministers had far outstripped Henry VIII's wildest ambitions, exercising the full power of royal supremacy over the English Church to construct a reformed liturgy and doctrine that was moving toward parity with its continental antecedents, even though a large segment of the population (outside, and even to some extent within, East Anglia and London) was not yet ready to embrace it.

During his brief reign Edward VI had overseen the most radical alterations ever made to the doctrine and worship of the English Church. His chief ministers had orchestrated the wholesale destruction of the old church and the construction of an entirely new edifice. The Edwardian Church was defined by the Book of Common Prayer, which outlined a firmly evangelical approach to public worship in England. Other than the retention of its episcopal government, the English Church under Edward VI and Cranmer most closely resembled the Reformed churches of Switzerland in belief and practice. This chapter has argued, in part, that Edwardian religious changes focused on the public worship of the church because Cranmer and his associates presumed that 'right' actions would gradually lead parishioners to 'right' beliefs. If, based on the evidence presented above, we accept this assertion, how then did the reformers envision

their plan working, and why was the reformation of worship and ritual prioritized over the dissemination of doctrinal formulae?

In her study of Bishop John Hooper and his approach to reform in the diocese of Gloucester during Edward's reign, Caroline Litzenberger offers a helpful roadmap through which to navigate the liturgically focused approach to reform in England. She recounts that "Hooper's mentor, Heinrich Bullinger...believed that ritual practice shaped or at least greatly influenced belief," and, just as the Swiss approach to reform involved "the elimination of anything that would distract worshippers from focusing on the Word of God, including decorations [and] especially images," so too did the English approach.³⁹³ The negative act of destroying distracting and superstitious images was only one side of the Reformed approach to worship, Litzenberger argues. She draws on Edward Muir's analysis, stating that "Protestant ritual...provided clarity of meaning through the declaration of seemingly unambiguous words [albeit] at the cost of visual impoverishment."³⁹⁴

The Prayer Book's displacement of the elaborate Sarum ceremony, along with the campaign against distracting images in churches, did not mean that evangelicals like Cranmer rejected liturgical ritual outright. Instead, they placed emphasis on a revised set of rituals that claimed to recover the spirit and practices of the early church and that they believed followed better the words of Scripture. Muir notes that, "despite their emphasis on the Bible and interpretation, Protestants still experienced the sacred through

³⁹³ Caroline Litzenberger, "Communal ritual, concealed belief: Layers of response to the regulation of ritual in Reformation England," in *Religion and the Early Modern State: Views from China, Russia, and the West*, ed. James D. Tracy and Marguerite Ragnow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 100. For the process of reform in Switzerland, see Carlos M. N. Eire, *War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (1986; repr. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

³⁹⁴ Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 198.

rituals.”³⁹⁵ This being the case, it is not surprising that Cranmer and his associates went to such lengths in revising liturgical rituals, such as the celebration of the Eucharist, so that they would align with the emerging evangelical theology. Litzenberger goes on to suggest that “what distinguished the Protestants’ approaches to ceremonies in the sixteenth century was their emphasis on the meaning of the ritual,” thus, as Cranmer had done in the Prayer Books, Bishop Hooper in his diocese “revised ritual space and reformed rites so that, by entering into the discipline of participating regularly in particular rituals, people would come to understand and accept beliefs consistent with those rituals.”³⁹⁶

The value of physical repetition and mental retention of ritual is evidenced by the often-negative reaction that common people had to the new forms of worship in the Prayer Books. The 1549 Western rebellion is an extreme example of how upset people could become when their familiar rituals (and thus their underlying theology) were abruptly changed. A less-drastic example of the public reluctance to accept new forms of worship was the problem of non-participation in the new Eucharistic rite.³⁹⁷ Evangelical reformers thought the only reason people were reluctant to accept the new worship forms was because they had been deceived by the superstitions of the old church. They thus placed great importance on conducting the new services in English, so that “the people (by daily hearing of holy scripture read in the Church) should continually profit more and

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 186.

³⁹⁶ Litzenberger, “Communal ritual,” 100; for detailed discussion of the meanings behind the Eucharistic ritual, see Muir, 155–176; for discussion of the Protestant Reformation itself as a ritual process, see *ibid.*, 185–198.

³⁹⁷ Walsham has written a detailed study on ‘Church Papistry’, or strategic (non-)conformity to English church practices. See Alexandra Walsham, *Church Papists*, especially 22–49.

more in the knowledge of God, and be the more inflamed with the love of his true religion.”³⁹⁸ In their opinion, the problem was that the medieval church had ignored the words of St Paul, who, according to the Prayer Book, “would have such language spoken to the people in the Church, as they might understand, and have profit by hearing the same.” Since services had previously been in Latin, most parishioners “heard with their ears only, and their hearts, spirit, and mind, [had] not been edified thereby.”³⁹⁹ In reality, there were more factors than merely language at play in the laity’s mixed reaction to the Edwardian reforms. As Litzenberger notes, “when those in authority impose rituals on the people as did the sixteenth-century Protestant reformers, then those ceremonies do not necessarily reveal the actual beliefs of the subjected portion of society.”⁴⁰⁰ Drawing on Catherine Bell’s theory of ritual implementation, Litzenberger explains that “through ‘complicity, struggle [and] negotiation’ the powerless agree to accept a form of the official policy, a form that they then appropriate and modify.”⁴⁰¹ In the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552 the authorities thus set forth requirements for liturgical conformity with specific theological meanings in mind; however, the laity, to whom such requirements were addressed, accepted them with a much wider set of attached meanings than Cranmer and his associates originally had in mind. When coupled with examples of lay reticence to accept the new rituals, this goes a way toward explaining the generally slow progress,

³⁹⁸ This wording appears unchanged in the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books, see *Two Liturgies*, 17, 193.

³⁹⁹ *Two Liturgies*, 18, 194. This principle is drawn from 1 Corinthians 14, where Paul instructs the church in the appropriate use of spiritual gifts, such as speaking in tongues. The main point of this chapter is that “all things be done for edification” (1 Cor. 14:26). The reformers thought that the old church worship in Latin had contravened Paul’s teaching by conducting services in a tongue that most people could not understand.

⁴⁰⁰ Litzenberger, “Communal ritual,” 100.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid. See also Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 189–191.

and ultimately incomplete implementation, of the Edwardian reforms despite official sanction from both government and ecclesiastical authorities.

Evangelicals made a concerted effort to reframe the ritual practices of the church and imbue them with new meanings. Cranmer and his associates based their decisions on the principles they derived from scripture, the practices of the early church, and their own common sense reasoning. They sought to remove from worship those aspects they saw as tending to superstition and distraction, replacing them with spare, yet still meaning-laden, rituals based on scriptural precedent. They thought that if people attended and participated in the reformed public worship of the church, they would come to understand and accept the theological foundations for the new liturgical practices. This chapter has shown that the changes made to the ritual celebration of the Eucharist, as well as to church interiors, provide a useful lens through which to view the intent behind those changes, as well as to gain an overall picture of how the reformers attempted to change English religious culture during this period.

Due to the limited period the Edwardian reforms had to take root, and the evidence that many parishioners were slow to adopt them, it is fair to say that they were not a success in their own time.⁴⁰² That being said, the endurance of an evangelical subculture during Mary I's reign, in hiding domestically and in exile abroad, as well as the resurgence of Protestantism during Elizabeth I's reign, are testament to the perseverance of the movement and its distinctive form of worship. Patrick Collinson provides some basis for asserting that the worship-based approach was successful in the

⁴⁰² Litzenberger offers a compelling argument for the development of a cautious 'wait and see' attitude to reform under Edward VI. Based largely on the study of wills made in Gloucester between 1540–1580, she finds that many people were reluctant to express an overtly evangelical/Protestant faith in their last testaments until well into Elizabeth I's reign. See Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 59–82.

long run when he says: “It would be foolish to deny to either the *Homilies* or the *Book of Common Prayer* the capacity to distil and drop into the mind, almost by an osmotic process, familiar forms of words which may have done more than anything else to form a Protestant consciousness.”⁴⁰³ So, although the worship-based approach employed during Edward VI’s reign was not wholly successful in its initial implementation, it would seem that time, repetition, and perhaps the “osmotic process” of hearing the Word of God (both read and preached) over the course of decades and centuries has proven the wisdom of Cranmer’s approach after all.

