INTRODUCTION

Background

In the 1980s, while completing a book on education and literacy in late medieval England, I ran across a manuscript housed at the University of Nottingham containing fair copies, synopses, and selections of letters and household accounts from the family of Sir Francis Willoughby (1546/7–1596) of Wollaton Hall outside Nottingham. A descendant, Cassandra Willoughby (1670–1735), composed this 'Account of the Willoughbys of Wollaton' between 1695 and 1721. In 1687 she had moved into Wollaton Hall, a family residence that had been mostly deserted since a fire in 1642. There she took it upon herself to investigate the library. In the process she copied down (partially or fully or in summary form) in two volumes a cache of family letters and household accounts dating from the 1540s until 1690. The second volume of her 'Account', hereafter *The Continuation of the History of the Willoughby Family*, which picks up the family history with Percival Willoughby (*c.*1560–1643), Francis's son-in-law, was edited and published in 1958 by A.C. Wood.[1] The first volume of Cassandra's 'Account' (hereafter Account), which includes letters, accounts, and genealogical materials prior to the 1630s and comprises nearly 200 folio pages, provides one of the most extensive and intimate portraits of an Elizabethan family that survives. It has never been published in full, although it has recently garnered attention particularly in regard to a growing interest in letter writing in Elizabethan England.[2] Cassandra concentrated her

[1] Cassandra, Duchess of Chandos, *The Continuation of the History of the Willoughby Family, being Vol. II of the Manuscript*, ed. A.C. Wood (Eton, 1958), hereafter *The Continuation of the History*.

[2] Extensive excerpts were published in W.H. Stevenson (ed.), *Historical Manuscripts Commission Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton* (London, 1911), 504–610, hereafter *HMC Middleton*. Among more recent uses of Cassandra's 'Account' (hereafter Account) is an article by Alice Friedman, 'Portrait of a marriage: The Willoughby letters of 1585–1586', *Signs*, 11 (1986), 542–555, and her *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (Chicago, 1989); references to the Willoughbys in James Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford, 2006), esp. 78–79; and an extended analysis of one of the vituperative letters from the Willoughbys in Michelle

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efforts on recording personal letters between Sir Francis, his wife, his sister, his father-in-law, his six daughters, and various sons-in-law and prospective sons-in-law. The letters describe events, relate casual gossip, and record opinions on such varied themes as love and marriage, household management, social expectations, and the everyday concerns (including intrigues) of servants, relatives, neighbours, and members of the Elizabethan court. The collection especially sheds light on the experiences of the Willoughby women (eight of the main correspondents are women). Overall the letters provide portraits of a range of romances and marital experiences, and of private concerns and personal struggles within an upper-gentry family with significant connections to the court.

The marriage between Francis Willoughby and Elizabeth Lyttleton, which began in 1564 when they were 17 and 18 years of age respectively, was stormy and unstable, and the couple was given to impassioned confrontations and accusations.[3] A dominant thread running through the letters is the refusal of Elizabeth Lyttleton Willoughby to obey her husband and his efforts to force her obedience through appeals to her father, public shaming, imprisonment within the household, and, finally, banishment from the house and family. Remarkably, these letters reproduce a number of quotations from their conversations written to provide correspondents with detailed evidence of indignities suffered at the hands of their spouse or other household members. By contrast, the marriage of their daughter Bridget to a cousin, Sir Percival Willoughby, was a solid, even happy one; their early letters reflect this in delightful expressions of love, while their mature correspondence reveals trust and respect despite difficult financial situations. Other daughters had more problematic marriages, also detailed to some degree in this Account. Overall, the letters describe a range of marital experiences in the Elizabethan context from companionable, such as that between Bridget and Percival, to troubled, such as that of Bridget's

O'Callaghan, ' "An Uncivill Scurrilous Letter", "Womanish Brabb[l]es", and the Letter of Affront', in James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (eds), *Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain* (Philadelphia, PA, 2016), 174–177. There is also a brief mention in Norman Jones, *The Birth of the Elizabethan* Age (Oxford, 1993), 112–114. Rosemary O'Day's *Women's Agency in Early Modern Britain and the American Colonies* (Abingdon, 2007) uses Cassandra Willoughby's notebooks, currently housed at the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, which include an earlier draft of the Account. The materials in the Huntington Library, Stowe Brydges Collection are referenced herein as STB. STB 1 is Box 1, in which each document is catalogued in a separate folder. STB Box 2, folders 1 and 2 contain far more material. STB 2 (1) holds three notebooks of material, the first two of which are relevant to the present project.

[3] Copies of original portraits of Francis and Elizabeth (Figures 2 and 3), dated 1573, now hang in Wollaton Hall. Francis is described as 26 years of age and Elizabeth as 27.

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parents and several of their other daughters. They afford us rare and detailed insights into the social and emotional dynamics of a long-standing, wealthy, and well-connected household during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth I, her predecessors and successors.

The letters enrich our knowledge of early modern childhood, education, marriage and marriage settlements, the roles of wives, daughters, husbands, and fathers, and the activities of servants. They provide insights into Queen Elizabeth's role in supporting disadvantaged women, the social dynamics of Elizabethan marriage, and the functions of a large Elizabethan household with an extended social network. They also offer a rich source for studying the culture of letter writing and of literacy (especially female literacy). Less discernible are the religious dynamics of this extended family in the wake of the Reformation. It is possible that the various correspondents purposefully avoided mention of religious issues at a time when Catholics and Catholic sympathizers (for example, the Lyttleton family, and certainly one of the prospective sons-in-law) were in retreat and those with Calvinist tendencies (such as, apparently, Sir Francis) were not in accord with the Elizabethan settlement of the Church.

In the first part of the introduction I look at Cassandra Willoughby (her life and her role in preserving the letter collection) and follow with a brief investigation into the rise of the Willoughby family in Nottinghamshire, concluding with the context for the Elizabethan Willoughbys and a description of the edited text.

Cassandra Willoughby as Transcriber and Editor

Without Cassandra Willoughby, the letters that passed between Francis Willoughby, his wife, their daughters, sons-in-laws and acquaintances, would have been lost to time. With one exception the original letters have not survived,[4] apparently thrown away in about 1832 when the sixth Baron Middleton, Henry Willoughby, built a new strongroom for his personal papers.[5] We can, however, reconstruct the process Cassandra followed in her compilation and

[4] See Friedman, 'Portrait of a marriage', which includes four letters that have survived as part of the Burghley archives (BL, Lansdowne MS 46/30–33), a copy of only one of which, however, Cassandra seems to have seen and copied into her Account. The circumstances of the survival of this letter collection are similar to those attending the letters of John Holles which were copied down by his son. As in the Willoughby case, only one original letter of all the copied Holles letters has survived. P.R. Seddon (ed.), *Letters of John Holles 1587–1637*, I, Thoroton Society Record Series (TSRS), XXXI (Nottingham, 1975), xi.

[5] Pamela Marshall, *Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (Nottingham, 1999), 11; in Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, xvii n. 1, Wood gives the date as 1835.

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judge the extent to which we can use her account in reconstructing the lives of her great-great-grandparents and great-grandparents/aunts/uncles.

Cassandra Willoughby was the only daughter of Francis Willoughby (the naturalist) (1635–1672), and the great-great granddaughter of Sir Francis Willoughby (known as the builder) and his wife Elizabeth Lyttleton.[6] (See Table 1.) Cassandra was an educated, well-travelled, one might say scholarly woman.[7] Her upbringing, interrupted by the death of her father when she was two years of age, was in a household that included John Ray, her father's collaborator and her brothers' tutor. Then, in 1676, when Cassandra was six years of age, her life was interrupted again when her mother, Emma Barnard, married Sir Josiah Child, moving with her children (but not with Ray) from the family home in Middleton, Warwickshire, to Essex.[8] By all accounts the relationship between the children (Cassandra and her two brothers Francis and Thomas) and their stepfather was strained.

In large part due to these strains, Cassandra's brothers and soon Cassandra herself moved from Essex, settling at Wollaton Hall in Nottinghamshire (Figure 1), the other Willoughby family home, which had not been kept up, had been partially burnt down in 1642, and had been used to house Parliamentary forces during the

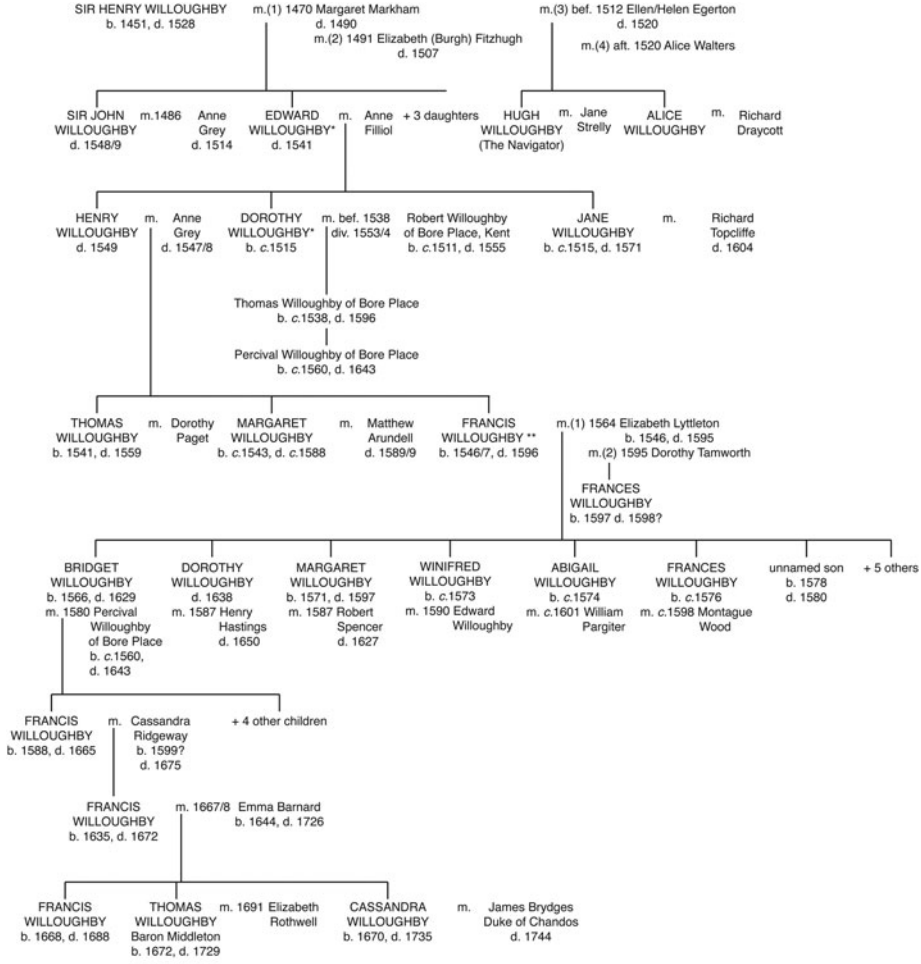
[6] Contemporary references to the Willoughbys of Wollaton generally follow the spelling that was common in the day: 'Willughby' rather than the more modern form of the family name 'Willoughby'. This edition uses Willoughby throughout except where the primary sources use 'Willughby'. Cassandra differentiated between the two branches of the family – those at Bore Place and those at Wollaton – by using different spellings; thus, when Bridget Willughby married Percival Willoughby, Cassandra changed her name to Bridget Willoughby. The names of the Wollaton family are doubled as 'Willoughby (Willughby)' in the index for ease of reference.

