ELIZABETH INCHBALD'S 'CATHOLIC NOVEL' AND ITS LOCAL BACKGROUND

by FRANCIS YOUNG

Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story* (1791) was the first novel written by an English Catholic with Catholic characters. It was set in the world of the Catholic gentry, a world that Inchbald knew well from her upbringing in Suffolk on a farm adjacent to the estate of an ancient Catholic family. Inchbald herself acknowledged that one of the book's characters, the ex-Jesuit Sandford, was based on an individual from her childhood, and some effort has been made by Inchbald scholars (notably Patricia Sigl and Michael Tomko) to research her Catholic background and the Gage and Rookwood families whose history may have inspired aspects of the novel. However, the Gage family's papers have not been considered for the light they can throw on Inchbald and the eighteenth-century Catholic community in Suffolk. These sources contain references to the Simpson family and have the potential to enliven our understanding of the immediate environment of Inchbald's youth. This article corrects misconceptions transmitted by James Boaden and other biographers of Inchbald, proposes a new identity for the man who became the model for Sandford, and draws attention to possible correspondences between the circumstances and relationships of the Gage family and the characters in *A Simple Story*.

Elizabeth Inchbald (1753–1821) was the author of the first novel by an English Catholic that featured Catholic characters and portrayed late eighteenth-century Catholicism sympathetically and, up to a point, accurately. *A Simple Story* (1791) opened the hidden world of the Catholic gentry, a world unknown to or feared by her intended readers, and presented it, at least initially, as reassuringly familiar and urbane. However, Inchbald's upbringing in a relatively tolerant religious atmosphere in Suffolk, where the number of Catholics was tiny and intermarriage between Catholics and Protestants commonplace, informed her particular presentation of Catholic society in *A Simple Story*. Indeed, although the majority of the novel's characters and events are undoubtedly fictional, the research presented in this article demonstrates that *A Simple Story* is a portrait of Suffolk's Catholic community in the late eighteenth century rather than a generalized or fanciful portrayal of English Catholicism. *A Simple Story* is best understood as a 'secular' novel with Catholic characters rather than 'a forerunner of the twentieth-century "Catholic novel"',[1] yet the situations in which the characters find themselves as a result of their relationship with Catholicism are true to life. Inchbald's novel portrayed Catholics normally and without

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stereotypes, and was thus an eloquent argument for Catholic Emancipation without ever broaching the subject. The local inspiration Inchbald drew upon is critical to understanding why England's first Catholic novel feels so modern, but it also calls into question the extent to which *A Simple Story* is a true representation of all English Catholics of a certain class in the late eighteenth century.

Inchbald originally conceived the two parts of *A Simple Story* as two separate novels, and although they were eventually joined they are quite distinct in character. The first part tells the story of the Protestant Miss Milner's forbidden love for her guardian, the Catholic priest Dorriforth. When Dorriforth becomes Lord Elmwood on the death of his cousin, he obtains a dispensation from his vows and eventually marries Miss Milner. The second part of the novel, set some years later, reveals that Lord Elmwood has become a distant, tyrannical father who refuses to see his only daughter Matilda, while Miss Milner is a repentant adulteress. The novel leaves unresolved the love between Matilda and Harry Rushbrooke, Lord Elmwood's nephew. Although Dorriforth is a Catholic priest at the start of the story, and the moralising priest Sandford is a significant character, the themes of the novel are not overtly or obviously Catholic.

Inchbald's 'Catholic novel' pre-dates by more than a century the French and English works to which that description is usually applied, and it has little in common with an aesthetic, reactionary novel, such as J.-K. Huysmans's *La Cathédrale* (1898), or with the twentieth-century writings of Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, with their emphasis on 'Catholic guilt' and the fallen human condition.[2] Mark Bosco has argued that the twentieth-century Catholic novel could exist only when Catholics were cut off from the 'Enlightenment discourse' of the world around them in the period before the Second Vatican Council. Whilst eighteenth-century English Catholics were undoubtedly isolated by the law, they participated enthusiastically in 'Enlightenment discourse' and one of them, Alexander Pope, took a leading role in the European Enlightenment. Eighteenth-century Catholics, whilst painfully conscious of their difference, took every opportunity to present their community and their religion as a normal part of the genteel modern world to which their enlightened peers owed a duty of toleration.

Recent scholarship has established that eighteenth-century English Catholicism was a natural home for radical thought rather than extreme conservatism,[3] yet some scholars continue to conflate Catholicism with conservatism at this period.[4] There is a strong temptation to view eighteenth-century Catholicism through one of two lenses: the influential cultural tradition of anti-Catholicism, according to which Catholics were craven, superstitious lovers of arbitrary government,[5] and the resurgent Catholicism of the mid-nineteenth century exemplified by the writings of John Henry Newman. The voices of eighteenth-century Catholics

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themselves can go unheeded while assumptions drawn from Continental Catholicism or later developments in English Catholicism are imposed on them.

Catholics yearned for toleration and, like the Huguenots in France, they were more concerned with this goal and the Enlightenment agenda that endorsed it than with the theological niceties that obsessed their Reformation forebears. It should come as no surprise that *A Simple Story* is a secular novel with an apparently progressive message concerning education for women. John Sommerville has argued that secularization in early modern England went hand in hand with a 'spiritualization' of religion.[6] It was in the interests of English Catholics to be the pioneers of secularization, and the internalized, hidden religiosity of the Catholic characters in *A Simple Story* supports Sommerville's speculation that Catholics internalized their faith like Protestants in order to survive.[7] Indeed, eighteenth-century English Catholic piety was characterized by an attraction to quietist forms of spirituality.[8]

Margaret Doody has argued that the novel, feminized and domesticated, became 'officially unimportant' and harmless in the eighteenth-century,[9] whilst Ian Watt's observation of 'the impotence of religion' in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* applies equally to most eighteenth-century novels.[10] The internalized, individualistic piety of Puritanism remained in Defoe's work long after religion had ceased to have any significant effect on his plots. Inchbald's novel maintains the 'impotence of religion' against all odds: the *deus ex machina* of the death of Lord Elmwood and Dorriforth's dispensation from celibacy puts aside the one obvious obstacle presented by Catholicism in the novel, and neutralizes the possibility that Dorriforth's Catholicism will have any direct effect on the plot. However, the very reticence of Catholicism in the novel is its subversive message. A largely domestic, occasionally melodramatic 'novel of manners' in which Catholics were portrayed as ordinary, rational human beings was a far more effective response to anti-Catholicism than any political pamphlet. It is unlikely that Inchbald would have had the confidence to create a secular novel with Catholic characters had she originated in a homogeneously Catholic community or been exposed at a young age to the anti-Catholicism prevalent in large urban centres. Inchbald's upbringing in the peculiar religious situation of a corner of Suffolk and of her own family was crucial in creating the conditions for the writing of *A Simple Story*.