Returning to the four Suffolk case studies, while there was a general compliance with official policy in these parishes during Edward’s reign, there was by no means an evangelical consensus among parishioners. Rather, it seems likely that churchwardens, acting as mediators between the government/episcopacy and the parish community, wielded a great deal of power over the speed and degree to which the new religious policies were enforced. Their control of parish treasuries and responsibility to report their progress to the royal commissioners meant that wardens, regardless of their personal beliefs, were compelled to obey crown and ecclesiastical orders on threat of punishment for disobedience. However, one should not discount the fact that all of these parishes went beyond official orders during this time. We have noted above that several churchwardens left ambiguous or possibly evangelical wills. This being the case, it seems highly likely that at least some of the churchwardens held evangelical beliefs and sought to use their position to advance the cause in their local communities.

⁴⁰³ Patrick Collinson, “The Church and the New Religion,” in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh (1984; reprint, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 1991), 179–180; thanks to Caroline Litzenberger for drawing my attention to this quotation. For a similar, yet more cautious, statement to this effect, see Craig, *Reformation, Politics and Polemics*, 28.

Studies of localities in other parts of England during this time show that most parishes merely complied with Edwardian religious policies, only meeting the minimum requirements in order to escape punishment, while others actively resisted regardless of punishment.⁴⁰⁴ The vigor with which the churchwardens in these four Suffolk parishes approached religious change during this time lends credence to the county's evangelical, pro-reform reputation—at least among those in positions of local authority.

⁴⁰⁴ See Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath*, especially Chapter 6, “Morebath Dismantled,” 111–151. Litzenberger shows that the Edwardian reforms also took longer to gain traction in Gloucestershire; see Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*. Haigh's account of the reformation's slow progress in the northwest of England is also useful here; see Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance*.

Conclusion

Having focused most of our attention on local responses to official policy as evidenced in churchwardens' accounts, it is nonetheless illustrative of the great change in religious thought and practice that took place during this period to compare the wills of two Boxford testators, Thomas Coo and William Coo the younger, grandfather and grandson, respectively. As noted in Chapter Two, Thomas Coo was the wealthiest clothmaker in Boxford and a leader in the community. In his 1531 will he left his "soule to allmyghty god and to his blessed mother marye and to all t[he] holy company of heaven." He also made traditional bequests of 10s. to "the high aultar" for "tythes and offerings negligently forgotton and not payed," £6 for a priest to sing and pray for his and his family's souls, and £4 "to the churche of Boxford...to be spent upon such things w[ith]in the same church as shall be thought most expedyent and necessary by the descresion of the wardens of the same churche."⁴⁰⁵ A classic example of a traditional will, when the devout Thomas Coo died in 1531 he likely could not have imagined the changes that would take place in England, his village, and his own family over the next fifty-plus years.

Though only separated by one generation (that of William Coo the elder, who served as churchwarden in 1535 and 1543–1544), Thomas Coo and his grandson William Coo the younger were worlds apart in terms of religion. When, in 1585, William Coo the younger made his last will and testament, he chose a distinctive preamble and soul bequest indicative of his Protestant faith. In so doing he set himself on the opposite side

⁴⁰⁵ TNA, PCC PROB 11/24/72. Thomas Coo was also the father of William Coo, the elder, and grandfather of William Coo the younger, respectively. Both of whom served as Boxford churchwardens at various times. Northeast, "Notes on Persons," in *Boxford CWA*, 85.

of the religious divide from his grandfather: “I comend my soule unto almighty god my creator and Jesus Christ my redemer, by and throughe whose death and passion my full hope is to attayne everlasting life, which is prepared for all such as faithfully believe in him.” William’s will made no reference to Mary or the saints, left nothing for intercessory masses said on his behalf, nor anything to his parish church. His only public legacy was a sum set aside for the poor of Boxford, to be distributed yearly, not on the anniversary of his death, but on All Saints Day.⁴⁰⁶ Of course, by 1585 invocation of the saints and requests for prayers had been anathema for decades, and hardly anyone left money to the church any more.

By the time William Coo the younger made his will Elizabeth’s moderate, yet decidedly Protestant, religious settlement had had twenty-six years in which to work on his mind, body, and heart, presumably through the gradual, “osmotic process” described at the end of Chapter Four, which would have included hearing the Bible read and following the Prayer Book services countless times for much of his life. William served as churchwarden in 1554–1555 and, based on the language in his later will, he either oversaw with reluctance the return to the old religion under Mary I, or turned to Protestantism later, as a result of that “osmotic process.” Either way, if one takes his final words at face value, William Coo’s conversion to the evangelical religion had been real and his faith was thus a world away from that of his grandfather. Though this is but one example, it is indicative of similar shifts in religious belief that were taking place throughout our Suffolk case studies, and indeed throughout England, over the course of

⁴⁰⁶ TNA, PCC PROB 11/69/673. For more on the Coo family, see Northeast, “Notes on Persons,” in *Boxford CWA*, 85.

the Tudor Reformations. The main focus in this thesis has been on community responses to religious change as evidenced by actions recorded in churchwardens' accounts, but hopefully the examples drawn from individuals' wills interspersed throughout have likewise served to illuminate the parallel narrative of personal religious identity formation that took place alongside the communal story.

By the time of Edward VI's death in the summer of 1553 England had been subject to steadily more radical evangelical religious policies for six years, and this was after having been exposed previously under Henry VIII to various other ill-defined and ill-enforced policies against Roman influence, superstition, and idolatry for at least another ten years. In Chapter One we explored the pre-Reformation Sarum liturgy, its central rite the celebration of the Eucharist, and its literal and symbolic importance to late medieval English religious culture. We also toured the lavishly decorated interior of the typical English parish church in order to better understand the severe changes in this regard that were later imposed on communities during the mid-sixteenth century. In Chapters Two through Four we investigated the parish records of four Suffolk parishes in order to understand how they responded to changes in official religious policy under Henry VIII and Edward VI. For the most part, all four of the parishes under investigation met the changes with a high degree of compliance. Most surprising is the evidence that, in some cases, these parishes even exceeded in time and/or degree the official requirements for stripping and reordering church interiors and conducting public worship along evangelical principles. When compared with the often-reluctant conformity, and sometimes-hostile reaction, religious changes received in other parts of England, the

relatively easy reception of these changes, as evidenced in the records of our four Suffolk parishes, lends credence to the region's reputation as an early outpost of evangelicalism.

Save for an initial reluctance to acquire Bibles under Henry VIII, and the internal divisions evident in the Long Melford parish records, each of our four parishes either met or exceeded all of the new religious policies enacted during Edward VI's reign.

Furthermore, we have identified several community members prominent during this period who seemed to have espoused evangelical sympathies in their wills and who were potentially members of larger, evangelical affinity networks already extant in Suffolk. At the same time, it would be presumptuous to say that a pro-evangelical reputation held true for the entire population of Suffolk and/or each parish therein, let alone the larger region of East Anglia. Even within the four parishes under investigation here there were clearly some to whom the new evangelical faith appealed, while others remained steadfastly committed to traditional, conservative religious beliefs and practices. While Edward's radical evangelical reformation made slow progress in England overall, Haigh notes that there were certainly those to whom the new religion appealed: they were usually (but not always) literate and tended to be in middle to higher social classes.

The State Reformation therefore found its most willing collaborators among those with influence: country gentlemen who might enforce Protestant laws, and might press servants and tenants towards new ways; merchants and masters who might staff civic administrations, and might persuade their journeymen and apprentices to adopt new beliefs; yeomen and artisans who might serve as churchwardens, and ensure that altars came down and Bibles were set up.⁴⁰⁷

Although evangelicalism might not have made many converts during Edward's time, appealing as it did largely to the social minorities listed above, the important thing was

⁴⁰⁷ Haigh, "Conclusion," in *English Reformation Revised*, 213.

that they were, in Haigh's words, "minorities in key positions."⁴⁰⁸ Thus it would seem that a principal factor in our Suffolk parishes' early and largely enthusiastic compliance lies with one group, the churchwardens. Acting as mediators between, on one hand, the government and episcopacy, and on the other hand, the parish community, churchwardens wielded a great deal of power and influence over the speed and degree to which the new religious policies were enforced. We have seen in the Long Melford records that Edwardian churchwardens came into conflict with conservative members of their community and may have chosen to negotiate a less severe pace and process of change in selling church goods to locals at lower prices. Conversely, the churchwardens in Cratfield seem to have stepped out well ahead of even official policy by removing many of the ties to medieval devotion in St Mary's Church during the reign of Henry VIII. One should not discount the fact that, in one way or another, all of these parishes went beyond official orders during this time. We have already noted that several churchwardens left ambiguous will preambles (indicating possible dissent from the old religion or at least religious ambiguity) and some even used overtly evangelical language. This being the case, it stands to reason that some wardens held evangelical beliefs and sought to use their offices to advance the cause in their local communities.