[7] Information on the life of Cassandra Willoughby comes from Joan Johnson, *Excellent Cassandra: The Life and Times of the Duchess of Chandos* (Gloucester, 1981); Rosemary O'Day (ed.), *Cassandra Brydges (1670–1735), First Duchess of Chandos: Life and Letters* (Woodbridge, 2007); and Huntington Library, Stowe Temple Brydges Collection, STB, Boxes 1 and 2.

[8] Emma Barnard was the third wife of Sir Josiah Child (*c.*1633–1699). Famous as a merchant and mercantile thinker, Child was a member of Parliament on and off from 1658 to 1685, a founding member of the Royal African Company, owner of over 1,000 acres in Jamaica and, due to his purchases of stock in the East India Company, a controlling presence in the East India Company in the 1680s and 1690s. 'Contemporary notices of him are generally unfavourable', as he was considered to be 'vain, covetous and […] cunning', *The History of Parliament Online:* http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/search/site/Josiah%20Child. Perhaps Cassandra was drawn to the story of Francis Willoughby, as she and her brothers had also lost a parent very young and were forced to move. Her brothers were named Francis and Thomas, just as Margaret Willoughby's brothers were. Cassandra lost one of her brothers young, just as Margaret had. See Table 1. I thank Miranda Bethell for this insight.

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Table 1. Genealogy of the Willoughby Family.



* Edward Willoughby had an illegitimate son, George Willoughby, alias Foxe, who died in 1594.
** Francis Willoughby had an illegitimate son, William Deverell, alias Willoughby, born in 1584/5.

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Figure 1. Jan Siberbrechets, Wollaton Hall and Park, Nottinghamshire (1697), oil on canvas, in colour online, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, CT. This painting illustrates Wollaton Hall at the time when Cassandra and her brother Thomas were in residence.

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Civil War.[9] It was in 1687, when Cassandra was not more than 17 years of age, that her older brother Francis asked her to join him at Wollaton to preside over its rehabilitation. She went, 'thinking it would be no small pleasure to me to be Mistress of Wollaton and to doe whatever I had a mind to'.[10] They proceeded to repair, renovate, redecorate, rebuild, and restore order to the estate.[11] Francis died in 1688; Cassandra, however, remained at Wollaton and was joined by her younger brother, Thomas, and his tutor Thomas Man (*c.*1655–1690), who was a physician.[12] Dr Man, with whom Cassandra shared an interest in gardens – especially the physic garden kept at Wollaton for Dr Man's use – continued at Wollaton and seems to have been the third part in the family nucleus.[13] Cassandra, Thomas, and Dr Man restored and labelled her father's cabinet of specimens, both honouring and continuing his work.[14] When Man died in 1690, he left his books to Thomas and a writing desk to Cassandra.[15] Cassandra continued (on and off) at Wollaton, helping to oversee the house and estate, run the household and, after his marriage in 1691, raise her brother's family and continue to advise him. Cassandra also travelled with her brother 'to visit the family estates and check on their condition', suggesting that she played a role in managing the Willoughby estates.[16]

[9] For information relating to this fire and the damage to Wollaton Hall, see Cassandra Willoughby, 'An Account of the Willughby's of Wollaton', 2, Nottingham University Library MSS Collection, Middleton Collection (hereafter Mi), LM 27, fos 70–72; Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 66–68, and 'The Wollaton Estate and the Civil War, 1643–1647', in J.H. Hobson, P.A. Kennedy, and V.W. Walker (eds), *A Nottinghamshire Miscellany*, TSRS, XXI (Nottingham, 1962), 3–4. Sir Percival Willoughby, Cassandra's great-grandfather, made only essential repairs, and the Hall remained virtually unoccupied by the family until Cassandra and her brother moved in. Percival Willoughby died at Wollaton in 1643.

[10] Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 125; Mi, LM 27, fo. 137; Johnson, *Excellent Cassandra*, 34.

[11] Johnson, *Excellent Cassandra*, 36.

[12] Isabelle Charmantier, Dorothy Johnston, and Paul J. Smith, 'The Legacies of Francis Willughby', in Tim Birkhead (ed.), *Virtuoso by Nature: The Scientific Worlds of Francis Willughby, FRS (1635–1672)* (Leiden, 2016), 369–372.

[13] Johnson, *Excellent Cassandra*, 38–40; Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 129–135, 137–138; Mi, LM 27, fos 142–149, 152–153.

[14] Charmantier et al., 'Legacies', 366–368, 371. With Dr Thomas Man, Thomas continued the insect studies his father's death left unfinished (p. 371).

[15] For his will, see TNA, PROB 11/414/320, fos 295–295v: 'those Effects, the income of my Chambers etc which I have in Colledge, my books which have a place amongst Sir Thomas Willoughbys, I leave to Sir Thomas Willughby; and those written books or papers I desire may be read by him and what he thinks not for his vse be burnt'. Man's will also mentions the pupils he was teaching.

[16] Johnson, *Excellent Cassandra*, 52–55.

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Cassandra also spent time in the old family library and among its neglected family papers. There she found deeds, wills, marriage settlements, and other, mostly legal, papers dating back to the twelfth century, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century family letters, copies of orders for running the household from the sixteenth century, and sixteenth- and seventeenth-century household accounts and inventories.[17] Cassandra then proceeded to copy down some of these materials. Cassandra also kept a journal from 1692 to 1718.[18] She wrote poems and essays, and produced at least two letter books with copies of outgoing and some incoming letters from 1713 to 1735.[19] In 1713, at the age of 43, Cassandra married her first cousin, James Brydges, who, by 1720, had been made duke of Chandos. Moving from Wollaton to her husband's house in Stanmore, Middlesex in 1713, Cassandra took on numerous social obligations and ongoing financial concerns as well as responsibilities for her husband's children from a previous marriage, his extended family and a household of upwards of ninety members, including a chaplain and a librarian. James Brydges was a notable patron and collector of art, and Cassandra herself was an 'amateur but expert' artist, particularly involved with painting portraits of family members.[20] Together, they patronized a number of artists, including the women artists, Maria and Adriana Verelst.[21] Rosemary O'Day describes the emergence of several elite 'crazes' of the time: 'for family history, genealogy, and

[17] Although Cassandra consistently refers to these papers as papers found at Wollaton, she may also have copied papers brought to Wollaton, along with the family library, from Middleton Hall where her father and mother had primarily lived. Many of the documents she saw had descriptions written by her father on them.

[18] Cited in O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges*, 2 and n. 3. It is in two sections and focuses mainly on her travels. See Huntington Library STB, Box 2 (2), misc. uncatalogued papers and notebooks, and the Stoneleigh MSS, Gloucestershire Papers 20–21 at the SBTRO (DR 18/20/21/1).

[19] The letter books are edited in O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges*; letter book I is in the Stoneleigh MSS collection at the SBTRO (DR 18/20/21/2). Letter book II is owned by the Governors of North London Collegiate School. The Huntington Library has a collection of letters to Cassandra and two poems written by her in the Stowe Temple Brydges Collection, STB 1 (file nos 1-47) and STB (2). Uncatalogued misc. papers; compiled family genealogies are in BL, Stowe MS 656 and in Huntington Library STB 2 (1) book 3, a genealogical notebook. Additional genealogical material is in Mi, LM 13.

[20] Rosemary O'Day, 'Family galleries: Women and art in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 71 (2008), 323–349. The 'amateur but expert' assessment is on p. 323. Many of the paintings in the homes of James Brydges and Cassandra were unattributed and, according to their inventories, had no value. Most of them were quite likely done by Cassandra, whom Horace Walpole once called 'a great artist'. See STB 1, no. 45, for a signed but undated and unfinished graphite drawing by Cassandra of Thoresby Hall. The sketch suggests that she lacked instruction in perspective drawing. O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges*, 342, fig. 13.

[21] *Ibid.* 273, fig. 11.

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for likenesses of living family women and art […] for collecting, classifying, and recording, and for touring and topography [… and] gardening'.[22] Cassandra was accomplished in all of these, but for the most part used her talents toward serving the needs and memorialization of her family.

As duchess of Chandos, Cassandra lived a socially active life; her correspondence, which was largely but not exclusively with women, shows Cassandra involved in matchmaking, acting as a godparent, shielding her husband from importunate relatives, discussing her health (which was often problematic) and that of her correspondents, attending to properties, handling requests regarding stocks (for example, the stock of the South Sea Company) and positions, and coping with her husband's debts. Her interests ranged from finance to medicine, to patronage, to painting and architecture, to parliamentary elections. Cassandra took particular care to keep in touch with relatives and also friends, for, as she says in one of her early letters, 'I take too much sattisfaction in hearing from my friends, to lose it by a neglect of my own.'[23]

Cassandra was, to a very great degree, self-effacing. One must examine minutely everything she touched to find her imprint. She managed and consulted on properties and stock purchases; she planned and executed architectural renovations, based on knowledge acquired through her travels surveying English architecture and gardens. She managed her own finances with care but also took on advising members of her family and sometimes helping to support them. She was a noted musician, textile artist, and portrait painter, who, however, seems to have put everyone else's interests first and desired, above all, to be useful. As Cassandra herself put it, when explaining her reasons for marrying, 'I had no concern so much at my heart as what might tend to the good of the family.'[24] When she died in 1735, James Brydges wrote to his nephew that it was 'a loss whereby I am deprived of one of the most excellent persons of the age'.[25]

Despite these many activities, and despite bouts of ill health, Cassandra continued to work on her Account, or at least on the second volume, until the 1720s.[26] In preparing it she was working with a very large cache of letters and accounts, some of which were in poor shape and difficult to read. She praises the letters

[22] O'Day, 'Family galleries', 331–332.
[23] O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges*, 334.
[24] *Ibid.* 12.
[25] *Ibid.* 324.
[26] Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, xi.