Inchbald existed at the fringe of the genteel Catholic society she described. She was born Elizabeth Simpson, the daughter of a farmer (and thus below the level of the gentry) in the village of Stanningfield between Bury St Edmunds to the north and Sudbury to the south, where the landowners were the Catholic Rookwoods and later Rookwood Gages of Coldham Hall. At Coldham there was a chapel where the Simpsons attended mass and Inchbald received her religious education. Inchbald

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left Suffolk for London and a theatrical and literary career in 1772 but she never severed her ties with her home county and its Catholic society, often paying visits to her family and meeting the Rookwood Gages in London.

Many of Inchbald's biographers have paid scant attention to her unusual rural Catholic background. For James Boaden, S. R. Littlewood, Roger Manvell and Annibel Jenkins, Inchbald's provincial childhood and adolescence were little more than a prelude to her career on the stage, while Pamela Clemit has downplayed the autobiographical influence on *A Simple Story*.[11] Boaden, her earliest biographer, seems to have been puzzled by the fact that the 'firmness of her philosophy', by which he meant her commitment to Enlightenment rationalism and doubts concerning revealed religion, co-existed with a stubborn attachment to 'a more tender, as well as purer guide, her religion'.[12] For Boaden, labouring under the anti-Catholic assumption that Catholics were superstitious and reactionary, Inchbald's Catholicism was an oddity in light of her 'philosophical' principles. Manvell considered *A Simple Story* 'strikingly autobiographical': Miss Milner was Inchbald and Dorriforth/Lord Elmwood was John Phillip Kemble, or at least one of Kemble's performances.[13] Jenkins, on the other hand, denied that the novel was 'a fiction of her own experience' or 'an imagined fiction of the people, events, or incidents of her life'.[14] William McKee thought that Inchbald was well-informed concerning Catholicism, but 'had little feeling for Catholic life',[15] and Jenkins argued that that the novel was emphatically 'not about the Catholic Church'.[16] More recently Bridget Keegan has drawn attention to the influence of Ignatian spirituality on the novel and Barbara Judson has argued that the entire novel is underpinned by a subversive theological agenda.[17]

There is no inherent contradiction between Jenkins's view that *A Simple Story* is not about the Catholic church and the idea that it is a Catholic novel. There is more to be gained from considering 'the novel's broadest preoccupations with Catholic culture' than from seeking within it an overt theological agenda.[18] The novel captures the spirit of inconspicuous, apolitical late eighteenth-century English Catholicism. Published in the year of the Second Catholic Relief Act, which permitted discreet Catholic chapels, the novel is the literary equivalent of the small chapels hidden behind elegant secular façades that were springing up around England. Yet at the same time the roots of English Catholic culture were deep, and whatever her personal relationship with the Catholic Church at any given time in her life, Inchbald belonged to this world and when she wrote about it she did so convincingly. Eighteenth-century English Catholics were apologetic for their Continental co-religionists; a few years after the publication of Inchbald's novel, the secular priest Joseph Berington was coldly contemptuous of miracles, Papal authority and even statues in churches. Berington was answered

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in 1797 by John Milner, the first significant opponent of Enlightenment thinking to appear among the English clergy and an avowed Papalist.[19] Given that Milner did not come to prominence until some years after the publication of *A Simple Story*, it is highly unlikely that his name inspired that of Inchbald's heroine, as some scholars have suggested.[20] Inchbald's is the wary, discreet, drawing-room Catholicism that preceded the Second Relief Act rather than Milner's assertive Papalism. Furthermore, in spite of the fact that Inchbald lived most of her life in London, the Catholicism portrayed in *A Simple Story* is that of the rural gentry, not the urban migrants who by this time made up the bulk of England's Catholic population.

At the time of Inchbald's birth, Catholics in Suffolk had co-existed without prejudice or violence with their neighbours for many decades. Anti-Catholic reactions to the Jacobite invasion of 1745 and the violence of the Gordon Riots of 1780 left the staunchly Protestant county of Suffolk undisturbed. Joy Rowe has argued that the 'stiff-necked independence' that made Suffolk a haven for Protestant nonconformity made it a tolerant place for Catholics too, who were so small in number that they presented no threat to the establishment.[21] The misfortunes of local Catholics met with sympathy: in 1703, Thomas Rookwood's non-Catholic neighbours signed a petition to Queen Anne calling for him to be recalled from exile and restored to his estate at Stanningfield,[22] and in 1745, the Gages' non-Catholic neighbours readily offered to take into safekeeping their horses and weapons before they were confiscated by local magistrates.[23] For the gentry of Suffolk, ties of sociability and family mattered more than religious and political differences.

Among Inchbald scholars only Patricia Sigl and Michael Tomko have paid serious attention to the idea that her background in Suffolk's Catholic community might have influenced *A Simple Story*. Sigl's 1982 article on the sources of Boaden's *Memoirs* included a brief consideration of possible 'Biographical Sources' for the novel. Sigl noted a letter in which Maria Edgeworth reported that Inchbald said she had once known a priest who would have behaved like Sandford, the Jesuit (or rather ex-Jesuit) who deliberately insults Miss Milner to provoke her to self-examination and moral improvement.[24] More recently, Tomko has argued that a detailed understanding of Inchbald's own religious history and her relationship with the Catholic Rookwood Gage family can shed light on her literary development.[25]

Tomko's contention that Inchbald's religious background is an important and neglected key to unlocking England's first Catholic novel is the starting point for this article. Tomko has gone further than anyone else in his investigation of Inchbald's background and the aristocratic dynasty in whose shadow she lived, but his research has relied on printed sources. The unpublished papers of the Gage and Rookwood families and the records of the wider Catholic community in the Bury St Edmunds area

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have not been considered. The principal printed sources on the Gage family are the antiquary John Gage Rokewode's *History and Antiquities of Hengrave in Suffolk* (1822) and *History and Antiquities of Suffolk: Thingoe Hundred* (1838). John Gage based the material in both of these volumes on the Gage family manuscripts as well as on four handwritten volumes of family history by his brother, Sir Thomas Gage, 7th Baronet, completed in around 1818.[26] These papers are now divided between Cambridge University Library and the Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds.

The Gages who settled in Suffolk were a branch of a family of Sussex recusants whose ancestor, Sir John Gage (1479–1556) served Queen Mary in a variety of offices. Penelope Darcy, the heiress of Hengrave Hall in Suffolk, married into the Gage family in the early seventeenth century, which thereby inherited Hengrave. On the death of the last of the Gage baronets in 1767, Hengrave and the baronetcy passed to the descendants of John Gage, who married Elizabeth Rookwood, the heiress of another nearby Catholic estate, Coldham Hall. Thus the Gages and Rookwoods became the Rookwood Gages. John Gage's antiquarian works offer a great deal of detail on the early history of Hengrave but little more than basic genealogical information on the Gages after 1640. Sir Thomas's manuscript volumes, by contrast, contain some colourful eighteenth-century family anecdotes. Furthermore, many letters and papers that Sir Thomas did not use to compile his history of the family still survive. I have separately edited the papers of the Gage and Rookwood families for future publication, but in the meantime these documents remain relatively inaccessible to scholars.[27] Although Inchbald herself is nowhere mentioned in the family papers, they provide a valuable record of the world on which she drew for *A Simple Story*'s setting.