One final consideration comes from the nature of the sources themselves. As noted in the Introduction, churchwardens' accounts have come into vogue in recent years as useful sources for studying the process and progress of religious change in England. This thesis certainly agrees with the assertion of their usefulness for marking compliance with religious policy. Yet, it would be imprudent to ignore the fact that these sources also

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

have their particular shortcomings. Quantitatively speaking, the four parishes under consideration here possess the best sets of printed accounts for Suffolk; however, there are still some gaps in the records, which can muddy the historical context in which decisions are seen to be made. For example, this thesis has tentatively accepted Ann Nichols' interpretation of several entries in the Cratfield accounts during the early 1540s as showing some early evangelical tendencies, but the lack of complete records for the rest of Henry VIII's reign make it difficult to establish a reliable timeline for further changes until the flurry of activity recorded in 1547. Furthermore, and qualitatively speaking, churchwardens' accounts offer a wealth of information on parochial religious transactions and the relative speed of compliance with official policies, but this is not usually the kind of information needed to establish individual or collective motivations for such actions. To address this issue, this thesis has utilized will evidence, when available, to illustrate general points about changing religious outlooks, and to get at the individual motivations of churchwardens and certain prominent community members. Furthermore, in the interest of contextualizing the regional situation, we have occasionally cited examples of contemporaneous religious activity throughout England and especially in other Suffolk parishes, such as the radical liturgical practices and incendiary sermons given by Rev. Rowland Taylor in Hadleigh and the existence of a group of evangelical Christian Brethren in Mendlesham.

Throughout this study we have utilized the methodology advocated by John Craig and outlined in the Introduction, wherein churchwardens' accounts, as highly regulated records of human action, are seen as reliable indicators of individual and/or communal

religious consciousness.⁴⁰⁹ While they may not represent the beliefs of the entire community, they do represent the importance early modern English society placed on maintaining good order, as well as Haigh's sense (discussed above) that evangelicals, a minority group comprised of individuals who happened to occupy key local positions, could effectively mediate religious change based on shared definitions of what was necessary and acceptable in the local community.

Possibilities for Further Study

Recognizing the limited scope of this study, it is useful here to suggest some possibilities for future investigation, all of which would further elucidate the complex picture of local reception of religious policy during this period. As noted above, while churchwardens' accounts and the religious language used in wills certainly bears fruit in the study of religious change during this time, the addition of other sources, such as church and local court records and personal correspondence would provide a further layer of contextualization and personalization to the study of this topic. It is often difficult to find individual voices in churchwardens' accounts, which is why wills have been used as supplementary sources in this thesis. Court cases containing depositions and descriptions of actions deemed heretical or non-compliant with religious policy would, of course, add detail and personal voice to a larger study on this topic, as would any sort of relevant personal correspondence touching the subject of religion and religious change.

Furthermore, the royal and ecclesiastical visitations undertaken throughout this period seem to be an understudied and intriguing aspect of the process of religious

⁴⁰⁹ Craig, "Co-operation and Initiatives," 379–380.

change. Visitations were the main points of contact between the Tudor government and the localities, where policy was mediated and authority enforced (at least in theory). We have noted that Edward's commissioners were all staunch evangelicals (as were Elizabeth's later on), and thus pushed beyond the official limits of religious policy. This had the effect of producing noticeably radical actions that were recorded in our parish accounts, such as removing the rood loft and taking down stone altars in favor of communion tables. While some churchwardens may have held evangelical sympathies it is probable that the commissioners also played a part in influencing local actions. It would likely be fruitful to determine the identities of the Suffolk commissioners and, if possible, examine the extant records of their visitations to see how much pressure they put on churchwardens to go beyond official policy.

Finally, while these four parishes possessed the most complete printed (and therefore readily accessible) sets of churchwardens' accounts, the parish of Bungay St Mary, on Suffolk's northern border with Norwich, also has an impressive collection of heretofore untranscribed sixteenth-century churchwardens' accounts. Had time permitted, the Bungay records would have made an intriguing fifth source set for this thesis. MacCulloch notes that Bungay was home to the conservative JP Richard Wharton, and that in late 1549 the parish churchwardens "were still paying to have the curtain before the rood washed."⁴¹⁰ Though it could have potentially exhibited a much more conservative response to religious policy than found in Boxford, Cratfield, Long Melford, and Mildenhall, a transcription project of that magnitude would likely have required much more time to complete, and will likely comprise the better part of a future doctoral

⁴¹⁰ MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors*, 169.

dissertation. As it is, the four case studies employed in this thesis have exhibited enough individual variation to indicate that religious change was received and mediated in a manner distinct to each local context.

Final Thoughts

In the end, this is not a story of dry policies and account books—it is about ordinary people and how, in the midst of great social and religious upheavals, they dealt with those changes in their local communities. This thesis has shown that it is possible to gain a better understanding of the local, personal context of religious change through studying churchwardens' accounts, the seemingly arid ledgers for parish income and expenditure kept by lay officers. While the accounts do not often betray personal beliefs, even of those who wrote them, they do tacitly uphold the words of St Matthew's Gospel, that "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."⁴¹¹ Churchwardens were chosen by their parish communities to manage the church money and to act in their best interests. Either for pragmatic, religious, political, or a combination of such reasons, the wardens in our Suffolk locales saw fit to spend parish money to comply with, and sometimes even exceed, new evangelical religious policies under Henry VIII and Edward VI. In so doing, our Suffolk churchwardens literally invested in the new evangelical religion and ensured that it would endure—in one form or another, either at home or abroad, in public or in private.

Although beyond the scope of this study, one could draw intriguing parallels between the intertwined yet opposing paths of the evangelical/Protestant religion and the

⁴¹¹ Matthew 6:21 (New International Version).

conservative (Catholic) religion. The sixteenth-century Protestant revolution and the response from the Roman Catholic Church changed the terms on which religion was understood and defined. Western Christian faith splintered as a result of the myriad social, religious, and political pressures of the sixteenth century and the distinct religious groups that resulted from that event were henceforth defined through negation, with each side emphasizing its difference from the other and claiming the sole license on God's truth. At the same time, however, divisions between religious groups also brought about the formation of a positive, shared religious identity distinct to each group. Religious conflict during the sixteenth century meant that, on both a collective and personal level, the Roman Catholic faith and the many forms of Protestantism came to define themselves both by what they were (affiliation), as well as what they were not (differentiation). Hence, networks of intra-religious affiliation formed a symbiotic relationship with real and perceived inter-religious differences. It is not surprising, then, that the seventeenth century would be largely defined by confessional religious conflicts, or that political conflicts would be robed in religious polemic. This thesis has not claimed to address these larger issues, but from the vantage point of our four Suffolk parishes caught up in the midst of religious upheaval one cannot help but see the larger context of religious conflict and change looming on the horizon.

In terms of where this thesis fits in the larger historiography, its conclusions are less stark than Duffy's revisionism, yet not as optimistic as Dickens's progressivism. It seems as though Haigh was right when he observed that the evangelical religion appealed to some but not all, and everywhere caused discord. For better or worse, the mid-sixteenth century saw successive Tudor monarchs attempt to strip parish churches of one

faith and erect another in its place. In a general sense, the remaining decades of the sixteenth century and the entire seventeenth century were merely an extended debate on the validity, scope, and effectiveness of that change (a debate that now lives on in its historiography). However apt the description, Haigh's view of a divisive reformation must be balanced with the long-range historical context of England's thorough Protestantization under Elizabeth I. Our Suffolk case studies notwithstanding, Duffy, Haigh, and other revisionists have made a convincing case that medieval English religion was alive and well prior to the Tudor Reformations and that many parts of England only accepted evangelicalism reluctantly. That being said, we must ask, with Norman Jones, how it came to be that England was "so Protestant by the mid-seventeenth century that a bloody civil war would be fought over what kind of Protestants to be rather than, as might have been predicted [by revisionists], over whether to be Catholic again?"⁴¹² The way forward, as outlined in the Introduction to this thesis, lies with Peter Marshall's assertion that "we should see the English Reformation primarily as a crucible of religious identity formation."⁴¹³ If we desire a better understanding of the larger process of religious change in early modern England, then we ought to direct greater attention to how individuals, families, and communities negotiated these issues. If we focus only on local compliance or non-compliance with government policy we will learn little about the process of religious change, but when we combine that side of the story with evidence for changes in religious belief among individuals and how that factor may have influenced

⁴¹² Norman Jones, "Negotiating the Reformation," in *Religion and the English People, 1500–1640: New Voices, New Perspectives*, ed. Eric Joseph Carlson (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1998), 274.