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written by Bridget Willoughby Peckham (*c.*1600), half-sister of Percival Willoughby, to Bridget Willoughby as:

> well writ, the hand fine, and the manner of expression so agreeable to the present stile and mode of writing, that I should not have thought a letter of hers had been writ more days then it had been years. And indeed many of those letters which are above a hundred years old, are expressed in very much the same manner, that the way of writing letters now is, and much more like the present English than some of those letters which are in the Library at Wollaton, which are of a later date.[27]

With or without regard to the quality of older handwritings, Cassandra's accuracy in copying letters and overall believability must be assessed.

Nearly all the materials transcribed by Cassandra in her preparatory notes or in her final family history have been lost. In the interest of time, perhaps, and certainly in the face of some difficulty in reading the materials, Cassandra paraphrased, provided a précis or truncated her sources.[28] Regarding this practice, for example, while introducing letters relating to Margaret Willoughby, Lady Arundell, Francis Willoughby's older sister, Cassandra wrote, 'I shall shew by copying part of a letter from her to her Brother'.[29] Concerning the description of a conversation between Lady Arundell and Squire, one of Elizabeth Willoughby's servants, Cassandra wrote, 'There is a very long dialogue writ down by Squire, too much to copy'.[30]

Looking to what she does include, we can judge how accurate Cassandra's transcriptions are by examining the surviving original letter.[31] (See Appendix to this Introduction.) Elizabeth Willoughby wrote this particular letter toward the end of 1585, at a time in the lives of Elizabeth and Francis when they had been separated for a number of years and she was appealing to return to the marriage and his house. The final transcription by Cassandra, while accurately paraphrasing some of the letter and, at times, copying it word for word, omits significant portions.[32] Cassandra softens Elizabeth's

[27] Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 22; Mi, LM 27, fos 17–18.

[28] On Cassandra's practice in preparing the family history, see O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges*, 49, where O'Day notes that she edited and re-edited her history, searched out facts (e.g. in parish registers), and talked about her work with her brother and others. See the untidy early draft of her family history in the Huntington Library, STB 2 (1), 3 notebooks.

[29] Cassandra Willoughby, Account, Mi, LM 26, fo. 58 (hereafter Mi, LM 26, or the Account): see p. 91 below.

[30] Mi, LM 26, fo. 70: see pp. 103–104 below.

[31] BL, Lansdowne MS 46/31; Friedman, in 'Portrait of a marriage', edits the letter on pp. 550–552.

[32] Mi, LM 26, fos 126–127: see pp. 59–63, 157–158 below.

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accusation that Francis was spying on her or believing slanders being bruited around about her. Cassandra also excludes a segment of the letter that relates to Lady Willoughby's expenses while in London and her reluctance to return to Francis for fear she would lose the small living she was currently allowed. In the original letter, but not in the copy, Lady Willoughby writes that she was warned that Francis had determined and vowed, should she return, to lock her in a chamber and not allow her to go out, even into the garden, without his leave and licence. She mentions 'her old yeares' and her body now subject to sickness and her mind disquieted with her former troubles, none of which is in the copy letter. She then promises to:

> study to conforme all my wordes as I may best content & please yow, as also to performe all good duties that do become a loving & obedient wife towardes her husband. So on the other side my assured hope & truste is that yow having buryed & blotted out of yor remembrance all former unkyndnesses contryved againste me, will both repute of me as of yor honest & lawfull wife, & requite me wth ~~all~~ like love & offices of a good & kynd husband

most of which is not included in Cassandra's copy letter. While copying accurately the material she includes, Cassandra excludes materials that describe a deeper chasm and greater suspicion between Elizabeth and Francis than is evident from what she repeats or retells. It may be that her sensitivity as a descendant moved her to exclude some of the more emotionally difficult or dramatic passages. As she notes in her account for 1578, when copying down a heated (and public) conversation between Francis and Elizabeth: 'Many more spitefull disrespectfull speeches she [Elizabeth] made which are there copied, but this I think is sufficient to shew the nature of their uneasiness, and too much to be noted down by a Granddaughter in the fourth descent from this Lady.'[33]

There are also occasional differences between the draft notes for Cassandra's Account, held in the Huntington Library, and her fair copy, edited here.[34] In her earlier notes, when describing a letter from Francis Willoughby to his father-in-law, Sir John Lyttleton, she wrote:

> In this letter he writes that being to goe to London he [Sir Francis] set down directions for his Men to observe in ordering his family in his Absence […] viz That Joahn should look to the ordering of the Children, to which she [Elizabeth] said who ever should take upon them to order her Children in her Presence she would Mischief, she said Joahn was his Whore and that

[33] Mi, LM 26, fo. 90: see p. 123 below.
[34] STB Box 2 (1), books 1 and 2.

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> she would not be left amongst such Villains, but would goe into the Town […] which Sr F:W: denying her she fell into very pashonate expression and sitting down called for a Knife threatning to make away with herself, and the Knife being denyed her she would have struck her Self in the Belly with her Scisors if she had not been prevented, ^then she^ said she would never eat or drink more, but with the same Knife she was next to eat with would Kill herself[35]

The fair copy omits the comment about Joahn being Francis's whore as well as the passage where Elizabeth says she will never eat or drink again but would use the knife to kill herself.[36] Throughout this edition any differences between the draft notes and the fair copy of Cassandra's Account are referenced in the footnotes or, for longer passages, included in brackets and italics in the text itself.

There is also a problem of dating in Cassandra's Account. Cassandra clearly tried to copy the letters in chronological order, although at one point she skips from 1575 back to 1572. There are letters, however, that are undated, or only partially dated. In particular, the letters from Lady Margaret Arundell, sister to Francis Willoughby, are mostly dated by month and day, but not by year, although they do mention where she is at the time of writing.[37] Cassandra has had to contextualize Lady Arundell's letters in terms of what she knows of her interactions with her brother, her travels and the world around her in order to guess how to place her letters.

Despite dating difficulties and Cassandra's practice of excluding information or paraphrasing her materials, she is remarkably accurate in what she reports and never manufactures content.[38] Her accuracy is evident in a letter that she copied from Queen Jane to Edward Willoughby in 1537, which is a near duplicate of an original letter from Jane Seymour to Edward's brother John Willoughby.[39]

[35] STB Box 2 (1), book 1, fo. 22v.

[36] Mi, LM 26, fo. 92: see p. 125 below.

[37] Mi, LM 26, fo. 63: see p. 94 below. Cassandra notes that 'The date of the year, is not writ to any of these letters from Lady Arundell.' See also Mi, LM 26, fo. 106: see p. 137 below.

[38] See her transcriptions of her father's paper volume of memoirs and observations taken out of old muniments, which are also accurately done, with only an occasional omission, addition, or correction. Mi, LM 13, summarized in small part in *HMC Middleton*, 269–271. See Mi, LM 26, fos 4–6 and 8–13, where she transcribes fos 47–61 of her father's account of the Marmion family in the period after the Conquest and his account of the Montforts and the Barons' revolt of 1264–1267. She gives credit to her father's MS 'which gives an account of some Antiquities of our Family'.

[39] Mi, LM 26, fo. 35v: see p. 68 below; *HMC Middleton*, 517–518. Mi, C 10; Mary A. Welch (ed.), 'Willoughby letters of the first half of the sixteenth century', TSRS, XXIV (Nottingham, 1967), 4. As Welch notes, in editing the letter to John Willoughby,

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In addition, toward the beginning of her two volume account of the Willoughby family, Cassandra includes many pages of descriptions of the account books of George Medley, gentleman, brother-in-law, and executor of Henry Willoughby, father of Francis Willoughby, covering legal and other expenses as guardian of Sir Henry Willoughby's children from 1549 to 1562.[40] Cassandra's account echoes very exactly the surviving account books.[41] For example, when Cassandra notes 'by a book of Medeleys accounts for the childrens cloaths etc. […] I find that his Nephew Francis Willughby and his Neece Margaret removed to Tyltey April the 21th 1550', she is quoting exactly from Medley's book of accounts for 1550 where there is a memorandum 'that my Nepveu Fraunces Willoughbye and my nece Margarett Wylloughbye his syster came to Tyltey the xxi^th^ of Apryll'.[42] When Cassandra notes on folio 46 that the cost of Francis Willoughby's board at St Anthony's School in London was £2 16s 0d, she had correctly added the boarding expenses listed in the Medley Account book dating from 18 January to 13 June, 3 Mary [1554/5], although she does not mention Master Lyse, the name of the schoolmaster.[43] Similarly accurate is her calculation of the boarding expenses for Margaret Willoughby at Tilty from 9 May to 11 July 1555.[44]

In a second surviving account book in George Medley's hand, Cassandra's excerpts on fo. 52 of her Account once again accurately reflect the original, including the final summation of expenses at the very end of the manuscript.[45] Where this account book notes, in 1553: 'To the Clarke of the Signett for the chargez of Wryting and the Seale of Lycence for my coosyn Thomas Wylloughbye to goe over the seaez to the universitye of Parys to studye […] vi s viii d' Cassandra copies: 'After this there is set down 6^s^ 8^d^ paid to the Clerk of the Signet for the writing, seal and lycence for his Cousin Thomas Willughby to goe beyond sea to the University of Paris to

'The wording of this letter is almost identical with that copied by Cassandra apart from the variation in a phrase and the omission of another word.' Welch concludes that these were identical letters sent to the Willoughby brothers with scribal variants from a master draft.

[40] Thomas, Margaret, and Francis: see below, pp. 27–28.

[41] Mi, Medley Account books A 31, 32; Mi, LM 26, fos 40–55. (Mi, A 32 has duplicate pagination. Initially the folios were numbered; at some later time page numbers were added.) W.H. Stevenson also copied down extracts from these account books. *HMC Middleton*, 397–414.

[42] Mi, LM 26, fo. 40: see pp. 70–71 below; Mi, A 32, fo. 1, p. 1; also quoted in *HMC Middleton*, 399. On Tilty, located in Essex, see the edited text (hereafter 'Text'), Text n. 12.

[43] Mi, A 32, fo. 25, p. 47; *HMC Middleton*, 409.

[44] Mi, A 32, fos 25–25v, pp. 47–48.

[45] Mi, A 31; some of the expenses are transcribed in *HMC Middleton*, 397–399.