In the sections that follow I shall examine the sources relating to the Catholic community in Suffolk, with a view to discerning what they have to reveal about the Simpson family and the religious world in which they lived. I shall correct certain errors and misconceptions regarding Inchbald's Catholic background that have crept into the biographical literature, in particular the identity of the model for the character of Sandford, and finally I shall advance some suggestions as to how family relationships within the Gage family and their circle could have inspired elements of *A Simple Story*. Whilst it is fair to take Inchbald at her word that *A Simple Story* is not simply a fictionalization of real people or events, still less a *roman à clef*, Inchbald's Catholic upbringing within a particular region and her own experience of a confessionally mixed family informed her unprecedented decision to introduce Catholic characters to a secular Enlightenment novel.

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The Simpsons of Stanningfield and the Catholic Community

On 27 April 1727 John Simpson and his son, also John Simpson, completed an inventory of the 'Evidence Room' at Hengrave Hall, a strong room in the southeast wing that contained all the papers that survive in Cambridge and Bury, as well as many more that have since perished.[28] Few families were as careful as the Gages in retaining even the most trivial family and estate documents, and the archive even contained Sir Thomas Kytson the Elder's accounts for the building of Hengrave Hall in 1525–38. It is likely that John Simpson made a catalogue of the family papers that day at the instigation of Sir William Gage's executors. Two and a half months earlier the second baronet had been killed when his horse threw him against the iron gates of Hengrave Park. He bequeathed his property to his second wife Merelina and left his fourteen year-old grandson the baronet's title.[29] When Merelina died intestate that same August, a family feud broke out between Sir William's surviving children and Delariviere Gage, the new baronet's mother.[30]

There is no way to be certain that the 'John Simpson Junior' who witnessed his father's inventory in April 1727 was the father of Elizabeth Inchbald, but it seems likely. Along with John Simpson and his son, the inventory was witnessed by Dorothy Wordwell.[31] Dorothy Wordwell 'of Bury' and John Simpson 'of Coldham' were the godparents of Thomas Hunt, son of William Hunt, at his Catholic baptism on 15 January 1748.[32] This John Simpson was certainly Elizabeth's father, since only a Catholic could be a godparent at a Catholic baptism and there was only one Catholic Simpson family in Stanningfield. Furthermore, a John Simpson (probably Inchbald's grandfather) witnessed an indenture transferring property from the trustees of the Rookwood estate to Elizabeth Rookwood and her husband John Gage after Thomas Rookwood's death on 20 November 1726, suggesting an association between the Simpsons and Stanningfield at this early date.[33] That the Simpson family were always Catholic is strongly suggested by the absence of any clear reference to them in the Stanningfield parish registers. Of the twenty-three Simpsons or Simsons mentioned in the registers between 1720 and 1778, the majority are identifiable as children of Joseph Simpson and his successive wives Honnor and Sarah, or as illegitimate.[34] Catholics were buried, like everyone else, in the parish churchyard, and it is possible that Mary and William Simpson, buried in 1734 and 1739, were children of John and Mary although no parents are mentioned. Given infant mortality rates in the eighteenth century it would be surprising if Inchbald's parents lost no children.

The eighteenth-century registers of the Catholic mission in Bury St Edmunds survive in two parts. The first, kept by the Benedictine monk Francis Howard and known as the *Hengrave Register*, is now in the archives of Downside Abbey and covers the period 1734–51.[35] The

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second, kept by the Jesuit John Gage and his successors and now in private ownership, covers the period 1756–97; I designate John Gage's register the *Bury Register* to distinguish it from the earlier *Hengrave Register*. Simpsons appear occasionally in both registers; George Simpson was the godfather of William Hunt on 20 April 1746, and George and his wife Anne were also godparents to James Plummer on 6 November 1763. Edward and Mary Simpson were godparents to John Plummer on 22 April 1767, and the sudden death of Mary Simpson was recorded on 4 September 1765.[36] It is unclear what the relationship was between George, Mary, Edward and Anne Simpson and Inchbald's family. However, two of Inchbald's sisters married men surnamed Hunt, and the association of Simpsons with Hunts in the register is suggestive. By 1767, when a detailed list of all the Catholics in England was drawn up by the government, the only remaining Simpsons apart from Mary Simpson and her children were a 'wid[ow] Simpson' and her three children between the ages of twelve and eighteen who kept an inn and posthouse in Stoke-by-Nayland.[37] However Stoke-by-Nayland, the seat of the Catholic Mannock family, was not part of the territory of the Bury mission, and John Gage customarily made a note when Catholics from other towns and villages featured in his register.

A gap of four years (1751–56) exists between the conclusion of the *Hengrave Register* and the commencement of the *Bury Register*, during which time, on 15 October 1753, Elizabeth Simpson was born and presumably baptized by a Catholic priest. However, it is very unlikely that Inchbald was baptized at Bury, since the Bury and Coldham missions were entirely separate. Francis Howard noted that John Simpson was 'of Coldham'. Since Stanningfield was the name of the village, and Coldham only the name of the hall that contained the Catholic chapel, this was an indication that John belonged to a separate congregation. John Gage reinforced this point on 14 October 1788 when he took the trouble to note that William Yates, whom he married to Laetitia Clarke, was 'de c[on]gregatione de Coldham'. The origins of the Bury and Coldham missions were historically distinct. Coldham was a centre of Catholic missionary activity from the summer of 1589, when the house served as a headquarters for the Superior of the Jesuits in England, John Gerard, until the winter of 1591.[38] Gerard described Coldham as 'a continual receptacle for priests and a place wherein many other Catholics did often find great spiritual comfort, the house being a very fair great house and [Robert Rookwood's] living very sufficient'.[39] The association between the Rookwood family and the Jesuits was strong; the Gunpowder Plotter Ambrose Rookwood (c. 1578–1606), together with his brothers Christopher and Robert, were among the first pupils to attend the English Jesuit College at St Omer in 1592–93,[40] and most of the known chaplains at Coldham were Jesuits. Once Ambrose succeeded to the estate, Coldham 'was a common refuge for priests, as it had been in the time

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of his father. Here his catholic neighbours could go to the sacraments, and meet often to hear sermons and talks'.[41] Coldham's status as a major centre of Jesuit operations in England is evident from the contents of the library, which was inventoried by Elizabeth Rookwood in 1737 and contained almost 2000 volumes, many of them rare sixteenth-century works of Catholic apologetics.[42]