⁴¹³ Marshall, "(Re)defining the English Reformation," 583–584.

collective parish actions, as we have attempted in this thesis, our view of the Tudor Reformation becomes clearer, yet also more complex.

This thesis does not seek to establish a new methodological path for study of the English Reformation, nor does it aspire to change the dual narratives of compliance and resistance that have become intertwined in the previous forty years' worth of historiography on the subject. Instead, it has sought to use churchwardens' accounts and wills of selected parishioners to further nuance the picture of local responses to changes in religious policy in mid-sixteenth-century England. The Suffolk parishes of Boxford, Cratfield, Mildenhall, and Long Melford may not be typical of the Tudor Reformation as experienced elsewhere in England, but they are, in fact, representative of four distinct experiences within a broader regional context. While this thesis has attempted a detailed study of each parish's churchwardens' accounts, it has still only scratched the surface of the larger process of religious change in those places. Each of these parishes is worthy of further study on its own, for there is much more to learn about the places and people, and the many ways they lived, thought, and worshipped. In taking these parishes together, comparing and contrasting their experiences of authority and their mediation of religious policy, this thesis has offered new insights into the complex relationship between the Tudor government and its subjects during one of the most turbulent periods in English history.

Epilogue

Return to the Old Religion under Mary I, 1553–1558

Although beyond the scope of this present thesis, it is helpful to include an epilogue covering the local reaction to religious changes under Mary I and during the first years of Elizabeth I's reign, from approximately 1553 to 1562. Despite the seeming eagerness of our four Suffolk parishes to conform to new religious policies under Henry VIII and Edward VI, the churchwardens' accounts for the several years following Edward's death reveal a complex reaction to continuing shifts in religious policy. After Mary's supporters crushed an attempted coup in support of the evangelical Lady Jane Grey in the summer of 1553, Henry VIII's eldest daughter took her rightful place as Queen of England. Within two years of taking the throne Mary I and her main councilors, Cardinal Reginald Pole, Mary's Archbishop of Canterbury, and Edmund Bonner, the Bishop of London, had repealed all of the religious legislation passed under Henry VIII and Edward VI, reinstated the old heresy laws, and reunited the realm with the Roman Catholic Church.⁴¹⁴ This meant that Thomas Cranmer's 1552 Prayer Book, with its evangelical liturgy, was to be replaced once again by the old Sarum Mass said in Latin and with communion delivered in one kind only. Interestingly, Mary did not move to reestablish the monasteries or chantries. She knew that too many people had benefitted financially from the sale of church lands under her father and brother, including many

⁴¹⁴ For some of the key documents of Mary I's reign, see I Mary, Stat. 2, c. 2, in Dickens and Carr, *Reformation in England*, 143–144; "The Marian Injunctions," in *ibid.*, 145–148; an extract from the Heresy Act, in *ibid.*, 148–149; and Mary's Second Statute of Repeal, in *ibid.*, 149–154.

members of Parliament who would have obstructed monastic reestablishment, thus one major aspect of the old faith would not return.⁴¹⁵

Churchwardens' accounts for the four Suffolk parishes show that the local reaction to these changes was surprisingly compliant. This is all the more surprising because the changes enacted under Henry VIII and (especially) Edward VI had been extremely costly. Early on, all of these parishes had sold off their church plate and they had been urged on to further action by a series of regional visitations conducted by royal commissioners. On a physical level, the Suffolk churchwardens had removed images and tabernacles from their local churches, whitewashed painted walls and paid to paint scripture verses on them, taken down altars and replaced them with communion tables, and removed the Great Rood and rood loft from the chancel arch, leaving only the rood screen to separate lay and sacred space in the church. On a doctrinal level, the evangelical government had attempted to change the way English people thought about religion. First, they had abolished the doctrine of purgatory and thus severed the connection between the living and the dead that had permeated medieval religion. They also replaced the traditional Sarum Mass with the evangelical Prayer Book services, and in so doing changed the central sacrament of the Christian faith, the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, into a reformed, spiritual experience, rather than a physical transferal of grace through the consecrated elements.

Despite the changes they had made and the money spent in outfitting their churches for the new Prayer Book services and evangelical theology underpinning them, each of our Suffolk churchwardens' accounts record seemingly orderly returns to

⁴¹⁵ Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 86.

traditional liturgical forms and fixtures from 1554 through 1559. Unfortunately, the extant Mildenhall accounts end in 1558 and do not resume again until 1578, but during the first four years of Mary's reign the churchwardens paid for a new rood loft, a Lenten veil for the rood, an Easter sepulchre, and a pax, plus payments for making a new stone south altar and high altar.⁴¹⁶ Furthermore, in 1557 they paid £1 5s. "for pictures of Mary and John with the patrons of the church," which were presumably painted on oilcloth and hung above the rood loft in place of the customary wooden statues.⁴¹⁷ Despite these efforts at conformity, it should be noted that the accounts indicate that some of the new items were of much lower quality than the originals. In 1557 the Mildenhall wardens paid only 2d. for a new pax, whereas in 1542 they had laid out 2s. 3d. to goldsmith Robert Stone for a pax. At more than thirteen-times the cost, and employing a skilled metalworker, the earlier pax must have been gilded with gold or silver, whereas its replacement was likely a painted or carved wooden panel.⁴¹⁸ There is also a noticeable disparity in the expenditures for the new rood. As mentioned in Chapter One, Mildenhall parishioners had been at work decorating their rood only a few decades earlier, from 1505–1508, spending in excess of £6 to embellish the solar above the rood and the paint

⁴¹⁶ *Mildenhall CWA*, 133–136.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 136. This was no doubt a money-saving decision, and though it was probably done in the spirit of the Marian reforms, it was not in accordance with their letter. The eighteenth item in Bishop Bonner's 1555 Injunctions for his London Diocese required "that the churchwardens and parishioners of every parish do cause to be made, prepared, and set up in their church before the said feast of the Nativity of our Lord [December 1555], a decent and seemly Crucifix, with images of Christ, Mary, and John...." *VAI*, 2: 366. Likewise, Cardinal Pole's twenty-eighth item in his 1556 Injunctions for Canterbury repeated the previous order in Latin: "*Item*, an habeant crucem affixam una cum simulacris Virginis Marie et Johannis. Necnon et principalem imaginem sive Patronum ecclesie decenter erectas." *Ibid.*, 2: 388. Although Marian visitation records have not survived for the Norwich Diocese, it is safe to presume that Bishops Thrilby and Hopton would have followed a similar pattern to the Injunctions issued by Bonner and Pole. Further underscoring their seeming reluctance to comply, the Mildenhall wardens' action came a full year after Pole's Injunctions and two years after Bonner's.

⁴¹⁸ Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 91, 136.

the figures on it.⁴¹⁹ In contrast, the expenditures for an entirely new rood loft in 1554–1558 failed to reach £3.⁴²⁰ For a community that had so actively supported a similar project fifty years prior it seems odd to have laid out less than half the original amount in the mid-late 1550s. Another interesting point is that, other than those on the rood, there are no entries for making new images in the church.

Similar evidence survives for Boxford, where in 1554 the churchwardens paid for a mass book, a cope and vestment, a cross and cloth (presumably for the high altar), a paten for the Eucharistic chalice, a basket for the holy bread, and a pix. They also recorded their presence at a visitation at Bury in 1555, along with expenses for a censer and pax purchased that year. While there are no Marian entries for reinstalling the rood loft, in 1556 the wardens purchased a new Lenten veil. It seems reasonable to assume that they had also reinstalled some form of rood loft at this point, otherwise there would have been no purpose for the veil. That same year they also paid “for puttyng owte of the wryting in the Chyrche.” Interestingly, the wardens did not pay to repaint the didactic and devotional images on the walls until 1557. Again, one wonders about the prices of these items: they had paid 20s. to remake images in 1557, but they paid 25s. to whitewash and write scripture verses on the walls in 1548. Furthermore, (and as mentioned in a footnote in Chapter Three) they paid a further 13s. 8d. in 1550 for writing on the candle beam.⁴²¹ As with Mildenhall, it seems that less money was spent in returning to the old religion under Mary I than had been spent in attempting to comply with evangelical religion under Edward VI.