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study.'[46] With regard to a third household account book, copied down in part by W.H. Stevenson and dated 1587, Cassandra, who excerpts the same account book on folios 127v, 129–129v and 130v, includes nearly identical information with minor discrepancies.[47] Finally, for the years 1596–1599, Cassandra transcribed coal accounts, including coal receipts. There is a single surviving summary account for eleven months ending 27 August 1596 that supports her figures.[48]

If further evidence is needed to confirm the accuracy of her reporting, we find that Cassandra describes a letter:

> from Edward Willoughby to his Brother Sir Percivall [the son-in-law of Francis] dated November 1588, in which he […] tells this story of Alderman Catcher and Alderman Skinner, that they were both by order of the Privie Counsel committed to the fleet, for whiping two Gentlewomen in Bridewell as common whores, and it was supposed it would cost them 2000^{li} before they got out, the Queen taking the matter hardly against them, their fine was like to be the greater. One of these Gentlewomen was Wife to him that sue'd to be Lord Latimer, the other was Captain Nunames Wife.[49]

This same episode is described in another letter, not copied by Cassandra, sent from John Adams to his brother-in-law Percival Willoughby in the same year:

> I am more sory that Mr. Catcher the Friday next after this terme was fined for the whipping of Mrs. Newnam and Mrs. Nevill in Bridewell[50] to the Queene CCCCC^{li} and CC^{li} to the ii gentelweomen, on hundred^{li} apeec, and his fellow Skinner to on thowsand markes to the Queene, and CCCC^{li} to the two gentelweomen […]They have besydes as parte of theyre judgment iii

[46] Mi, LM 26, fo. 50: see p. 82 below; Mi, A 31, fo. 11, p. 21; *HMC Middleton*, 398. The date for this account is 1553. Another example of her accuracy is evident in Text n. 67, where she transcribed information from Mi, A 31, fo. 10. Further, she also reports correctly the sum total of expenses calculated at the very end of Mi, A 31, fo. 26v. See Text n. 76. For further references to her accuracy in transcribing information from the Account Books, see pp. 70–73, 74–85 (esp. nn. 40, 54–55, 78) and 162 (esp. n. 284), 168 (esp. n. 313). of the edited text below.

[47] *HMC Middleton*, 452–456; Mi, A 69/1–2, fos 1–13v, 19.

[48] Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 30–32; Richard S. Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton 1500–1643 with special reference to early mining in Nottinghamshire, 1500–1643', PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 1964, 96. See Mi, Ac 49: 'A note of all the changes of the Cole booke since Jo. Speed entred that is from the ii of October tell the xxviith of Auguste 1597. List of various expenses add up to 915^{li}—4^{s}—5^{d}. The whole gets from the daye abovesaid to the daye aforesaid is 6631 rookes of coles the value of them is: 1105^{li}—3^{s}—4^{d}.'

[49] Mi, LM 26, fos 133–133v: see p. 172 below.

[50] 'being ga' crossed out.

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monthes imprisonment, and to aske the gent[lewomen's] forgiveness at theyre house at the Counter and at Bridewell.[51]

Finally, there is a surviving draft letter transcribed by W.H. Stevenson from Percival Willoughby to Lord Burghley dated 1597 and a companion letter from Percival to Burghley, described by Cassandra in her Account and dated October 1597 regarding the wardship of the daughter of Sir Francis Willoughby by Dorothy Tamworth, Lady Wharton, his second wife, whose daughter had been born on 3 May of that year. They echo one another in their concerns for the overreaching of Lady Wharton, her machinations through her stepfather Sir Mychell Molins, and Percival's own poor estate, although Cassandra truncates her copy:

> There is the copy of a letter from Sir Percivall Willoughby dated October 1597 to the Lord Burghley, then Lord high Treasurer of England, who had given the wardship of that child [the youngest daughter of Sir Francis Willoughby] to his Son the Secretary. In this letter Sir Percivall desired the Lord Burghley that for the avoiding of the malice of his adversaries, and the better establishing of his perplexed estate he would vouchsafe so far to recomend his humble sute to his Son, that he might have the wardship of the child, for the land only, for such considerations as should seem good to his Honour. And that he might the better judg of the value of it, Sir Percivall writ that he had inclosed the particular of those lands, and by that particular, he would also see what lands this Lady the widow of Sir Francis Willughby, by the help of Sir Micheal Molyns, and the rest of their accomplices, had got for herself and her heirs, though her usages of Sir Francis had been such, that she had ill deserved it.[52]

[51] Mi, C 18/1; *HMC Middleton*, 158–159. The date of this letter is 21 Aug. 1588. John Adams goes on to write that the two women were pregnant, and that one of them miscarried ten weeks later as a consequence of her mistreatment: 'the cyrcumstances did aggravat the offence, first the punishment without any fault in specially the hasty proceeding, the whipping of weomen, maryed gent[elweomen] with child, crying on there knees for mercy, wipte by a man, in the sight of men, and rejoyseing, whereby proceeded untymely chyld birthe (and the chyld as they sayd borne a live, died) and this chanced within x weekes after'.

[52] Mi, LM 26, fo. 157: see pp. 198–199 below. The draft original, copied down by Stevenson, reads: 'R[ight] ho[nourable] my humble dutie remembred; I make myself bolde (humbly craving pardon) to implore the honourable contynuaunce of your Lordship's favour in recommending my former suite to Mr. Secretarie, towching the wardship of the landes of Sir Fraunces Wyllughbyes yongest daughter; being the rather incited thereunto, for that I finde the nowe Ladie Wharton, the mother thereof, to be my ernest competitour therein, suggesting many thinges alltogether untrue, to withholde the same from me, and thereby to procure it unto herself; which if your honourable Lordship doo not helpe to prevente, ~~my estate is farre more miserable then ever it was~~, I shall hardlye be able ever to free my poore estate, or to make any dewe satisfaction to Sir Fra[ncis's] many creditors. For she, which was so unkynde a wyfe, to so over loving a husbande, as

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In this particular case and in much of the other material she copied and paraphrased, Cassandra included sufficient material for the reader to conclude that, while sometimes excluding material that she regarded as superfluous, too much to copy, or too damaging to the reputation of her ancestors, she is a trustworthy witness who was not averse to describing the dramas and difficulties between Elizabeth and Francis or between other members of the family, including the servants, all of which make her Account so interesting. Rather than setting this correspondence aside because of its transmission through Cassandra's pen, it is best to study the materials we have while recognizing the problems associated with their second-hand survival.

Cassandra was also willing to draw conclusions. Her assessment of Sir Francis Willoughby's character is a sympathetic one. She notes that he appears to have been of a very mild, sweet disposition, and a lover of hospitality, but a little too apt to be imposed on by stories from his servants.[53] This portrait is somewhat belied by what appears to have been an overly suspicious character and one who not only fell out with his wife but also with his children and his son-in-law and heir, Percival Willoughby. In addition, there was at least one illegitimate child by Sir Francis, baptized in 1584/5 in the West Riding of Yorkshire,[54] while a draft will of Sir Francis in 1579, although perhaps

having absolutely contryved and gotten to herself and ^{her} heires the greatest parte of his landes, colde not afforde his dead corps the leaste parte of those ~~duties~~ rightes and obsequies which weare due to suche a man; and hath bin so harde a stepmother to his children, as firste to withdrawe his fatherly affeccion from theim in his lyfe tyme, to be a straunger, or rather an enemy, unto theim since his deathe, and nowe of late $^{by\ Sir\ My[c]hell\ Molins\ meanes}$ to invegle the yongest of them with faire promises of advauncement to come up to London, and within theis iiii^{or} or fyve dayes to bestowe her in marriage upon an apprentice or petti merchant of lytle worthe; she that hath in so many thinges (not unknowen to the worlde) since her firste meeting with Sir Fraunces soughte the subvercion and overthrowe of his howse and name: What I may then looke for att her handes (if I be $^{should\ be\ any\ waye}$ subjecte to her ^{malice}[~~whom whe holdeth her professed enemy~~] your Lordship in your honourable wysdome and consideracion may easily conjecture. And therefore humbly craving your Lordship's honourable care of my [word crossed out] releise herein, doo still rest your Lordship's in all dutie and devocion and so righte humbly take my leave.' Mi, F 10/32; *HMC Middleton*, 620–621.

[53] Mi, LM 26, fo. 87: see p. 119 below. This assessment is echoed by comments made by Thomas Stanhope, a close associate of the Willoughbys and one of the leading gentry in Nottinghamshire: 'he [Sir Francis] is […] a very sweet-natured man and not greatly followed, yet easily governed'. Centre for Kentish Studies U 1590 C 2/3, cited in Beryl Cobbing and Pamela Priestland, *Sir Thomas Stanhope of Shelford: Local Life in Elizabethan Times* (Radcliffe-on-Trent, 2003), 188.

[54] STB (2) 2, Uncatalogued half-sheet of paper signed 'Rob^{t} Barnard Vic^{r} ': see below, Introduction n. 202.

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patterned after other puritanically inclined wills, exhibits an extreme sense of sinfulness.[55] Finally, in a household where family, servants, and other hangers-on jockeyed for influence, it is telling that Sir Francis left them all in a state of limbo, having written at least four drafts of his will but dying intestate, for, as Percival Willoughby wrote to his wife in 1588, '[Francis] was every day in a thousand minds what to doe with his estate.'[56]

Cassandra concludes that Lady Willoughby seems to have been a woman of wit and virtue but of a turbulent spirit and ungovernable passions. In support of her assessment of Elizabeth, she copies down a number of letters and dialogues, one of which, to the London Alderman Catcher, in the early 1590s, certainly bears out Cassandra's description:

> You causlessly condemn me of unkindness to Percivall Willoughby. I will forbear to repeat his unfriendly behaviours, because I will not disclose his faults to a babling fool. Expecting no better than the worst you can practice, I stay my own trouble, and stay you your tongue for al = be = it, I am Fatherless, I am not Husbandless nor friendless, but
>
> A Dispiser of vain Fools
> Elizabeth Willughby.[57]

It is probable that Elizabeth used this same sharp reproachful tone with her daughters as several of them, as we will see later, accused her of misusing them. Cassandra, however, does not copy down some of those letters that might offer more insight into her troubled relationships with her daughters. On the other hand, one must keep in mind that Elizabeth, who was often ill, had had at least twelve pregnancies between 1565 and 1579, with six surviving daughters and a son (her last child) who lived to approximately two years of age.