The Bury mission, by contrast with Coldham, could not claim an unbroken existence since the sixteenth century. There had been a Jesuit mission in the town from around 1674 until the Glorious Revolution of 1688, when the Jesuits scattered back to the houses of local Catholics, including Coldham.[43] It was not until around 1717 that a secular priest named Hugh Owen began a new mission in Bury, and it was continued after his death in 1741 by the Benedictine Francis Howard until the Jesuits returned in 1755. It is likely that Owen's mission was patronised by a local family of doctors, the Shorts, while Howard was under the patronage of the Gages.[44]

From the mid-seventeenth century onwards Bury's Catholic community was dominated by two families, the Gages of Hengrave to the north and the Rookwoods of Stanningfield to the south. In 1718, with the marriage of the Coldham heiress Elizabeth Rookwood to John Gage, a younger son of Sir William Gage, 2nd Baronet, the Rookwood Gages became a branch of the Gage family but remained at Coldham and continued to patronise a separate Jesuit mission. With the arrival in Bury St Edmunds of John and Elizabeth Rookwood Gage's son, the Jesuit John Gage, the balance of influence shifted to the Rookwood Gages. In the 1750s the Gages of Hengrave and Rookwood Gages of Coldham took opposing sides in a dispute concerning the jurisdiction of the Vicars Apostolic, which was but one skirmish in an ongoing war between the secular clergy and their patrons on one side and the Jesuits on the other. The Gages took the side of the Vicars Apostolic, while the Rookwood Gages, unsurprisingly, supported the Jesuits' claims of independence from their jurisdiction. In 1753, the year of Inchbald's birth, Alban Butler, who was then chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk in Norwich, was tasked by the Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, John Talbot Stonor, with enforcing in East Anglia a brief of Pope Benedict XIV. This required clergy who were members of religious orders to return to their houses on the Continent every six months. Butler left copies of the instructions from the Vicars Apostolic with Sir William Gage, 4th Baronet, at Hengrave, which were to be signed by the Benedictine Francis Howard and two Jesuits, James Dennett and John Gage.

Dennett and Gage initially refused to sign the document, but were subsequently ordered to do so by their superior. Butler then sent a second copy to Sir William, but the Jesuits objected to the fact that the document had been sent to the baronet and still refused to sign, probably because this implied a secular landowner's dominance over the clergy. Butler

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noted that the Jesuits 'are angry with Sir Will[ia]m for taking them from me for them'. Sir William then received a 'bitter' letter from Thomas Rookwood Gage of Coldham, John Gage's elder brother, accusing the Vicars Apostolic of seeking to destroy the mission of the religious orders (and the Jesuits in particular).[45] In this environment of mutual recrimination, it is unlikely that there was much communication between the Bury and Coldham missions and it is almost certain that Elizabeth Simpson was baptized at Coldham. Unfortunately, no registers for the Coldham mission survive as they do for Bury.

One piece of evidence regarding Elizabeth's Catholic background is conspicuous by its absence from the records of the local Catholic community. According to Boaden, Elizabeth's mother was Mary Rushbrook, the daughter of William Rushbrook of 'Flimpton' (a misspelling of Flempton).[46] Hengrave Hall lay within the parish of Flempton and Catholics from the village attended the chapel in the hall, but the *Hengrave Register* (so-called because it was originally a register of baptisms, marriages and deaths of Catholics who attended the chapel at Hengrave) contains no mention of any Rushbrooks. Similarly, no Rushbrooks appear in the Constables' lists of Catholic Non-Jurors in Bury in 1745, nor in the *Bury Register*, nor in the Returns of Papists in 1767, according to which Mary Simpson was fifty-six years old and had lived in Stanningfield since 1731 (presumably the date of her marriage to John Simpson).[47] However, the parish register of Flempton church does contain a record of the baptism of 'Mary Daughter of William Rushbrook' on 15 June 1713.[48]

It was not unknown in the eighteenth century for Catholic parents to have their children baptized in the parish church, but in combination with the absence of Rushbrooks from any of the sources regarding the local Catholic community, the evidence for Inchbald's mother not being a Catholic is fairly conclusive. It may well be that the Coldham register, if it still survived, would contain evidence that Mary Rushbrook became a Catholic before or after her marriage to John Simpson, but the strong possibility that her mother was not a Catholic at the time of Inchbald's birth has the potential to shed new light on Inchbald's decision to make Miss Milner, the heroine of *A Simple Story*, the child of a Catholic father and a Protestant mother. Rather than merely a device to render her heroine acceptable to Protestant readers and add an extra layer of tension to Miss Milner's relationship with the Catholic Dorriforth, Miss Milner's mixed background reflected Inchbald's own experience. Unlike Miss Milner, however, whose father promised that she would be brought up in her mother's religion, Inchbald was brought up in the faith of her father. Mr Milner's determination to fulfil his wife's dying wish, quoted as if from an imaginary letter, adds pathos to Inchbald's narrative of Miss Milner's origins,[49] and at the beginning of the novel she is the mirror

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image of Inchbald herself, who was the Catholic daughter of the non-Catholic widow of a Catholic father.

Mixed marriage was no novelty in Bury's Catholic community; out of forty-six marriages solemnized by John Gage between 1756 and 1788, twenty-nine involved a non-Catholic spouse (noted by Gage with the abbreviation 'Acat[holicus]'). However, these spouses were usually willing to undergo a Catholic marriage in addition to the legally required church wedding. Within the Gage family itself, Sir William Gage, 2nd Baronet's second wife Merelina Jermyn brought her Protestant daughters by her first husband Sir William Spring to live at Hengrave.[50] Delariviere Gage (née D'Ewes), the mother of Sir Thomas Gage, 3rd Baronet was the granddaughter of the puritan and Parliamentarian Sir Symonds D'Ewes.[51] Sir William Gage, 4th Baronet's wife Frances Harland, widow of John Ellis, was also a Protestant and the sister of an admiral in the Royal Navy.[52] Unlike Merelina, however, Delariviere and Frances both became Catholics when they married.

Even from beyond the grave, Miss Milner's Protestant mother is a directing influence on her life, and it is her mother's directions that create the environment in which Miss Milner can subvert Dorriforth's authority over her, which is weakened by their confessional differences. Even if she did not know them personally, Inchbald cannot have been unaware of the female authority figures in the recent history of the Gage and Rookwood families. Following the death of her father-in-law in 1727, Delariviere Gage took over the running of the family estates on behalf of her son, and even after the third baronet attained his majority she remained the dominant force in his life until his death in 1741, usually accompanying him to social occasions. Elizabeth Rookwood Gage, the only daughter of Thomas Rookwood of Coldham and the last of her family, ran the Coldham estate from the death of her husband John Gage in 1728 until her son Thomas Rookwood Gage's marriage to Lucy Knight in 1746.