⁴¹⁹ See discussion of the new rood in Chapter One. For the specific entries, see *Mildenhall CWA*, 44–47.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 133–136.

⁴²¹ *Boxford CWA*, 64–67, 53–54, 58.

The Cratfield accounts provide less detail for the Marian period, but what information they do provide shows little activity until 1557, when they paid to fetch the stone slab for the high altar from the vicarage barn, purchased a new Lenten veil, and paid a total of 8s. to install a new rood loft.⁴²² The fact that they had not destroyed the stone altar slab and had hidden it for sixteen years is curious in a parish that otherwise seemed on the forefront of evangelical reform, having begun to remove images and altars in the early 1540s, much earlier than the other parishes studied here. It is possible that its storage was merely an example of prudence dictating that a good piece of stone should not go to waste. Conversely, it could indicate the existence of a conservative faction within a mostly evangelical community that held out hope for a return to traditional religion. It is possible that conservatives took similar action in Boxford and Mildenhall, although it seems unlikely since both parishes built new altars under Mary.⁴²³ Admittedly, the Cratfield records lack detail at a crucial interpretive moment, but (when compared with our other Suffolk parishes) the fact that they did not reinstall their rood until 1557 does show a reluctance to comply with Mary's orders immediately.

Finally, Long Melford's return to traditional worship forms and fixtures is well documented in the parish accounts. Roger Martin and Richard Clopton, both religious conservatives, did everything in their power to restore traditional religion to their parish from 1554 through 1558. They immediately reinstated the traditional "Plough Monday" collection that had been abolished in 1548 and also paid to have the church organ

⁴²² *Cratfield CWA*, 85.

⁴²³ The Boxford accounts do not contain entries for rebuilding the altars that were taken down in 1550, although they must have been since there is an entry for taking it down again in 1559. See *Boxford CWA*, 57–58, 70. Mildenhall also removed its altars in 1550 but did not rebuild the high altar until 1558. See *Mildenhall CWA*, 136.

repaired. They also pursued the two Edwardian churchwardens William Dyke and William Marshall to ensure that they paid back any money still owing for the sale of church plate in 1547.⁴²⁴ More so than any of the other parishes under consideration here, during Mary's reign, Clopton and Martin succeeded in restoring much of what had been stripped from the church under Edward VI. In a polemical entry in 1555, the wardens paid 3s. "for puttyng owte the vayn scrybylyng uppon the churche walles," meaning the words of scripture that had replaced the painted images in 1547–1548. They also paid 5s. 4d. for removing the words of scripture painted on the roodloft (probably meaning the candle beam).⁴²⁵ It is somewhat surprising that Martin and Clopton would use such hostile language to describe the words of scripture, but it was probably more of a commentary on those who had permitted the despoliation of the church and the theology behind that action. Again, it is worth noting that in 1547–1548 the wardens had paid a total of £3 9s. to whitewash the walls, print scripture verses on them, and make the king's arms, whereas they only spent 8s 4d. reversing those actions later.⁴²⁶ They replaced their rood loft in 1556, complete with the images of Mary and St John, and paid an additional 10s. for it to be painted and gilded.⁴²⁷ Dymond and Paine note that the total expenditures to restore traditional religion in Long Melford ran up a debt of over £17, which Martin and Clopton financed through borrowing from the poor and highway accounts and

⁴²⁴ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 56–59. As noted in Chapter Three above, the Long Melford wardens had not removed the organ during Edward's reign. They were not required to do so under Edward's policies, but their inaction in this regard set them apart from the parishes of Boxford and Mildenhall where organs were removed in 1549 and 1550, respectively.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 40–41, 60.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 60–61.

through their own personal gifts.⁴²⁸ One wonders how much of the fabric and fixtures restored to Holy Trinity Church came directly from Martin and Clopton's homes, since they had been the largest purchasers of church items during the 1547 sales.⁴²⁹

There is no doubt from the churchwardens' accounts that these Suffolk parishes complied in various ways with the return to traditional religion under Mary; that being said, there was also some vocal opposition to Mary's policies. Perhaps Mary's most (in)famous action was her reinstatement of the Heresy Acts in late 1554, which allowed for the arrest and execution of anyone holding religious views not in line with the once again conservative religious policy of the English church. Under Mary's policies evangelicals were heretics and they were viewed by conservatives as spreading a cancerous heresy throughout the body of the English church. While substantial time and energy was spent trying to get evangelicals to recant, the only remedy for those who would not abjure their heretical views was to be cut out and destroyed for the good of the whole body.

No doubt, many conservatives welcomed the return to familiar religious practices and doctrines after years in the wilderness of radical Edwardian policies, but those who had embraced the new religion under Henry and/or Edward were faced with a stark set of choices: they could either 1) recant their (now) heretical views and rejoin the English church, 2) hide their evangelical views while outwardly conforming to the new conservative policies, or 3) flee Marian England to live with like-minded evangelicals in

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 58.

⁴²⁹ There is at least one explicit entry in the accounts relating to William Clopton's collection of church goods. It states that Mathew Lyes was paid 8d. for his help in "bryngyng of the church hutches from Mr W. Cloptons." Ibid., 60.

the centers of reformation in continental Europe. Considering that the evangelical movement comprised a relatively small portion of the English population under Edward VI, the number who actually chose to leave the country comprised an even smaller group. In her thorough census of the Marian exiles Garrett calculated that about 788 evangelicals chose continental exile over staying in England.⁴³⁰ Dickens notes that an unusually high proportion of those refugees came from the “noble, gentle, moneyed, and clerical” walks of life.⁴³¹ Those evangelicals who left were the ones who could afford to do so, while those who remained in England (save for a number who stayed on principle) were usually from the lower and middling strata of society. In what can only be called a public relations disaster, Mary’s persecution and execution of evangelicals, including 27 martyrs in Suffolk (more than any other county outside London), only seemed to stoke the fires of resistance.⁴³²

Though it is not the focus of this thesis, it is important to note the importance of John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* (also known as Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*) for spreading the evangelical message and hardening the resolve of its adherents against what they saw as Roman Catholic heresy, following its initial publication in 1563. Foxe, a master editor more than an author himself, and London printer John Day, collected and catalogued in gruesome and sometimes embellished detail the stories of evangelical martyrs who died

⁴³⁰ Christina Garrett notes that “this computation does not include foreign women who became wives of exiles abroad, nor the children born abroad...but only those English persons who are known to have crossed the Channel,” including men (married and single), women (married and single), children and adolescents, and servants. Christina Hallowell Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: A Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (1938; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 32.

⁴³¹ Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 386.

⁴³² MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors*, 170–173. For a more sympathetic, revisionist perspective on Mary I’s reign, see Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England Under Mary Tudor* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010).

under Mary's heresy laws. His martyrology took in the whole narrative of Christian history and was organized so that the recent Marian martyrs took their place alongside historical martyrs of the early church such as Saints Stephen, Polycarp, and Catherine of Alexandria. First published in 1563, *Acts and Monuments* went through several editions and expansions during Elizabeth's reign and was a bestseller well into the seventeenth century. The book is often credited with helping to establish both a collective identity for English evangelicals and for initiating the "Bloody Mary" polemic against Queen Mary and her Roman Catholic supporters.⁴³³

Lest this study should fall into the same half-formed Whig ideas about Mary, it should be noted that her religious policies ran parallel to the larger movement for Catholic (Counter-)Reformation during and after this period throughout Europe. While desiring to return the church to the authority of the pope, the old worship forms, and the traditional sacraments, Mary's policies were also intended to continue lay instruction in English and measured exposure to scripture, and emphasized a salvation theology based on "Christ and his redemptive suffering."⁴³⁴ Duffy notes that there were even aspects of the Henrician and Edwardian changes that Mary's government sought to preserve, ranging from "registers of births, deaths, and marriages and a church chest, to an emphasis on basic religious instruction in English."⁴³⁵ The point is that the Marian period

⁴³³ For more detailed study of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, see Elizabeth Evenden and Thomas S. Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of John Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and John N. King, *Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs' and Early Modern Print Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). As noted in the Introduction, John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* is available online in full text, at *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011); <http://www.johnfoxe.org>.

⁴³⁴ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 564.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 534.

was not simply reactionary; it was a constructive attempt to redefine traditional English Catholicism within the realities of a post-Edwardian, post-reform religious context.