The information in the letters that Cassandra provides offers sufficient material for the reader to conclude that issues of obedience were central to the difficulties between not only Elizabeth and Francis, but also in the lives of their daughters. Cassandra, reading these letters over a century removed, appears not to have reacted negatively to Francis's expectations of obedience from his wife and his actions and threats to curtail her freedom. Indeed, in a 1730 letter, written to a newly married niece, Cassandra advises, 'I think the best way for a wife to secure her own happiness is by striving to render her husband's life as happy as is in her power.'[58] A reader today, however,

[55] Mi, 7/180/5/1, fo. 2.
[56] Mi, LM 26, fo. 135: see p. 174 below.
[57] Mi, LM 26, fo. 133v: see p. 173 below.
[58] O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges*, 243.

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might find herself more sympathetic to Elizabeth, despite the sharpness of her language, and less inclined to view Francis as mild in his demands of her, particularly in the face of her many reported illnesses, recurrent pregnancies, and our knowledge (which Cassandra knew and Elizabeth must have known) of his infidelity in the marriage. Similarly, the control over their daughters that both Francis and Elizabeth exercised, while perhaps unremarkable for the period, produced some very unfortunate results, and issues of abusive husbands, and obedient or disobedient wives and children continue to surface in the correspondence of the next generation.

The reader of these letters must also realize that he or she may be getting only one side of the story, perhaps deliberately constructed to produce a certain response from recipients; in addition, the letters, while ostensibly private, could be expected to be read, and commented on, by others.[59] An instructive example of the problem is the description Cassandra gives, based on her reading of many family letters, of the relationship between Frances, the youngest daughter of Sir Francis and Elizabeth, and her husband Montague Wood. Cassandra notes,

> By many other letters one may believe that this Mountague Wood of Lamley was a very ill man, as well as a very ill Husband to this Frances Willughby […] I believe very soon after they married, he began to use his Wife very ill and continued to doe so as long as she lived. There are many letters from her to her Sisters which give an account of his barbarity to her viz: that he turned her out of doors, beat her, and made her suffer the want of the necessarys for life, and other of her letters complain of the unkindness of his relations to her. So that upon the whole, one may judg that she had a very miserable life.[60]

In letters not copied down by Cassandra, however, Montague Wood, writing in 1600 to Abigail Willoughby, one of Frances's sisters, offers a different side of the story:

> Good Sister I had thought not to have written unto you, untill I had sent you sum good news, but sutche occasions have happned of late, that I am forced to send you as ill news, as ever you herde and worst to me then to all the worlde besides. Soo it is that foure my last goinge to London, your sister Fraunces, by the evill perswationes of sum dishonest people hathe acquainted

[59] For an analysis of women's letter writing that elaborates on these points, see Laura E. Thomason, *The Matrimonial Trap* (Lewisburg, PA, 2014), 12–14, although her focus is on English women letter-writers in the 18th century. See also Daybell and Gordon (eds), *Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain*.

[60] Mi, LM 26, fo. 194v: see p. 251 below.

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> herselfe, withe a coople of gentlemen bothe strangers to her before nowe and to me, bothe unmaried men and of notorious fame, and hathe yelded soo mutche to her pleasures as she hathe not refused to goe to taverns, to foll withe them, I knowe not howe often, and to staye at the taverne, whole nights withe them, she hathe ridden, to one of there howses, and hathe sent awaye her servaunte for the space of three dayes not sufferinge soo mutche as her mayde to staye withe her.[61]

Clearly, both partners in this marriage were using letters to construct a case against each other and were expecting a sympathetic response from their correspondents. One also notes, since it is entirely likely that Cassandra had access to the letters of both Montague and Frances, that Cassandra may have chosen to present Frances's complaints but not those of her husband. She appears to be similarly one-sided regarding the correspondence from Dorothy Willoughby complaining about her husband Henry Hastings, although Henry appears to have tried, at least at the beginning of the marriage, to justify himself to Francis Willoughby.[62]

Generally, Cassandra seems concerned to detail cases in which the women about whom she writes were constrained or troubled in some ways, as she continues to do in the second volume of her Account, copying down Frediswith (Phridelwide/Frediswide) Willoughby Adams's complaints of not being allowed to travel,[63] detailing the financial and familial struggles of Bridget Willoughby, the problems Bridget's daughter Lettice had with an unwanted suitor, extended letters regarding arrangements and concerns about the wedding of Cassandra's grandparents (Francis Willoughby and Cassandra Ridgeway), a fall and illnesses of her grandmother Cassandra, the financial difficulties, widowhood and illnesses of her aunts, the marital explorations of her father, the pity she felt for her mother's troubles between her children and their stepfather with the jointure in her mother's remarriage, Cassandra's own trauma in losing her older brother, and her strangely strained reaction to her younger brother's marriage, at which point she abruptly ended her account.[64]

[61] Mi, C 29; The remainder of this letter and a second letter from Montague Wood full of similar complaints, are included as part of the edited text below, pp. 251–253. These letters are included by the kind permission of Lord Middleton.

[62] Mi, LM 26, fo. 168: see 211–212 below.

[63] Mi, LM 27, fos 21–22; Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 26. In a letter to Bridget Willoughby she wrote, 'her Husband does not care she should goe journeys from him […] but must sit mopeing at home by her fire side, turning apples – and may goe to Church to pray for her friends'.

[64] Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 26–29, 46–47, 62, 69–86, 89–92, and *passim*; Mi, LM 27, fos 21–24, 42–43, 64, 74–95v, 99–101, and *passim*. She ends her account with her first sight of her brother's wife: 'The first sight which I had of that Lady which my

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Cassandra, for the most part, ignored the political, financial, economic, and material aspects of the Elizabethan Willoughbys. A.C. Wood, who edited and published Volume II of Cassandra's Account in 1958, was dismissive of her perspective:

> It cannot be claimed that her narrative throws any light on the general history of the period it covers […] The explanation of so much omission must surely lie in the fact that she was a woman; a man would hardly have turned his back on the dramatic political scene in this way. We can only conclude that her sex, and the conditions of life in which women lived in the seventeenth century, narrowed her world and vision.[65]

While Cassandra did include some household accounts and a few political references, but in no systematic fashion, it is clear that she was primarily concerned with the family archive of personal letters and that she was keenly interested in the family's genealogical history and extended family ties. Rosemary O'Day has described Cassandra as being 'obsessed with ancestry, descent and connection'.[66] This genealogical interest is evident in the first 38 folio pages of her Account where she mistakenly begins with one William Willoughby, *temp*. Edward I.[67] Here she partly attempts to contextualize the early history of the family in relationship to some of the more dramatic moments in medieval English history, viz. the Baronial Revolt of the thirteenth century, some of the military excursions to the continent, the Wars of the Roses, and the revolt of Lambert Simnel under Henry VII. In these cases she largely relied, sometimes verbatim, on the published chronicles of William Dugdale, William Camden, and Richard Baker, as well as on the manuscript mentioned above written by her father.[68] These first 38 folio pages are largely derivative and not included in this edition, although it is noteworthy that she spends time detailing the marriages, not only of the sons of her Willoughby ancestors, but also the daughters who, for the most part, drop out of the standard genealogies of the time. As she moves forward in her Account, however, and begins to focus on family letters, she does not attempt to contextualize her notes in terms of national politics, nor does she try to follow the financial vagaries of Francis Willoughby's ill-conceived schemes for

Brother was to marry, struck me with such a lively impression of my eldest Brothers face (who had been dead two years and a half) that it was very hard for me to recover the great surprise which it gave me.' Chandos, *The Continuation of the History*, 141; Mi, LM 27, fo. 156.

[65] Chandos, *Continuation*, xvii–xviii.

[66] O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges*, 14.

[67] See other genealogical writings in BL, Stowe MS 656 and STB 2 (1) book 3.

[68] Mi, LM 13, a volume of memoirs and observations taken out of old muniments. See Introduction n. 38.

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manufacturing woad, glass, or iron;[69] she does not focus her attention on the building of Wollaton Hall, a project that has interested a number of scholars;[70] nor does she dwell on the declining profits of the Willoughby coal mines by the 1590s,[71] although she must, perforce, mention the financial difficulties that seep into the personal letters of Francis and Elizabeth and dominate the lives of Bridget and Percival. Instead, she organized her Account around the personalities involved, beginning with the marriage of Francis and Elizabeth and then systematically collecting information and copying letters relating to each daughter in turn. She saves, however, much of what she has to report about Bridget, the oldest daughter, and her husband Percival Willoughby, for the second volume where she continues the Account through her grandparents, parents and her own generation.

Cassandra's interest in the interpersonal relations of her ancestors has fortunately left us with a rich portrait of a family dominated by the discourse of women intersecting with the demands of husbands and would-be husbands who were at times and by turns affectionate and controlling. In the final analysis, however, they were not often capable of understanding or coping with the strong-willed Willoughby women – women who sometimes chose what, in patriarchal Elizabethan society, could only be destructive behaviour and ended up leading, as Cassandra put it, 'very unhappy lives'.

Willoughby Family Background

The Nottinghamshire Willoughbys of Wollaton would have been aware, in the seventeenth century, that their family could be traced

[69] Richard S. Smith, 'A woad growing project at Wollaton in the 1580s', *TTS*, 65 (1961), 27–46; R.S. Smith, 'Sir Francis Willoughby's ironworks, 1570–1610', *Renaissance and Modern Studies*, 11 (1967), 90–140; R.A. Pelham, 'The establishment of the Willoughby ironworks in north Warwickshire in the sixteenth century', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 4 (1953–1954), 18–29. Francis was also trying to expand coal production and the market for coal, and he was considering funding a paper mill.

[70] M. Airs, *The Tudor and Jacobean Country House: A Building History* (Stroud, 1995); Friedman, *House and Household*; Mark Girouard, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* (London, 1983); Sheila M. Strauss, *Wollaton and Wollaton Hall: A Short History* (Nottingham, 1989); Marshall, *Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family*; Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Double profile: A reconsideration of the Elizabethan style as seen at Wollaton', *The Architectural Review*, 107 (1950), 147–158; and a number of articles in *TTS*, Vols 6, 72, and 76. See also John Kelly Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton, 1547–1596', PhD thesis, University of Virginia, 1991.

[71] Smith, 'Willoughbys of Wollaton', chs 7–11; Richard S. Smith, *Early Coal-Mining around Nottingham 1500–1650* (Nottingham, 1989), 22–23. Cassandra does include some receipts from coal for 1596–1599 in the 2nd vol. of her Account, Chandos, *Continuation*, 30–32.