Errors and Misconceptions

James Boaden made some errors of spelling in his *Memoir*s that have been picked up by Inchbald's later biographers, such as 'Standingfield' for Stanningfield and 'Flimpton' for Flempton. Unfamiliarity with the local geography led Jenkins to assert that Stanningfield 'lies just on the border of Suffolk' and that 'Suffolk is bordered … on the north and east by Norfolk'.[53] Stanningfield is in fact well within Suffolk, and it is Suffolk that partially borders Norfolk to the east, not vice versa. In an effort to situate Inchbald's *A Simple Story* within its Catholic context, J. M. S. Tompkins fell into some further errors in her 1967 notes on the Oxford University Press edition of the novel. Tompkins's suggestions that the name of Harry Rushbrooke was inspired either by the maiden name of Inchbald's mother or by Rushbrook Hall are plausible and sound, but

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she was incorrect in describing Rushbrook Hall as 'one of the Catholic seats of the district'.[54] The main line of the Jermyn family who built and lived at Rushbrook Hall were never Catholics, although one particularly famous member of the Jermyn family, Henry Jermyn Lord Dover, did convert to Catholicism in the 1670s.[55] In 1703 the Jermyns died out in the male line and were succeeded at Rushbrook by the firmly Protestant Davers family. However, it is possible that the surname of Sir Harry and Lady Luneham contains a reference to the Jermyns, whose distinctive coat of arms was a crescent moon ('Sable a crescent between two mullets in pale Argent').[56]

Confusion concerning the Gage family has also hampered Inchbald's biographers. The Lady Gage who visited Inchbald's mother in London was not Frances Gage of Hengrave but Lucy Rookwood Gage, who became Lady Gage in 1767 on the death of Sir William Gage, 4th Baronet when her husband Thomas Rookwood Gage succeeded to his cousin's title.[57] In his edition of Inchbald's surviving diaries for 1776, 1780 and 1781, Ben Robertson relied solely on Jenkins's biography for information on the Gage family, and consequently failed to differentiate between references to Sir Thomas and Lady Gage, their eldest son and his wife, and John Gage the ex-Jesuit.[58]

In the fullest attempt yet to re-establish the significance of Inchbald's Catholic origins to her work, Tomko has endeavoured to make explicit the link between Inchbald and the Gage family. According to Tomko 'her first confessor was Fr. John Gage S.J., who, according to Edgeworth, provided the model for the Jesuit priest Sandford in *A Simple Story*'.[59] This statement derives from a letter of Maria Edgeworth to Mrs Ruxton of 2 March 1810 in which Edgeworth reported that she had asked Inchbald if any of the characters in *A Simple Story* 'were taken from life': Inchbald replied that 'they are all invention except that she once knew a man who would she thinks have acted just like Sandford had similar occurrences fallen in his way – He was a jesuit and her first confessor'. Patricia Sigl noted that John Gage served the Catholic mission in Bury when Inchbald was young and compared the description of him by Sir Thomas Gage, 7th Baronet with Inchbald's characterization of Sandford: 'He was rough in his manners and appearance but had an excellent and feeling heart'.[60]

Sir Thomas's description of his great uncle is arguably in contrast to Inchbald's description of Sandford, who merely cultivates a deliberate insensitivity to Miss Milner: 'He was not an ill-bred man; he was a gentleman by birth, and one who had kept the best company; a man of sense and learning'.[61] Edgeworth never named John Gage, and there is in fact good reason to suppose that John Gage was not the priest who provided the model for Sandford. Sigl's interpretation rests on the assumption that Inchbald attended the Catholic chapel in Bury St Edmunds in her youth, when in fact she attended mass at Coldham Hall.

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Here, the chaplain was James Dennett (1702–89), who first arrived at Coldham in 1751 and remained there for one year before returning to the Continent. In 1762 he was appointed Provincial of the English Jesuits and divided his time between London and Coldham, but when he retired as Provincial in 1766 he returned to Coldham as chaplain until 1787.[62]

Inchbald's first confession would have taken place at the time of her first communion, which was usually between the ages of eight and twelve. Inchbald would thus have had her first confessor in the early 1760s when Dennett was Provincial, and an intimidating and authoritative figure in his early sixties. Dennett was, along with Sir William Gage of Hengrave and Thomas Rookwood Gage of Coldham, the principal contributor towards the cost of building John Gage's chapel in Bury which was begun in 1761 and still stands.[63] John Gage, by contrast, was a relatively young priest in his forties. In addition to being an older Jesuit, Dennett resembled Sandford in two other ways. He was the elder and superior of a younger priest, John Gage, who, like Dorriforth, was closely related to an aristocratic Catholic family. Furthermore, just as Sandford serves as tutor to Dorriforth's cousin Lord Elmwood,[64] so Dennett was Thomas Rookwood Gage's tutor in the 1730s and served again as tutor to his son Thomas Gage in the 1780s, accompanying him on the 'Grand Tour'.[65] Like Sandford, 'This Preceptor, held with a magisterial power the government of his pupil's passions; nay, governed them so entirely, no one could perceive (nor did the young lord himself know) that he had any'.[66]

There is a portrait of Dennett as an old man among the papers of the early twentieth-century antiquary Edmund Farrer in the Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds.[67] Farrer was told by the portrait's owner, Mr Cullum of Hardwick, that it represented a Catholic priest called 'Mr. Dunnett'.[68] The style of dress and the age of the portrait combined with the age of the priest in the picture make it highly likely that it represents James Dennett. The identification of Dennett as the model for Sandford is further strengthened by the fact that, when Inchbald paid an extended visit to her family in Suffolk in 1781, Dennett called at the Simpson family farmhouse five times, on 15 June, 7 July, 4 August, 29 August and 6 September.[69] On 15 June, 'Mr Dennett call[e]d and sat some time'. Although Inchbald's diary gives no indication of what she discussed with Dennett, this opportunity to reacquaint herself with a priest she had known in her childhood at a time when she was in the process of forming her novel may well have influenced the character of Sandford. There is only one reference in the diary to what may have been a meeting with the Jesuit John Gage. On 11 August 1781 Inchbald noted that she 'Met Mr Gage in the home field'.[70] However, 'Mr Gage' could have been either John Gage the Jesuit or Sir Thomas's eldest son Thomas. There is in fact no definite evidence that Inchbald knew John Gage the Jesuit at all.