The Marian shift in religious emphasis is further borne out by the changing ways in which conservative testators expressed their faith in will preambles. Litzenberger observed that during Mary's reign many conservative testators in Gloucestershire "explicitly articulated faith in salvation through Christ's death and passion, combined with either requests for intercessions of [sic] behalf of the testator by the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints or invocations to the saints."⁴³⁶ Having diverged from the traditional short forms used by their forbears under Henry and Edward, Marian testators tended to exhibit some Protestant influence in the more individual style of their will preambles. At the same time that conservative testators were exhibiting greater variety in their wills, Litzenberger notes that explicitly evangelical will preambles all but disappeared under Mary. Those of more malleable evangelical faith, or at least those who did not wish to be executed for it, chose to use ambiguous language in their wills.

This trend is noticeable even in our four Suffolk parishes, where there is no evidence of evangelical preambles for the Marian period. One interesting instance is the former Edwardian churchwarden in Long Melford, Peter Grengas. From 1551 through 1553 he oversaw the restructuring of Holy Trinity Church and helped outfit it for Prayer Book worship, yet when he died in 1558 he left a traditional soul bequest "to almightie god to our ladie seynt marye and to all the gloriouse companye of heaven."⁴³⁷ Since he chose a traditional preamble it is possible that as churchwarden Grengas followed

⁴³⁶ Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 93.

⁴³⁷ TNA, PCC PROB 11/41/287.

official policy out of duty (or fear), rather than religious conviction. Among several traditional and ambiguous soul bequests for notable members of our parishes, Robert Mason's 1558 will stands out: "I comende my soule vnto all mightie god my creator and redemer, beseching hym[m] of his infinities mercie that it maybe associate among his holie Angelles & Saintes in his heavenly kingdome."⁴³⁸ As the parish clerk and organ player in Mildenhall, Mason's will is traditional, but his statement includes some language that would have been unusual in earlier conservative wills.

Based on the evidence from churchwardens' accounts and wills, it seems as though, at least in Boxford, Cratfield, and Mildenhall, the Marian reforms were accepted slowly and with a minimum of expenditure. It is possible that their slow compliance was due to the financial strains caused by the Edwardian changes (not being able to afford to comply as quickly). There could have also been a general reticence, born of their experience under Edward, to re-invest in liturgical items and material embellishments for the church that could just as easily be removed again based on the whim of the Sovereign. However, it seems just as likely, given their relatively early compliance with most of the evangelical policies, that these particular parishes were reluctant to restore the old religion (or did so with little zeal) because at least some among their lay-leaders had embraced evangelical beliefs. As with her brother before her, Mary Tudor did not live long enough to see her religious policies fully accepted by the English people. As evidenced by the accounts from our Suffolk parishes, communities were still in the process of transitioning back to the old religion when Mary died on November 17, 1558.

⁴³⁸ SROB, IC 500/2/28/224; the bequests (but not the preamble) are reproduced in Middleton-Stewart, *Mildenhall CWA*, 176. Mason also desired that "10s. be distributed to the poor at the day of my burying," perhaps with the traditional tacit understanding that the recipients would pray for his soul. Ibid.

Early Religious Change under Elizabeth I, 1559–1562

Mary's death brought to the throne her sister, the Protestant Princess Elizabeth. Having survived a childhood and adolescence fraught with religious, political, and social pitfalls, Elizabeth was more cautious than her brother or father. An extremely conservative Protestant, Elizabeth sought to reform the church along moderately evangelical lines. Within months of her accession in 1559 Parliament agreed on an uneasy settlement of religion.⁴³⁹ In so doing it restored the Royal Supremacy, with Elizabeth named "Supreme Governor" of the church, and passed a new Act of Uniformity, which reinstated an amended version of the 1552 Prayer Book as the only official liturgy of the English Church.⁴⁴⁰ In July 1559 Elizabeth also released a new set of injunctions to guide the royal visitations later that summer. Although the 1559 Injunctions followed the 1547 Injunctions in many ways, they were more moderate in

⁴³⁹ For an in-depth study of the Elizabethan religious settlement, largely focusing the political side, see Norman L. Jones, *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion, 1559*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History, vol. 32 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1982).

⁴⁴⁰ The 1559 Prayer Book was basically a reissue of the 1552 edition, with a few significant, mostly conservative, amendments made to the communion service. Kneeling at reception was allowed without the explanatory 'Black Rubric' from 1552, and the words of administration were altered to include both conservative and Protestant wording. These changes allowed a greater degree of latitude in terms of Eucharistic theology, which theoretically allowed religious conservatives to partake of the elements and maintain a 'real presence' view of the sacrament. Controversially for Protestants, the 1559 Prayer Book required clergy to wear the traditional vestments for worship services (as required by the 1549 Prayer Book), as opposed to the plain Geneva gown preferred by the returned Protestant exiles. For a detailed study and reproduction of the 1559 Prayer Book, see John E. Booty, ed., *The Book of Common Prayer, 1559: The Elizabethan Prayer Book*, Folger Shakespeare Library (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1976).

While acknowledging some scholarly disagreement over whether the 1559 Prayer Book was based on its 1549 or 1552 predecessor, Booty argues for 1552, because the returned exiles in Parliament "were proposing the 1552 Book for consideration, [furthermore,] they would also have proposed revisions, perhaps some of those made at Frankfurt." Despite the exiles' desire to push reform further, "the Queen and her government indicated their independence of the more zealous Protestants, rejecting any revisions that would make the book more Protestant and adopting revisions that could only be interpreted as conservative." *Ibid.*, 338–339. In its half-way appearance the 1559 Prayer Book perhaps comes to resemble the 1549 Book in some respects, but this is misleading, since it would have made more political sense for the cautious Elizabethan government to attempt to reign in the 1552 version in order to appeal to conservatives, rather than make the 1549 version more Protestant to appeal to returned exiles.

tone. However, Hutton notes that in practice the 1559 visitations were just as radical as they had been under Edward. The commissions “were led by men who had been in exile during Mary’s reign, and represented some of the most determined Protestants in Elizabeth’s realm.”⁴⁴¹ Thus, as with the 1547 visitations, the 1559 commissioners and churchwardens who attended them were given the leeway to push reform further than the crown’s official moderate policy. One example of this latitude is found in the note appended to the injunctions that left to the parish or the visitors the decision to keep or destroy altars.⁴⁴² Of course, where the visitors were usually convinced Protestants they almost always enforced removal of altars and construction of communion tables. The religious settlement once again necessitated changes in parish church fabric to show conformity with Protestant principles. These changes are evidenced by the entries in our Suffolk churchwardens’ accounts.

Remarkably, given the religious back-and-forth of the previous decades, at least two of our Suffolk parishes seemed eager to conform to the Elizabethan settlement. While records for this time period are not available for Mildenhall, both the Boxford and Cratfield accounts for 1559 through 1561 show that they acquired the new Prayer Book and Psalters and the new book of *Homilies*, once again took down altars and replaced them with communion tables, once again whitewashed church interiors, and also made new inventories of church goods.⁴⁴³ Most of this was accomplished in the first year of Elizabeth’s reign, with various other actions in the following two years. The Boxford

⁴⁴¹ Hutton, “Local Reception,” 133–134.

⁴⁴² *VAI* 3:27–28.

⁴⁴³ *Boxford CWA*, 70; *Cratfield CWA*, 91. The inventories were required by the 1559 Injunctions in order to ensure that parishes were acquiring the necessary fabric and/or had removed unnecessary items related to the old religion.

accounts show an almost immediate reversion to evangelical church fabric and practices. The first folio page for 1559 shows that parish officers attended the royal visitation at Bury St Edmunds sometime before September, where the commissioners ordered them to remove and burn roods and rood lofts, leaving “onlie a convenyent particion” in the chancel.⁴⁴⁴ They seem to have done so without delay as the very next entry notes payment of 6s. 8d. “too the pullyng downe of the Roodlofte.”⁴⁴⁵ Cratfield’s 1559 accounts show that they purchased the new Prayer Book, took down altars, and set up a communion table. However, they did wait until 1561 to remove the new rood loft they had re-erected in 1557.⁴⁴⁶ There is no clear reason for Cratfield’s relative delay in removing their rood loft (when compared with Boxford), but they were still a year ahead of Long Melford, which had made the most complete return to traditional religion among the four Suffolk parishes.