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to one Ralph Bugge (d. *c.*1250), a wealthy Nottingham wool merchant and Derbyshire lead mine owner who flourished in the early thirteenth century and is first mentioned in Nottingham records *c.*1209.[72] Modern research has so far been unable to push the lineage further back. Ralph Bugge built up a landed estate in Willoughby-on-the-Wolds in Nottinghamshire and left it to his youngest son Richard.[73] Within three generations the heirs of Ralph Bugge through Richard had climbed through land acquisitions and fishing rights on the Trent, profits from mining, military experience, legal careers, wealth-building marriages, and local office holding into the ranks of the upper gentry and had taken as part of their name the place name of Willoughby (spelled variously Willughby, Wylughby, Wilubee and so forth).[74]

At the time of the 1362/3 death of Sir Richard de Willoughby, chief justice and the fifth in descent from Ralph Bugge, Richard held manors in Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, and four other counties, overall holding lands in nineteen counties worth between £500 and £700 annually.[75] This placed the Willoughby wealth somewhere between that enjoyed by the lay barons and the

[72] Sir William Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (London, 1656), only carried the family's origins back to Sir Hugh Willoughby *temp.* Henry VI (p. 757b), but Robert Thoroton, *The Antiquities of Nottinghamshire* (London, 1677), 35, traced the family back to Ralph Bugge, his son Richard Bugge and grandson Richard de Willoughby, knight. Cassandra traces the Willoughby origins to William Willoughby in the reign of Edward I. This is due to a mistake in the family pedigree at Birdsall House drawn up in 1573. *HMC Middleton*, 504 n. 2. Cassandra's father Francis Willoughby's genealogical notes frequently mention Richard and Ralph Bugge, references that Cassandra did not pursue. Mi, LM 13, 39, 44, 69, 85, 97, 133, 134. The Birdsall House genealogy was probably taken from William Flower, *The Visitations of the County of Nottingham in the Years 1569 and 1614*, Harleian Society, IV (London, 1871), 145, where he begins with William Willoughby *temp.* Edward I.

[73] The earliest evidence of Ralph Bugge owning property in Willoughby is from a charter dated sometime between 1209 and 1233 in which he bought a mill and two acres of land in Willoughby-on-the Wolds. See J.C. Holt, 'Willoughby Deeds', in Patricia M. Barnes and C.F. Slade (eds), *A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton*, Pipe Roll Society, NS XXXVI (London, 1962), 181; and Michael R. Bloom, 'The careers of Sir Richard II de Wiloughby and Sir Richard III de Willoughby, chief justice of the king's bench (1338–1340); and the rise of the Willoughbys of Nottinghamshire', DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1985, ch. 1, for further information on Ralph Bugge's accumulated holdings.

[74] See *HMC Middleton*, 735, for over 30 different spellings of the name.

[75] For the lands of Richard Willoughby d.1362/3 (Mar. 14), see the *Inquisitiones Post Mortem relating to Nottinghamshire*, II, TSRS, IV (Nottingham, 1914), 256, taken at the time of his death in 1362/3. H.L. Gray has calculated, from the income tax returns for 1436, that the average income for lay barons was £882, while that of the greater knights was £208. This places Richard de Willoughby's income at the high end of the greater knights. H.L. Gray, 'Incomes from land in England in 1436', *English Historical Review*, 49 (1934), 630. *HMC Middleton*, 99; Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', 59 n. 21; the information regarding the lands in nineteen counties comes from Simon Payling, 'Sir Richard Willoughby (*c.*1290–1362), justice', *ODNB*.

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greater knights of the shire.[76] Richard also appears to have been the first of the family to exploit coal mining at Cossall and Wollaton and perhaps elsewhere. Subsequently coal, in addition to rents, agricultural profits, benefits deriving from local and national positions of responsibility, and profitable marriages undergirded the family's wealth.[77]

The Willoughbys were unusually fortunate throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. During a time of recurrent plague, wars with France, and internal conflicts, they nonetheless managed to secure their inheritance intact through male descent from the time of Ralph Bugge until the generation with which this book is concerned.[78] Regarding the final failure of the Willoughby family line in the male line at the end of the sixteenth century, Simon Payling notes that out of 45 knightly families in Nottinghamshire in 1325, 13 had failed in the male line by 1400, another 18 in the fifteenth century, and 8 in the sixteenth century. By 1700 there were only three knightly families in the shire that still continued in the male line.[79]

By the end of the fifteenth century, the Willoughbys were poised to move into the higher ranks of the aristocracy. Why they did not do so rests, in part, on the careers of two of the sixteenth-century Willoughby heirs – Henry (1451–1528) and Francis himself, as well as the involvement of the family in the ill-fated effort to place Lady Jane Grey on the English throne in 1553 and the subsequent conservatism of Queen Elizabeth, who raised only a small handful of her closest advisers to the peerage.[80]

Henry Willoughby inherited substantial lands, including the manor of Middleton in Warwickshire from his father's estates in 1474, and, with his mother's death in 1490/1, Wollaton. He also married four times; at least two of his wives were sole heiresses.[81] He came

[76] Simon Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991), 2, table 1.1.

[77] This editor is preparing an extended article on the rise of the Willoughbys from the 13th into the 16th century.

[78] The family survived several minorities, such as that of Richard de Willoughby the senior at the end of the 13th century, and that of Sir Francis Willoughby himself in the 1550s. On several occasions the inheritance descended to a younger brother or half-brother.

[79] Payling, *Political Society*, 66.

[80] On Sir Henry Willoughby, see Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', 26–36; and Alan Cameron, 'Sir Henry Willoughby of Wollaton', *TTS*, LXXIV (1970), 10–21.

[81] By his first wife Margaret, the daughter of Sir Robert Markham, he had two sons and three daughters, and by his third wife, Helen, the daughter of John Egerton, he had another son and daughter.

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to maturity in the confusing political period of the Wars of the Roses and survived serving under Lord Hastings and then the duke of Buckingham, both of whom were executed by Richard III.[82] After Richard's defeat at Bosworth Field in 1485, Henry Willoughby supported Henry VII, serving him well throughout his reign, moving in the highest circles, and benefiting from his close relationship to the Crown; Henry VIII may not have valued him, however, to the extent that his father did.

Locally and regionally, Henry Willoughby was high sheriff of Lincolnshire (1491, 1501/2), high sheriff of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire (1495/6), high sheriff of Warwickshire (1505/6; 1519–1520, 1526), and justice of the peace in Lincolnshire and Warwickshire, and, for more than thirty years in Nottinghamshire (1492–1528), among other offices and responsibilities.[83] Alan Cameron points out how important a personage Henry was with several examples, perhaps the most telling of which is that the Nottingham Borough took care to present Sir Henry with a suitable gift (usually wine) when he attended quarter sessions.[84]

Henry was an enthusiastic if somewhat conventional Catholic[85] who could afford to pay for a chantry at Wollaton church and many additional indulgences and engage in lavish almsgiving to scholars, friars, anchorites, players, poor men, and others.[86] Already by 1497/8, his income 'was comparable with that of most contemporary noblemen'.[87] Henry was the beneficiary of dowries from his marriages, from a variety of land purchases and perhaps from some foreclosures and some possibly illegal seizures of land.[88] His income from the coal

[82] See W.H. Dunham, *Lord Hastings Indenture Retainers, 1461–1483* (New Haven, CT, 1955), 129.

[83] *Calendar of the Fine Rolls*, Vol. XXII: *Henry VII, 1485–1509* (London, 1962), sub nomine; *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry VII, 1485–1509*, 2 vols (London, 1914–1916), sub nomine. See also *HMC Middleton*, 123, 131, 141, 508, 512, 514; Cameron, 'Sir Henry Willoughby of Wollaton', 18.

[84] *Ibid.* 17.

[85] *HMC Middleton*, 124, 137–140. See Mi, F 1/4 for a letter of fraternity from the Cistercian Abbey of Chalons for Henry Willoughby and his wife Elizabeth, at the intercession of the abbot of Fountains Abbey, York, offering all the privileges of the order, dated *c.*1500. See also Mi, F 1/7, dated 1512, for a letter of fraternity from Frater Robert, provincial prior, from the Carmelite order at Coventry for Henry 'Willolowz' and his wife Helena.

[86] *HMC Middleton*, 124, 127, 137, 330–387; Cameron, 'Sir Henry Willoughby of Wollaton', 19. He was also granted participation in the prayers of the Observant Friars.

[87] *Ibid.* 11.

[88] Henry engaged in enclosing his lands on a significant scale. 'The Domesday of inclosures for Nottinghamshire, 1517', TSRS, II (Nottingham, 1904), 39.

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pits at Wollaton, receipts from which rose steadily up to 1510, was substantial.[89]

With all this, however, Sir Henry never rose to noble status. The reasons are not entirely clear. It would appear, from scattered references, that Henry Willoughby could be quarrelsome and had certainly fought with the Stanhope and Plumpton families, as well as with Lord Grey of Codnor, and even with his own mother.[90] In 1518, however, Sir Henry received, by letters signet from King Henry VIII, an appointment as captain to raise and equip soldiers, notwithstanding the Statute of Retainers. Toward the end of his life, in 1525, he also received a commission under the signet ring to repress riot in Coventry.[91] Henry Willoughby died in 1528, by which time he had rewritten his will numerous times.[92]

Henry Willoughby married off his children with great care,[93] and the alliances contracted had the potential to raise the Willoughbys into the very highest ranks of the nobility, had it not been for the damning involvement of the Grey family in the politics of royal succession and the too rapid deaths of Henry's heirs – his three sons (Edward Willoughby in 1541, Sir John Willoughby in 1548/9, and Sir Hugh Willoughby the navigator in 1554), his grandson Henry Willoughby in 1549 and his great grandson Thomas in 1559[94] – three generations within the space of eighteen years. In 1559 the inheritance was left in the hands of Henry's great-grandson Francis (the last remaining heir in the male line), who was between twelve and thirteen years old at the time, and those who held his wardship.[95]

John Willoughby, Sir Henry's eldest son and heir, had married Anne Grey, eldest daughter of Edward Grey, Viscount Lisle.[96] This marriage placed the Willoughbys close to Sir Edward Seymour, later duke of Somerset and protector of King Edward VI, as Anne

[89] Cameron, 'Sir Henry Willoughby of Wollaton', 11–12, 20; see table 1 in Cameron. Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton', 11, estimates that Henry's income from the coalfields in 1515–1516 and 1520–1521 was at least £325 annually.

[90] *HMC Middleton*, 115–120; Cameron, 'Sir Henry Willoughby of Wollaton', 14–16.

[91] *HMC Middleton*, 131, 141.