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The Gage Family and 'A Simple Story'

Inchbald told Maria Edgeworth that, apart from Sandford, no character in her novel was based on a real person. However, this does not preclude the possibility that Inchbald's experience of provincial Catholicism influenced the names and family circumstances of the characters. I do not intend to suggest that similarities between Inchbald's characters and members of the Gage family were intentional or even conscious, but her knowledge of family history would undoubtedly have influenced her imaginary portrayal of a Catholic gentry who are strikingly similar to the people she knew in Suffolk. Boaden was keen to emphasize Inchbald's association with the aristocratic Gages,[71] but her surviving diary and the fact that she sent her plays to Lady Gage suggest that her friendship with the family was genuine rather than a mere 'society' acquaintance. Sigl noted that two letters to Inchbald from Lady Gage (now lost) were among the papers from Richard Bentley's library sold at Sotheby's on 18–20 December 1871 and bought by the bookseller John Waller, who subsequently described them in his catalogue.[72]

Certain names in the novel seem to derive from Inchbald's background: 'Elmwood' from Rookwood, 'Hillgrave' and 'Margrave' from Hengrave and Rushbrooke from her own mother's maiden name, for example. The proximity of Miss Milner's country seat, inherited from her Catholic father, to 'Elmwood House, or rather Castle' is reminiscent of the proximity of Coldham Hall to the battlemented and turreted Hengrave Hall,[73] and a reference to what is obviously Epping Forest in the second part of the novel suggests that both houses lie to the north of London and Essex.[74] Furthermore, we learn that 'In the neighbourhood was also an estate belonging to an uncle of Lord Frederick [Lawnly]'s'. Frederick was a common Christian name in the Cornwallis family, and the seat of Charles, 1st Marquess Cornwallis at Culford Hall was less than a mile away from Hengrave and in easy walking distance.[75]

I have already suggested that the relationship between Sandford and Dorriforth resembled that between James Dennett, the Jesuit Superior, and John Gage. However, a parallel might also be drawn between Dorriforth and John Gage's brother Thomas Rookwood Gage, who like Dorriforth inherited a title on the death of his cousin. In 1767 Sir William Gage, 4th Baronet died childless, and the title was inherited by the Coldham branch of the family. This event was not entirely unexpected, and Sir Thomas Gage, 5th Baronet of Hengrave does not seem to have undergone a transformation of character like the metamorphosis of Dorriforth to Lord Elmwood between the first and second parts of Inchbald's novel. However, like the new Lord Elmwood, Sir Thomas found himself in a position of considerable power. The Rookwood Gage family had by 1767 absorbed the patrimony of the Rookwoods of Coldham, the Gages of Hengrave and the Martins of Long Melford, and Sir Thomas was free

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to patronise the Bury and Coldham missions in whatever way he chose. He gave priority to the Jesuits, who in spite of their formal suppression continued their mission in England with much the same organization as before.

A change of character like Lord Elmwood's did take place in one member of the Gage family, however. In 1741 William Gage, then a wine merchant in Portugal, inherited the baronetcy from his brother Sir Thomas Gage, 3rd Baronet. As soon as he inherited the family estates, Sir William instantly lost all interest in his mercantile business and alienated his former colleagues, one of whom, Thomas Bray, wrote anxiously to Sir William, begging him not to 'bury himself' at Hengrave, 'since yo[u] are known to be alive in the world'. Bray feared that Sir William was turning into a different kind of man, and implored him, 'pray don[']t lead the rest of y[ou]r life away w[i]th hearing of y[ou]r farmers Stories, nor Country Esq[ui]r[e]s tales of fox hunting'.[76] When Sandford tells Miss Woodley that he spoke to Lord Elmwood about 'Horse, hay, farming, and politics',[77] it is evident that the studious Dorriforth's title has wrought in him just such a transformation.

Later, Sir William's nephew Richard Holmes wrote to his aunt Delariviere Gage, tactfully explaining that Bray was very much 'provok'd', since he had not heard from Sir William since August 1742.[78] This series of letters suggests a degree of coldness in Sir William Gage, who refused to give his nephew any money when his aunt Delariviere died in 1746;[79] a reaction not unlike Dorriforth's initial reluctance to see his nephew Harry Rushbrooke.[80] These indications of Sir William Gage's character on their own would not be sufficient reason to suspect that he inspired some of Lord Elmwood's characteristics. However, Sir William shared another feature with Lord Elmwood that was unusual among the Catholic gentry; like Elmwood, he was the owner of a plantation in the West Indies. In 1742, on the death of Devereux Gage, a distant cousin, Sir William inherited 'Gage's Fee', a plantation on the island of Montserrat that Devereux had inherited from his Protestant mother.[81]

It was extremely unusual for a Catholic to own land in Britain's colonies; although the penal laws that attached to Catholic land ownership in England did not apply to colonial land, the financial penalties of recusancy meant that Catholic landowners rarely had the disposable income to invest in land overseas. Sir William obtained his estate by an inheritance that was not automatic, and he had to engage his lawyer to make the case that he was Devereux Gage's heir.[82] In the novel, Lord Elmwood's estate in the West Indies serves as an excuse for him to be absent for three years, during which time Lady Elmwood conducts an adulterous liaison with Frederick Lawnly.[83] Whilst this is clearly a literary device to remove him from the story, it is unlikely that Inchbald would have thought of a Catholic peer owning land in the West Indies had Sir William Gage not provided a model. As Maaja Stewart has noted,

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Lord Elmwood's prolonged absence on plantation business is one point of comparison between *A Simple Story* and Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (a novel where Inchbald herself is mentioned), in which Sir Thomas Bertram spends time on his plantation in Antigua.[84]

Miss Milner finds herself as the sole heiress of a Catholic aristocrat, a position shared in the early eighteenth century by Elizabeth Rookwood (1683–1759), the only daughter of Thomas Rookwood. Unlike Miss Milner, Elizabeth was not orphaned, but the role of the over-protective guardian that Dorriforth fulfils in the novel was taken by her father, who refused to let her marry John Gage of Hengrave even when she was an unmarried woman of thirty. Eventually Elizabeth and John Gage married in secret and Elizabeth's pregnancy revealed the truth. As if to add a tinge of melodrama, her father never entirely forgave her.[85] Sir Thomas Gage, 7th Baronet recorded this story (which survives in no other source) a century after the event, suggesting that the family memory of the Gages was long.

A Simple Story was apparently not the only novel inspired by the doings of the Catholic aristocracy in East Anglia. Sir Thomas Gage, 7th Baronet noted that at some point in the second half of the eighteenth century, a relative of the Gage family, Ann Gage, the daughter of a gentleman named Thomas Gage of Bury St Edmunds (a grandson of Sir Edward Gage, 1st Baronet of Hengrave), visited Teresa Tasburgh at Bodney Hall in Norfolk. The Tasburghs were an ancient Catholic family with branches in both Norfolk and Suffolk. During her stay at Bodney, Ann was seduced by Teresa's husband George Tasburgh (d. 1783), and conceived an illegitimate child. George Tasburgh subsequently went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to atone for his sin, and the episode became the inspiration for a novel that Sir Thomas Gage identified as *The Faithless Guardian*.[86] Numerous novels with this title were written in the nineteenth century, although few before 1818 and none in which the events of the plot in any way resemble the story of Ann Gage. It is likely that Inchbald came to hear of this story but prior experience had taught her to ensure that her novel remained within the bounds of propriety; certainly, if it ever existed, *The Faithless Guardian* has been eclipsed by *A Simple Story* as the literary representation par excellence of East Anglian Catholicism in the eighteenth century.