Owing to the lack of evidence for the early part of Elizabeth’s reign in Mildenhall, it is difficult to gauge the pace of compliance with her initial religious policies; however, Craig notes that “by 1578, recorded inventories of church goods reflected a reasonable observance to the Protestant order of the day. The parish possessed three surplices...a Bible, two service books, Jewel’s Apology, the Queen’s Inunctions...and two communion cups made of pewter.” By 1580 they had added the two books of Homilies, a psalter, and a third communion cup.⁴⁴⁷ While we lack the early context in which these purchases were made, the later inventories and accounts show a

⁴⁴⁴ Dymond and Paine, *Spoil of Melford Church*, 72 fn 150; quoting (TNA) PRO, STAC 5 U3/34.

⁴⁴⁵ *Boxford CWA*, 70; for Northeast’s comment, see *ibid.*, fn 63.

⁴⁴⁶ *Cratfield CWA*, 92.

⁴⁴⁷ Craig, “Co-operation and Initiatives,” 371; citing SROB, EL 110/5/5, fols 2r, 4v.

general level of compliance in the parish. Furthermore, Craig notes an interesting later development in relation to Robert Mason's earlier position as organ player in the 1550s. He notes that in 1582 "the parish sold their organ for 9s. and left no record of replacing the instrument." The sale could have been merely a pragmatic way to raise needed funds, but since such instruments were not banned under Elizabeth (just "disliked by the more precise"), Craig believes that "it is more likely that its sale was reflective of a growth of puritanism within the parish."⁴⁴⁸ This change in religious atmosphere may have taken years to surface, and yet it is not all that surprising given the activity noted in the Chapters above on Mildenhall's reception of the Henrician and Edwardian changes.⁴⁴⁹

In comparison with the relatively quick response to Elizabeth's policies in Boxford and Cratfield, and the apparent compliance (and later evidence of radicalism) Craig observed in Mildenhall, Long Melford seems to have dragged its feet in response to the 1559 Injunctions and visitation. For example, the rood did not come down in Holy Trinity Church until 1562. It seems as though conservative churchwardens Roger Martin and John Cordell, who were in office in 1559, simply ignored the initial order. In October 1561 Elizabeth approved another general order to remove rood-lofts, leaving only "a

⁴⁴⁸ Craig, "Co-operation and Initiatives," 372; see also SROB EL 110/5/5, fol. 4v. Craig also notes that Mildenhall sold their old Bible in 1585 and "replaced it with a 'Geneva Bible of the largest volume'." At a total cost of £2 10s. 10d. "This was the largest and most significant single expenditure of that year." Coupled with the fact that they had sold off their old Bible, rather than merely supplementing it with the new one, the action "smelt strongly of nonconformity." Ibid., 373. The Geneva Bible was notorious for its radically Protestant marginal notes, most of which espoused a Swiss-Reformed view of theology. Furthermore, the Geneva Bible included within its covers a worship service that the more godly were at least suspected of using in place of the liturgy in the *Book of Common Prayer*. For more on the Geneva Bible, see Brake, *English Bible*, 143–160.

⁴⁴⁹ It should be noted that Craig also found indications of some enduring traditional practices in Mildenhall's later Elizabethan accounts, such as the purchase of frankincense in 1600 for the Christmas Day service. His larger point is that although there was clearly an emergent nonconformist Protestant party within the community, there was still an active, albeit weakened, conservative party as well. See Craig, "Co-operation and Initiatives," 375.

comely partition betwixt the chancel and the church” in the chancel.⁴⁵⁰ In 1562 Long Melford’s new churchwardens, Thomas Sparpoynt and William Smethe, complied with the second order: They sold off timber from the loft and presumably blocked the doorways leading to access stairways. That same year they also took down their altars (selling the altar stone to William Clopton), whitewashed the chancel, set up a lectern, and purchased two copies of the 1559 Prayer Book.⁴⁵¹ The slow pace of change in Long Melford should therefore be attributed to the fact that its churchwardens in 1559 were both staunch conservatives and that they had essentially bankrupted the parish in attempt to return to the old religion under Mary. Indeed, Litzenberger asserts that “if the [early] corporate response to Elizabethan Protestantism was generally one of reluctant limited acceptance...then perhaps part of that reluctance was prompted by the cost of the liturgical changes used to measure conformity, rather than by parishioners’ religious beliefs.”⁴⁵² In the case of Long Melford, their inaction early in Elizabeth’s reign was probably motivated by both factors, but they were certainly handicapped by the heavy expenses they had incurred under Mary. Long Melford’s delay until 1562 is also in keeping with Hutton’s observation of a general reluctance in the realm to comply with the new policies, including removing rood lofts.⁴⁵³ In that respect, the accounts for Boxford and Cratfield from 1559 through 1562 are quite remarkable in revealing two parishes that were eager to return to the evangelical/Protestant forms of worship and church decoration

⁴⁵⁰ *VAI* 3:108–110.

⁴⁵¹ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 72–73, and fn 150. Bishop John Parkhurst reiterated many of Elizabeth’s 1559 Injunctions in his 1561 “Injunctions and Interrogatories for the Diocese of Norwich” (of which Suffolk was a part). For this document, see *VAI* 3:97–107.

⁴⁵² Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 116.

⁴⁵³ See Hutton, “Local Reaction,” 135–136.

introduced in the late 1540s and early 1550s. It seems that their early enthusiasm under Henry VIII and Edward VI had taken root during that time, endured through the return to the old faith under Mary, and resurfaced with Elizabeth's accession.

In 1571 the Elizabethan settlement received a theological complement in the form of the Thirty-Nine Articles, a new formulary of faith that was based on the Forty-Two Articles first released just prior to Edward's death in 1553. The Articles were originally proposed in Convocation in 1563; then they were debated and edited over the ensuing eight years before being presented to Parliament for approval.⁴⁵⁴ While they would be variously criticized as too Protestant or too Catholic in the eyes of the opposite parties, the Thirty-Nine Articles have endured for almost five hundred years as the guiding doctrines of the Anglican Church. Much of the criticism of them came from evangelicals who had fled England during Mary's reign and returned after Elizabeth's 1559 accession. Having been exposed to the radical Protestants of Geneva, Zurich, Emden, Strasbourg, and Frankfurt, among others, the returning refugees often demanded more reform in the fledgling English church than Elizabeth and her ministers were willing to allow. Seeing the moderate Elizabethan religious settlement as producing only a half-reformed church, these zealots, who referred to themselves as "the godly," sought to further purify the English Church, thus gaining the pejorative name Puritans in the later sixteenth century.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁴ Litzenberger, *Reformation and the Laity*, 124–125. For the original Articles (in Latin) submitted at Convocation in 1563, see David Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae ab anno MDXLVI ad annum MDCCXVII*, vol. 4 (London: n.p., 1737), 233–237.

⁴⁵⁵ For a magisterial study of the early Puritan movement, see Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

In terms of religion, the rest of Elizabeth's reign would be characterized by a back-and-forth power struggle between, on the one hand, the Queen and her moderate Anglican churchmen, who sought to maintain the status quo, and on the other, the Puritans, who continually sought the further reformation of the English Church. Given the scant attention often paid to it, it is remarkable to realize that all subsequent debates on the English Church during Elizabeth's time and beyond, were essentially referendums on the vision of that church as it had been expressed during the reign of Edward VI. Thomas Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* has endured, remarkably unchanged (save for some minor alterations in 1559 and 1662) as the liturgical use of the Church of England for over three hundred years. MacCulloch notes that the Prayer Book "was used more relentlessly even than particular passages of the Bible."⁴⁵⁶ When combined with regular preaching of the Edwardian and Elizabethan *Homilies* and the metrical singing of the Psalms, which was championed by Edward VI himself, it is understandable how the Edwardian Reformation lived on through the "universally performed [liturgical] theatre" developed during his brief reign and perpetuated by Elizabeth and her successors. As has been demonstrated in this thesis, it is imperative that we take the time to understand better the dynamics this earlier period of religious change in England and the nascent formation of a distinctly English religion, lest in overlooking it we "miss a vital stage in the fashioning of a nation and a culture."⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁶ MacCulloch, *Boy King*, 12.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 13–14.