[92] Mi, F 6/5 (1489), 6/22 (1497), 6/2 (1512), 6/24 (1508), 6/25 (1513), 6/28 (1528); *HMC Middleton*, 121–122, 123, 126, 128, 130. See *North Country Wills: Being Abstracts of Wills Relating to York, Nottingham, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland 1383 to 1558*, Surtees Society, CXVI (London and Durham, 1908), 121–123, for his 1528 will.

[93] An example of the care that Sir Henry took over marriage arrangements can be seen in a letter relating to negotiations in 1515 over the marriage of Thomas Gresley. *HMC Middleton*, 513 and Mi, 5/168/46.

[94] For the exact date of Thomas Willoughby's death, see p. 30 below.

[95] Initially Sir Francis Knollys held the wardship of Francis Willoughby. See below, pp. 32–33, for the negotiations concerning this wardship.

[96] *HMC Middleton*, 121. Anne's dowry was a modest 700 marks. Mi, D 4804.

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was co-heiress with her sister, who married Edward Seymour. Alan Cameron characterizes Sir John Willoughby as 'Undoubtedly the wealthiest layman resident in the county [of Nottinghamshire]', with a gross income 'of the order of £1,800 per annum',[97] an estimated £600 to £750 coming from coal receipts.[98] He was the protector and seneschal of two monastic houses – Lenton and Beauvale – with which the Willoughbys had had long-standing connections. In 1505 John and his wife Anne received a letter of fraternity from the hospital of Holy Trinity, Wolsoken (Walsingham?) in the diocese of Norwich, and in 1521 John was made a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre.[99] Sir John Willoughby's religious beliefs seem to have been, like those of his father, strongly Catholic; he was associated with his father in several of their religious affiliations and there is evidence that he went on two pilgrimages – one to Saint James of Compostela (Santiago de Compostela) and the other to Rome.[100] Post-Reformation, however, John Willoughby apparently accommodated to the changes,[101] although, in the wake of the dissolution of the monasteries, the Willoughbys profited very little.[102]

John was 47 when his father died in 1528; he then died on 10 January 1548/9 without heirs.[103] Since his younger brother and heir, Edward, had died in 1541, the Willoughby estates descended to Edward's son and John's nephew Henry. This Henry had married Anne (another Anne Grey) daughter of the second marquis of Dorset, once again strengthening Willoughby ties with the Grey family.[104] At the beginning of Cassandra's Account, she writes,

> This was the fourth time that the Willughbys had matched with this family of the Greys, which had made a very great intimacy between the two families, as appears by many of the old papers. In the books of accounts there is often mention made of Sir Henry Willughby's being at Bradgate [the home of Henry Grey, 3rd marquis of Dorset, later duke of Suffolk and also Henry Willoughby's brother-in-law] for severall days together, and in the account

[97] Alan Cameron, 'Some social consequences of the dissolution of the monasteries in Nottinghamshire', *TTS*, 79 (1975), 50–59.

[98] Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton', 18, citing Mi, M 145/6.

[99] Mi, F 1/5 1505; Mi, C 8/2.

[100] *HMC Middleton*, 132, 136; see Mi, F 10/13 for the signet letter from Henry VIII for a safe conduct for his pilgrimage to St James of Compostela, dated 22 Feb. 9 Henry VIII.

[101] See a letter to John from Henry VIII raging against Rome. *HMC Middleton*, 509.

[102] Cameron, 'Some social consequences', 50–59, esp. 53–54.

[103] For his will of 20 Dec. 1548, see Mi, 6/179/30–31; *North Country Wills, 1383 to 1558*, 201–203.

[104] The marquis was a frequent guest at the house of Henry Willoughby in late 1524 to 1525. *HMC Middleton*, 377–380, 384, 141, 514; Welch, 'Willoughby Letters', 51–53, 76–77; Mi, 7/180/30–31; Mi, C 11/2. For the 1528 marriage settlement, see Mi, 6/170/146–148.

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book of bills of fair for [the] Wollaton family (which shews what company daily came to Wollaton) I often find some of the family from Bradgate set down.[105]

The Children of Henry (*c.*1510–1549) and Anne Grey Willoughby (*c.*1519–1547/8) and the Childhood of Francis Willoughby

Henry was a young husband with three small children when he was killed in the 1549 commotion of Kett's rebellion. The rebellion was brutally suppressed by an armed force under the leadership of the earl of Warwick, and one of the casualties in the earl's forces was Henry. At this point Cassandra's Account provides a great deal of information, mostly drawn from old papers, a few letters, and account books. She notes: 'This Sir Henry Willughby was one of those gentlemen that went to appease the rebels in Norfolk who had got together under Robert Ket, a tanner, upon a grievance on account of inclosures, and was killed at Norwich, August the 27th, 1548 [*sic*]. He and his lady both lye buried in the Church at Wollaton, where there is a monument for them.'[106] Henry had enjoyed his inheritance for less than a year. He and his wife Anne Grey, who had died the year previously (3 January, probably 1547/8), left two sons and one daughter, all very young. Thomas, the eldest (b.1541), was eight years of age and Francis, the youngest (b.1546/7), only two years old; Margaret Willoughby, the daughter, was apparently about three years older than Francis (b.1543?). Cassandra notes that, 'It appears by some of the old papers that Sir Henry Willughby left these three children to the Marquis of Dorsets care, and that the three executors of his will were George Medley and Gabriell Barwyke, esquires, and John Hall, gent:.'[107] The children were put in the care of Anne's brother Henry, 3rd marquis of Dorset and duke of Suffolk, at

[105] *HMC Middleton*, 519; Mi, LM 26, fos 37–38.

[106] Mi, LM 26, fo. 39: see p. 69 below. There is an epitaph of Henry Willoughby in Francis Willoughby's handwriting in Hebrew, English, Latin, and Greek, estimated written *c.*1575. Mi, F 10/2; *HMC Middleton*, 155–156.

[107] Mi, LM 26, fo. 39: see p. 69 below. John Hall was the bailiff at Middleton; George Medley was half-brother to Anne Grey and her brother Henry Grey. His mother, Margaret Wotton, was the second wife of Thomas Grey, 2nd marquis of Dorset. As a result, George Medley was an uncle [or a half-uncle] to Thomas, Margaret, and Francis Willoughby. The other executors were Gabriel Barwyke and Henry Marmion, servants to the Willoughbys. The supervisors of Henry's will were Henry Grey and Sir John Markham. Mi, 6/179/35/1–2; *HMC Middleton*, 149, 396.

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Bradgate[108] but were soon transferred to the guardianship of George Medley, who owned or leased a house in Tilty, in Essex, and partially owned a London house in the Minories.[109]

> There is a letter from George Medeleye dated from London in February 1549 [1549/50], in which he writes that the Marquis of Dorset, being now daily to attend the King, he intended to remove his family from Bradgate to London, and therefore ordered that 12 horses should be sent for from Wollaton and a cart and horses from Middleton to come up to London with Mrs.[110] Margaret and little Mr. Francis Willughby. Attended thus, a servant to carry Master Francis before him, another servant to carry Mrs. Margaret, and another servant to carry little Whytneye, a horse for Mrs. Lenton [the governess], another horse for the maid, and 4 for the four men to wait upon them, a man to lead a horse to carry the male [a travelling bag], and two more servants to take care of the horses. It does not appear where these children were after this journey, till by a book of Medeleys accounts for the childrens cloaths etc. from the 4th of Edward the 6th to the 1st of Elizabeth [1550–1558], I find that his Nephew Francis Willughby and his Neece Margaret removed to Tyltey, April the 21th, 1550 […] I don't find where Mr. Thomas Willughby was when his Brother and Sister removed to Tiltey, but in Mr. Medeleys account book there is set down 20^{sh} for Mr. Thomas Willughby's board with him from May the 27th to June the 11th that year and 10^{s} for Mr. Thomas Willughbys mans board the same time. And again the same sume is set down for his and his mans board with Mr. Medeley from November the 3^{d} to the 18th, which day I find by the book of houshold expences for the family at Tyltey Mr. Thomas Willughby went to Cambridg.[111]

Thomas Willoughby, by then no more than nine or ten years of age, must have boarded at one of the several grammar schools in Cambridge, preparatory to attending the University.[112] This absence

[108] *CPR 1550*, Edward VI, iv, 11 gives to Henry Grey the wardship and marriage of Thomas Willoughby with an annuity of £40. According to the will, Francis was to receive £10 a year. At 16 Margaret was to receive 600 marks and Francis was to have £20 per year for clothing and learning until he came of age.

[109] The name is derived from the precinct in London that had housed the abbey of the Minoresses of St Mary of the Order of St Clare.

[110] 'Mrs.' was the abbreviation for Mistress.

[111] Mi, LM 26, fos 39–40: see pp. 70–71 below; Mi, A 32, fos 1, 4, pp. 1, 7; *HMC Middleton*, 399, 402. Thomas was in Cambridge by 1550. He then boarded at Tilty for 20 weeks (23 May to 10 Oct.) in 1551 'when the greate swett was in Cambrydge and other placez'. Mi, A 32, fo. 5, p. 9; *HMC Middleton*, 404.

[112] See *HMC Middleton*, 474–477, for excerpts from a 1550 inventory of things at Wollaton Hall in George Medley's hand, including 'Naperier and Lynen, with other stuffe sent to my ~~cousin~~ Maister Thomas Willoughbye at Cambridge'. See J.A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, IV (Cambridge, 1922), 423, who places Thomas at Magdalene College in 1551. He places him at Lincoln's Inn in 1558.