Elizabeth Inchbald is undoubtedly a figure of great importance in the literary history of the late eighteenth century, but she was also an outstanding representative of the English Catholic community. Inchbald deserves to be considered a key contributor to the debate concerning Catholic identity that intensified in the 1780s and '90s, albeit she did not adopt the conventional discourse of theological and political polemic. Inchbald exploited the secular Enlightenment novel for a political rather than a religious purpose: to convey the message that toleration of Catholics was the logical outcome of a rational society and the evident

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harmlessness of Catholics. We may never know how many non-Catholic readers of *A Simple Story* were influenced by the book to regard Catholics differently, but Inchbald faithfully represented the extent to which Suffolk's Catholics saw themselves as normal members of English society. The introduction of Catholic characters into *A Simple Story* was self-conscious on Inchbald's part, but it cannot be considered a 'Catholic novel' in the same sense as late nineteenth and twentieth-century works. Whilst Keegan and Judson have demonstrated that Catholic spiritual and theological themes are not entirely absent from the novel, it is more difficult to maintain that they are structurally significant. The power of *A Simple Story* as a Catholic work lay in the confidence that dared to insert Catholicism in the background. Had Inchbald originated from an area of the country where the Catholic population was denser and Catholic culture more pervasive (such as Lancashire),[87] she might well have been more assertive of Catholic distinctiveness or more apologetic for her faith. In Suffolk, Catholicism was a minority faith heavily dependent on the support of the gentry; Catholics and non-Catholics often co-existed in the same family and anti-Catholicism was rare. The fact that she stood outside the traditions of anti-Catholicism and anxious Catholic apologetic allowed Inchbald to subvert stereotypes of Catholics by the gentlest and most subtle means. The Catholic community in Suffolk produced Elizabeth Inchbald and by immortalizing its attitudes, customs and tolerance in *A Simple Story* she produced a unique 'Catholic novel'.

ABBREVIATIONS

CRS	Catholic Record Society
CUL	Cambridge University Library
Diaries	*The Diaries of Elizabeth Inchbald*, ed. B. P. Robertson, Pickering and Chatto, London, 2007
Simple Story	E. Inchbald, *A Simple Story*, ed. J. M. S. Tompkins, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford, 1988
SRO(B)	Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds

NOTES

[1] J. Saward, J. Morrill and M. Tomko (eds), *Firmly I Believe and Truly: The Spiritual Tradition of Catholic England, 1483–1999*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, p. 375.

[2] On the development of the twentieth-century 'Catholic novel' see M. Bosco, *Graham Greene's Catholic Imagination,* American Academy of Religion, Oxford, 2005, pp. 7–11.

[3] On the early British Catholic Enlightenment see G. Glickman, *The English Catholic Community 1688–1745: Politics, Culture and Ideology*, Boydell, Woodbridge, 2009, pp. 221–39. On late eighteenth-century Catholicism see B. Carter, 'Controversy and Conciliation in the English Catholic Enlightenment, 1790–1840', *Enlightenment and Dissent* vol. 7 (1988), pp.3–24; J. P. Chinnici, *The English Catholic Enlightenment: John Lingard and the Cisalpine Movement, 1780–1850*, Patmos Press: Shepherdstown, WV, 1980; G. Holt, *The English Jesuits in the Age of Reason*, Burns and Oates: Tunbridge Wells, 1993; Saward, Morrill and Tomko (2011), pp. 253–379.

[4] See, for instance, C. Jager, *The Book of God: Secularization and Design in the Romantic Era*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA, 2007, p. 134.

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[5] On the anti-Catholic tradition see C. Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England: A Political and Social Study*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1993; J. Black, *Eighteenth-Century Britain, 1688–1783*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, 2001, pp. 141–3.
[6] C. J. Sommerville, *The Secularization of Early Modern England: From Religious Culture to Religious Faith*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, pp. 165–77.
[7] Sommerville (1992), p. 182.
[8] Glickman (2009), p. 178.
[9] M. A. Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, c.1996, p. 279.
[10] I. Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*, 3rd edn, Penguin, London, 1972, p. 91.
[11] S. R. Littlewood, *Elizabeth Inchbald and her Circle*, D. O'Connor, London, 1921, pp. 1–17; R. Manvell, *Elizabeth Inchbald: England's Principal Woman Dramatist and Independent Woman of Letters in 18th Century London*, University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 1987, pp. 1–8; A. Jenkins, '*I'll Tell You What': The Life of Elizabeth Inchbald*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, 2003, pp. 1–14; P. Clemit, 'Introduction' in E. Inchbald, *A Simple Story*, Penguin Classics, London, 1996.
[12] J. Boaden, *Memoirs of Mrs Inchbald*, R. Bentley, London, 1833, vol. 1, p. 333.
[13] Manvell (1987), pp. 68, 74–5.
[14] Jenkins (2003), p. 278.
[15] W. McKee, *Elizabeth Inchbald: Novelist*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington DC, 1935, p. 121; Manvell (1987), p. 73.
[16] Jenkins (2003), p. 277.
[17] B. Keegan, '"Bred a Jesuit": *A Simple Story* and Late Eighteenth Century Catholic Culture', *Huntington Library Quarterly* vol. 71 (2008), pp. 687–706; B. Judson, 'The Psychology of Satan: Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story*', *English Literary History* vol. 76 (2009), pp. 599–624.
[18] Keegan (2008), p. 691.
[19] J. Berington, *An Examination of Events Termed Miraculous, as Reported in Letters from Italy*, Oxford, 1796; J. Milner, *A Serious Expostulation with the Rev. Joseph Berington, upon his Theological Errors concerning Miracles,* London, 1797.
[20] C. Craft-Fairchild, *Masquerade and Gender: Disguise and Female Identity in Eighteenth-Century Fictions by Women*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA, 1993, n. p. 85; Tompkins, 'Explanatory Notes' in *Simple Story*, n. p. 340.
[21] J. Rowe, '"The lopped tree": The Re-formation of the Suffolk Catholic Community' in N. Tyacke (ed.), *England's Long Reformation 1500–1800*, UCL Press, London, 1998, pp. 167–94.
[22] CUL Hengrave MS 76/2/19, 21.
[23] Carteret Leathes to Sir William Gage, 13 March 1744, CUL Hengrave MS 88/4/56.
[24] P. Sigl, 'The Elizabeth Inchbald Papers', *Notes and Queries* vol. 29 (1982), pp. 220–24, at p. 223.
[25] M. Tomko, 'Remembering Elizabeth Inchbald's *The Massacre*: Romantic cosmopolitanism, sectarian history, and religious difference', *European Romantic Review* vol. 19 (2008), pp. 1–18, at pp. 4–5; M. Tomko, *British Romanticism and the Catholic Question: Religion, History and National Identity, 1778–1829*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, 2011, pp. 56–60.
[26] T. Gage, 'Some Account of the Manor and Parish of Hengrave in the County of Suffolk', CUL Hengrave MS 1/1–4.
[27] F. Young, *The Gages of Hengrave and Suffolk Catholicism, 1640–1767*, Catholic Record Society, London, forthcoming; F. Young, *Rookwood Family Papers, 1606–1760*, Suffolk Records Society, Woodbridge, forthcoming.
[28] SRO(B) HA 528/40.
[29] CUL Hengrave MS 1/4, fol. 338.
[30] The family feud is recorded in five letters written by Delariviere Gage to an unknown recipient between 28 October and 28 November 1729, CUL Hengrave MS 88/4/28, 29, 31, 32, 33.
[31] Dorothy Wordwell was described as 'Servant to Madam [Delariviere] Gage' in the Constables' lists of 'Popish Non-Jurors' refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance to George II in 1745, SRO (B) D8/1/3, bundle 2.
[32] Downside Abbey MSS, Hengrave Register.
[33] SRO (B) 449/4/19.
[34] Stanningfield parish register (microfilm), SRO (B) J552/8.
[35] Downside Abbey MSS, Hengrave Register.