Appendix A

Religious Change under Henry VIII

	Boxford	Cratfield	Mildenhall	Long Melford ¹
Parish register installed (Ordered by 1538 Injunctions)	1538 ²	1538–39 ³	1538 ⁴	-
Thomas Beckett's name erased from books (Ordered by 1538 Royal Proc.)	-	-	1539 & 1545 ⁵	-
Rowell removed	-	1538–39 ⁶ , returned in 1541 ⁷	-	-
English Bible acquired (Ordered by 1536 & 1538 Injcts. and 1541 Royal Proc.)	1541 ⁸	1541 ⁹	1541 & 1545 ¹⁰	-
Lectern for Bible	1541 ¹¹	-	1541 ¹²	-
Coat of St Nicholas sold (Ordered by 1541 Royal Proc.)	1542 ¹³	-	-	1547 ¹⁴
Windows re-glazed (Possible removal of images)	-	1541 ¹⁵ (apparent)	-	-
Floor tile work (Possible removal of altars)	-	1541 ¹⁶ (apparent)	-	-
Stone altars removed	-	1541 ¹⁷ (apparent)	-	-
Communion table made	-	1541 ¹⁸ (possible)	-	-
English Processional-Litany of 1544 purchased	-	-	1544 ¹⁹	-

This table shows dates of parish compliance with, and, in some cases, initiative beyond, official religious policy enacted during the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII, from 1538 through 1547. Citations from parish churchwardens accounts are provided for each entry. What this table cannot express is the steady erosion and eventual abrogation of the doctrine of purgatory. This was the major theological change undertaken during Henry's reign and, in some measure, it sanctioned the more radical theological and liturgical changes later made by Edward VI.

Appendix B

Religious Change under Edward VI

	Boxford	Cratfield	Mildenhall	Long Melford
Church interior whitewashed	1547 ²⁰	1547 ²¹	1548 ²²	1547–48 ²³
Scripture verses painted on church interior walls	1547 ²⁴	1547 ²⁵	1548 ²⁶ (presumed)	1547–48 ²⁷
Church plate and other items sold	1547 & 1548 ²⁸	1547 & 1549 ²⁹	1547 & 1548 ³⁰	1547 & 1549–50 ³¹
Bible (re-)purchased or repaired	-	1547 & 1550 ³²	1552 ³³	-
Rood loft removed	1547 ³⁴	-	1549–50 ³⁵	1547 ³⁶
Church organ removed	1549 ³⁷	-	1550–51 ³⁸	-
1549 <i>BCP</i> purchased	1549 & 1550 ³⁹	1549 ⁴⁰ (presumed)	1549 ⁴¹	1549–50 ⁴²
Installation of poor box (Ordered by 1547 Injunctions)	1550 ⁴³	1548 ⁴⁴	1548 ⁴⁵	1547–48 ⁴⁶
Communion cups purchased	-	1547 ⁴⁷	1550–51 ⁴⁸	-
<i>Paraphrases</i> of Erasmus	1548 ⁴⁹	-	1548 ⁵⁰	-
Stone altars removed	1550 ⁵¹	(See Appendix A)	1549–50 ⁵²	1547–48 ⁵³
Communion table made	1549 ⁵⁴	(See Appendix A)	1551–52 ⁵⁵	1548 ⁵⁶ (presumed)
Window images removed	1547–49 ⁵⁷	(See Appendix A)	1548 & 1549 ⁵⁸	1549, 1551–54 ⁵⁹
1552 <i>BCP</i> purchased	1552 ⁶⁰	n/a	1552 ⁶¹	1552–53 ⁶²

This table shows dates of parish compliance with, and, in some cases, initiative beyond, official religious policy enacted during the latter part of the reign of Edward VI, from 1547 through 1553. Citations from parish churchwardens accounts are provided for each entry.

Appendix C

Income from Sale of Church Plate

	Boxford	Cratfield	Mildenhall	Long Melford
1547	£47 ⁶³	£20 ⁶⁴	£72 15s. ⁶⁵	£11 1s. 6d. ⁶⁶
1548	£1 8s. 10d. ⁶⁷	-	£23 10s. ⁶⁸	-
1549	-	£39 16s. ⁶⁹	-	£2 12s. 4d. ⁷⁰
Totals	£48 8s. 10d.	£59 16s.	£96 5s.	£13 13s. 10d.

This table shows parish receipts from sales of church plate that took place during the reign of Edward VI, from 1547 through 1549. Citations from parish churchwardens accounts are provided for each entry.

Notes to Appendix A

¹ There are no churchwardens' accounts in *Spoil of Melford Church* before 1547.

² *Boxford CWA*, 31.

³ *Cratfield CWA*, 57.

⁴ *Mildenhall CWA*, 85.

⁵ *Mildenhall CWA*, 85, 99.

⁶ *Cratfield CWA*, 56–57.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁸ *Boxford CWA*, 37.

⁹ *Cratfield CWA*, 58.

¹⁰ The presence of a Bible in 1541 is implied by payment made that year for “a lectron for the bybyll.” *Mildenhall CWA*, 87; for 1545, see *ibid.*, 99.

¹¹ *Boxford CWA*, 37.

¹² *Mildenhall CWA*, 87.

¹³ *Boxford CWA*, 38.

¹⁴ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 39. Though it occurred during Edward VI's reign the account entry for the sale of the coat of St Nicholas is included here for comparison with Boxford's similar action in 1541.

¹⁵ *Cratfield CWA*, 57.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Notes to Appendix B

¹⁹ *Mildenhall CWA*, 97.

²⁰ *Boxford CWA*, 53.

²¹ *Cratfield CWA*, 72–73.

²² *Mildenhall CWA*, 103.

²³ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40.

²⁴ *Boxford CWA*, 53. At the same time that they paid to take down the altars in 1550, the wardens paid 13s. 8d. “for the Wrytyng on the candlebeme.” Based on the amount, this was an elaborate set of scripture verses painted on the candle beam that still spanned the chancel arch above the rood screen. See *ibid.*, 58.

²⁵ *Cratfield CWA*, 72–73.

²⁶ *Mildenhall CWA*, 103. The accounts do not mention the painting of Scripture verses to replace wall murals, but following precedent from the other parishes, it is presumed that this occurred around the same time the church interior was whitewashed.

²⁷ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40–41.

²⁸ *Boxford CWA*, 48–49; 52.

²⁹ *Cratfield CWA*, 74; 77–79, 81.

³⁰ *Mildenhall CWA*, 103; 105

³¹ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 36–39, and fn. 95. In 1549–1550 the churchwardens sold off additional items, mainly consisting of old service books. See *Spoil of Melford Church*, 50; and Appendix C.

³² *Cratfield CWA*, 73; 81.

³³ *Mildenhall CWA*, 116.

³⁴ *Boxford CWA*, 49.

³⁵ *Mildenhall CWA*, 110.

³⁶ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40–41.

³⁷ *Boxford CWA*, 55.

³⁸ *Mildenhall CWA*, 115.

³⁹ *Boxford CWA*, 55; 57.

⁴⁰ The new Prayer Book is not mentioned in the Cratfield accounts but it is presumed to have been purchased due to further sale of church plate at this time, indicating continued compliance with other official orders. See *Cratfield CWA*, 81.

⁴¹ *Mildenhall CWA*, 109.

⁴² *Spoil of Melford Church*, 49.

⁴³ *Boxford CWA*, 58. This is the first mention of the poor box, but one presumes it was installed earlier (closer to the 1547 Injunctions), since Boxford was in compliance with, or ahead of, all other changes.

⁴⁴ *Cratfield CWA*, 80.

⁴⁵ *Mildenhall CWA*, 103

⁴⁶ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 41.

⁴⁷ *Cratfield CWA*, 73. Although it is referred to as a “chalys” in the accounts, there seems no other reason for the purchase than increasing their capability to administer communion wine to more parishioners.

⁴⁸ *Mildenhall CWA*, 115.

⁴⁹ *Boxford CWA*, 54.

⁵⁰ *Mildenhall CWA*, 108.

⁵¹ *Boxford CWA*, 58.

⁵² *Mildenhall CWA*, 110.

⁵³ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40.

⁵⁴ *Boxford CWA*, 55.

⁵⁵ *Mildenhall CWA*, 118.

⁵⁶ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 40. One presumes that the wardens had a communion table made at the same time as removing their stone altars, or shortly thereafter.

⁵⁷ *Boxford CWA*, 51, 53, 55.

⁵⁸ *Mildenhall CWA*, 103; 109.

⁵⁹ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 49, 54.

⁶⁰ *Boxford CWA*, 60–61.

⁶¹ *Mildenhall CWA*, 118.

⁶² *Spoil of Melford Church*, 53.

Notes to Appendix C

⁶³ *Boxford CWA*, 48–49, also n 51.

⁶⁴ *Cratfield CWA*, 74.

⁶⁵ *Mildenhall CWA*, 103.

⁶⁶ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 36–39, and n. 95.

⁶⁷ *Boxford CWA*, 52.

⁶⁸ *Mildenhall CWA*, 105

⁶⁹ *Cratfield CWA*, 77–79, 81.

⁷⁰ *Spoil of Melford Church*, 50.

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