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[36] This Mary Simpson seems to have been a member of the Coldham congregation as she was buried at Stanningfield on 7 September 1765, SRO (B) J552/8.
[37] J. Rowe (ed.), 'Norwich Diocesan Return of Papists 11 November 1767 (Norfolk Record Office, DN/DIS 9/16)', in D. Chadd (ed.), *Religious Dissent in East Anglia* III, University of East Anglia, Norwich, 1996, p. 207.
[38] J. Gerard (ed. P. Caraman), *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1951, pp. 24–31.
[39] J. Morris (ed.) *The Condition of Catholics under James I: Father Gerard's Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot*, Longmans, Green and Co., London,1871, pp. 85–6.
[40] G. Holt, *St. Omers and Bruges Colleges, 1593–1773: A Biographical Dictionary*, CRS, London, 1979, pp. 224–5.
[41] O. Tesimond (ed. F. Edwards), *The Gunpowder Plot: The Narrative of Oswald Tesimond alias Greenway*, Folio Society, London, 1973, pp. 99–100.
[42] For the library inventory, see CUL Hengrave MS 77/2, fols. 28–56.
[43] F. Young, '"An Horrid Popish Plot": The Failure of Catholic Aspirations in Bury St. Edmunds, 1685–88', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* vol. 41 (2006), pp. 209–55.
[44] A detailed account of the Catholic missions in Bury in the years 1732–43 can be found in the diary of another Benedictine monk, Alexius Jones, who was chaplain to the Bond family in the town, CUL Hengrave MS 69.
[45] Alban Butler to John Joseph Hornyold, 23 December 1753, Westminster Diocesan Archives, A 40/97.
[46] Boaden (1833), vol. 1, p. 4.
[47] Rowe (1996), p. 213.
[48] Flempton-cum-Hengrave parish register (microfiche), SRO(B) FL571/1.
[49] *Simple Story*, pp. 3–5.
[50] J. Gage, *The History and Antiquities of Hengrave in Suffolk*, Bury St Edmunds, 1822, pp. 245–6.
[51] CUL Hengrave MS 1/4, fol. 341.
[52] J. Gage, *The History and Antiquities of Suffolk: Thingoe Hundred,* John Deck, London, 1838, p. 210.
[53] Jenkins (2003), pp. 7, 8.
[54] Tompkins (1988), n. p. 341.
[55] S. H. A. Hervey (ed.), *Rushbrook Parish Registers with Jermyn and Davers Annals*, G. Booth, Woodbridge, 1903, pp. 310–38.
[56] Hervey (1903), p. 85. For the Lunehams see *Simple Story*, pp. 91, 93.
[57] Tompkins (1988), n. p. 341.
[58] *Diaries*, pp. 249, 255, 266, 271.
[59] Tomko (2011), p. 56.
[60] CUL Hengrave MS 1/4, fol. 73.
[61] *Simple Story*, p. 40.
[62] G. Holt, *The English Jesuits 1650–1829: A Biographical Dictionary*, CRS, London, 1984, p. 78.
[63] *Bury Register* (private collection), fol. 102.
[64] *Simple Story*, p. 38.
[65] Holt (1993), pp. 114–26.
[66] *Simple Story*, p. 38.
[67] SRO(B) HD526/123/9.
[68] E. Farrer, 'Coldham Hall and the Rookwoods', *East Anglian Miscellany*, newspaper cutting circa 1920, SRO(B) HD526/123/6.
[69] *Diaries*, pp. 256, 259, 265, 269, 271.
[70] *Diaries*, p. 266.
[71] Boaden (1833), vol. 1. pp. 17, 142, 250, 267, 297, 333; vol. 2, pp. 6, 92.
[72] Sigl (1982), p. 221; J. Waller, *A List of Interesting Autograph Letters*, John Waller, London, 1872, nos. 188 and 119. No. 119 is described as '2½ pp., 8vo. 29 April 1789. From Coldham Hall'.
[73] *Simple Story*, p. 46.
[74] *Simple Story*, pp. 325–6.
[75] See C. Paine, *The Culford Estate 1780–1935*, Ingham Local History Group, Ingham, 1993.
[76] Thomas Bray to Sir William Gage, 30 October 1741, CUL Hengrave MS 88/4/42.
[77] *Simple Story*, p. 225.
[78] Richard Holmes to Delariviere Gage, 4 March 1743, CUL Hengrave MS 88/4/53.

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[79] Sir William Gage to Richard Holmes, circa 1746, CUL Hengrave MS 88/4/34.
[80] *Simple Story*, p. 34.
[81] CUL Hengrave MS 1/4, fols 313–4. Sir William does not seem to have had much interest in his Montserrat estate and sold it to Thomas Meade.
[82] Sir Thomas Day to Sir William Gage, 11 January 1743, CUL Hengrave MS 88/4/48.
[83] *Simple Story*, p. 196.
[84] M. A. Stewart, *Domestic Realities and Imperial Fictions: Jane Austen's Novels in Eighteenth-Century Contexts*, University of Georgia Press, Athens, GA, 1993, p. 106.
[85] CUL Hengrave MS 1/4, fol. 348.
[86] CUL Hengrave MS 1/3, fol. 317.
[87] On Catholicism in Lancashire see J. A. Hilton, *Catholic Lancashire: from Reformation to Renewal 1559–1991*, Phillimore, Chichester, 1994. On the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism in East Anglia see Rowe (1998), pp. 167–94.

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