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of his older brother (particularly after 1551 during which year Thomas had returned for twenty weeks because of the 'swett' at Cambridge) and the rapid change of residences, in addition to the deaths of his father and mother, must have impacted Francis's life dramatically at a very early age. It is also clear from the notes that Cassandra took, that life at Tilty was something of a social whirlwind, with visits from Lady Jane Grey, first cousin to the Willoughby children, and the princess Mary Tudor, among others. All of this was cut suddenly short by the elevation of Lady Jane Grey to queen for nine days and, in the wake of Wyatt's Rebellion in January 1553/4, her execution, along with the execution of her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, and her father, Henry Grey, who was also the maternal uncle to Thomas, Margaret and Francis. In the wake of this tragedy, the older son Thomas's wardship, which had been given to the marquis of Dorset, was transferred to William, Lord Paget, and Thomas joined his household.[113] There was discussion of sending Thomas to school at Paris, but by 1558, at the age of seventeen, he was admitted to Lincoln's Inn. More importantly, George Medley, who now had wardship of Francis and Margaret, was, as the half-brother of Henry Grey and half-uncle to Lady Jane Grey, suspected of involvement in the plot to bring Lady Jane Grey to the throne and in Wyatt's Rebellion. In addition, his brother-in-law, Thomas Dannett, may have conspired with Henry Grey, perhaps agreeing to bring 400 men to his aid at Leicester. Although Dannett, in the end, did not supply the expected troops, he was nonetheless suspected, captured, and placed in the Tower for a month before being released and going into exile on the continent.[114] As Cassandra writes, 'I believe about this time [1553–1554] Mr. Medeley and the whol familie at Tyltey were involved in great troubles upon the Duke of Suffolks account, who was beheaded upon the 23rd of February [1553/4] following. Mr. Francis and Mrs. Margaret were removed to the Minoryes, [just outside Aldgate near the Tower of London] with their servants, I believe a house where Mr. Medeley used to live.'[115] As a result, George Medley also spent time in the Tower, and his lodgings in the Minories were searched by Bishop Gardiner.[116] From February and into April executions of large numbers of the rebels took place, with bodies publicly displayed

[113] *CPR 1554*, Philip and Mary I, i. 238–239. Lord Paget received an annuity of £100 in addition to custody and the marriage of Thomas until he reached full age or Lord Paget obtained the effect of his marriage.

[114] James D. Taylor Jr., *Sir Thomas Wyatt the Younger c.1521–1554 and Wyatt's Rebellion* (New York, 2013), 92.

[115] *HMC Middleton*, 521; Mi, LM 26, fo. 45: see pp. 75–76 below.

[116] *HMC Middleton*, 521 n. 1.

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throughout London. Thus, by the time that Francis Willoughby was eight years of age, he had lost his mother and his father; his cousin, Lady Jane Grey; and his uncle Henry Grey (as well as one other of the Grey uncles) had been executed;[117] he and his sister and their household had been moved about several times, and his guardian, foster father and uncle, George Medley, was under suspicion and briefly imprisoned, as was Medley's brother-in-law. In addition, the children may have been traumatized by the numbers and brutality of the executions taking place throughout the city. Then, when Francis was between twelve and thirteen, his older brother Thomas died, and Francis became heir to the Willoughby name and estates.[118]

Francis had received the kind of education that would stand him in good stead as heir to the Willoughby estates. Beginning in 1550, when Francis was three years old, his governors spent 20d for a 'pounde of sugere plate and greate comfettes to make hym larne his booke'. They also purchased two ABCs for 1d. Later in 1550 additional ABCs were purchased for 2d.[119] In 1552 the accounts mention costs of a Greek and a Hebrew grammar book for Francis; in 1553 the accounts list two French books for Margaret[120] and other books for Francis as well as moneys 'to Mystris Lenton for teaching and lokyng to' Francis and Margaret for a year and a half.[121] The 1554 accounts of George Medley record the purchase, for 3 pennies, of Evaldus Gallus's *Pueriles Confabulatiunculae*, a book of Latin dialogues.[122] In 1555, Francis was going to school at Saffron Walden in Essex[123] but by early 1556 he was boarding at St Anthony's grammar school

[117] The only uncle on the Grey side to survive in the wake of Wyatt's Rebellion was John Grey, the youngest son in the family. Although imprisoned, he was ultimately released and regained land and reputation under Queen Elizabeth. Francis Willoughby was to consult John, Lord Grey of Pirgo, when he engaged himself in marriage to Elizabeth Lyttleton (see below, p. 37).

[118] Mi, 6/171/10 is a parchment document that describes the estate and wardship of Francis Willoughby, dated 1 July 1560. It notes that Thomas Willoughby esquire was deceased 'the xvith day of August anno primo Elizabeth Queen'. It continues by noting that, at Thomas's death, Francis Willoughby was 12 years 30 weeks and 2 days old. This would put his birth date at about 17 Jan. 1546/7.

[119] *HMC Middleton*, 400–402; Mi, A 32, fos 2, 3, pp. 3, 5.

[120] *HMC Middleton*, 406–407; Mi, A 32, fos 8,10, pp. 15, 19. This last bill, dated 1553, was written up by Margaret 'wrytten with her owne hande' when she was presumably about ten years of age. The subsequent bills were also written up by Margaret, as she mentions 'Mystris Lenton for teaching and lokyng to my brother Fraunces and me […] to Clarke for teaching me to playe upon the virginalles'. She was apparently keeping a book of her bills.

[121] *HMC Middleton*, 406; Mi, A 32, fos 8, 10–10v, pp. 15, 19–19b.

[122] *HMC Middleton*, 408; Mi, A 32, fo. 17v, p. 32b.

[123] Mi, A 32, fo. 22, p. 41; *HMC Middleton*, 409.

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in London where he remained through the first half of the year.[124] By summer 1556 he had transferred back to Saffron Walden.[125] There Francis received a thoroughly humanist and elitist education that was gradually becoming part of the grammar school curriculum in England's best schools. His studies involved learning Cato's *Disticha*, a first reading text of Latin moral sayings, *Cicero's Letters*, Vives's *Colloquies*, and a Latin–Greek dictionary by Ambrose Calepin (printed in Strasburg in 1537), a dictionary in English (probably the dictionary of Thomas Elyot), Erasmus's *De Copia* and his *Adages*, Lorenzo Valla's *De Elegantia Linguae Latinae*, Ceporinus's Greek grammar, the *Acts of the Apostles* in English and with notes to sing and play, Mathurin Cordier's *Libellus de Corrupti Sermonis Emendacione*, the *Floures for Latine Spekynge* perhaps by Nicholas Udall, and Richard Sherry's *Treatise of the Figures of Grammar and Rhetorick*.[126] The accounts record payments to a writing master teaching Francis to write, as well as the cost of a 'Terence' and a Latin psalter.[127] By 1557 Francis was learning to write the Italian hand; he was also being taught 'arethmetick' by Master Horseley.[128] There are numerous notations in George Medley's account book of costs for teaching Francis and Margaret to play upon the virginals.[129] An entry of 1557 is particularly interesting in that it concerns a book which was purchased for the young Francis to notate his musical studies.[130] A much later surviving shelf list of books includes a 1552 copy of Galigai's *Practica d'arithmetica* which may also have been one of

[124] Mi, A 32, fo. 25, p. 47; *HMC Middleton*, 409.

[125] Mi, A 32, fos 22, 25, 28v–29, pp. 41, 47, 54–55; also cited in Friedman, *House and Household*, 19. The account book includes payments for schooling at St Anthony's from January to mid June 1556. On 15 Sept. 1556 Medley's account book records 3s 4d to the schoolmaster at Saffron Walden for teaching Francis for one quarter (fo. 28v, p. 54). *HMC Middleton*, 409–411.

[126] *HMC Middleton*, 406–414; Mi, A 32, fos 28v–30, 34, pp. 54–57, 65. For Francis Willoughby's schooling, see T.W. Baldwin, *William Shakespeare's small Latine and lesse Greeke*, I (Urbana, IL, 1944), 375–379. See also Kenneth Charlton, *Education in Renaissance England* (London, 1965), 93 ff.; and more recently Ian Green, *Humanism and Protestantism in Early Modern English Education* (Farnham, 2009), *passim*, although he does not cite specific school curricula or Sir Francis. See also Friedman, *House and Household*, 19.

[127] Mi, A 32, fo. 28v, p. 54; *HMC Middleton*, 411.

[128] Mi, A 32, fos 34–34v, pp. 65–66; *HMC Middleton*, 413. Stevenson dates this 1557, but the very next entry mentions 16 Apr. 1558.

[129] Mi, A 32, fos 12, 18, 18v, 20; pp. 22, 33, 34, 37; see *HMC Middleton*, 407–408, 412–413, for more notations on Francis's musical education. We know very little about the education Margaret received beyond the two French books mentioned earlier, that Mrs Lenton was teaching her along with Francis, that she was writing up bills at the age of ten, and that she shared, with Francis, their musical education. That it was advanced is suggested by a reference in Cassandra's account of Margaret discussing astronomical texts in Italian with a family servant. Mi, LM 26, fo. 70.

[130] Mi, A 32, fos 32v, 34v, pp. 62, 66; *HMC Middleton*, 412–413.

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Francis's school texts.[131] Instructed in Greek, Latin and Hebrew grammar, writing, arithmetic, Latin rhetoric, and music, Francis was sufficiently educated to be considered a cultured man. In 1558 he went 'to Cambridge to schole wyth docketer Carre'.[132] But with his brother's death in 1559, Francis Willoughby's wardship became valuable, and in 1560/1 it was formally assigned to Sir Francis Knollys,[133] with the proviso that an annuity of £100 was to be set aside for Francis's education.[134]

Knollys was a committed Protestant who was married to the daughter of Mary Boleyn, Queen Elizabeth's cousin and reputed by some to be her half-sister. Knollys was vice-chamberlain of the royal household and a member of Elizabeth's Privy Council; as a result, Francis would have spent time with the Knollys family at court. In June 1564, at the request of Francis Willoughby himself (now 17 years old), however, the wardship was reassigned from Sir Francis Knollys to Henry Medley, Gabriel Barwick, and John Hall, the original executors of Henry Willoughby's estate, or, in the case of George Medley, to his son after Medley's death in 1562/63.[135] The cost of this transaction was £1,500. Among other reasons for this transfer, Francis had refused to marry Elizabeth Knollys,[136] the daughter of his guardian, who was, at the time, about 15 years of

[131] Friedman, *House and Household*, 32.

[132] Mi, A 32, fo. 35v, p. 68; *HMC Middleton*, 413–414. In 1559 he was still 'at docketer Carrez in Cambridge'. Mi, A 32, fo. 37, p. 71; *HMC Middleton*, 414. This was perhaps Dr Nicholas Carr at Trinity College, although Francis Willoughby's later close associations were with Jesus College. Francis was perhaps 13 years of age at the time.

[133] See Mi, 6/171/10 for the grant of custody, wardship and marriage of Francis Willoughby to Sir Francis Knollys, dated 1 July 1560. It describes a list of all the 'extent and clere yerelye value of all the mannors landes and hereditaments' of Thomas Willoughby who died 16 Aug. 1559. See Mi, A 31, fo. 24v for the costs (£10) of delivering Francis to Sir Francis Knollys at London and for staying there to conclude the agreement in 1560. Friedman, *House and Household*, 20. On Sir Francis Knollys, see Alexandra F. Johnston, 'Sir Francis Knollys and His Progeny: Court and Country in the Thames Valley', in Norman L. Jones and Daniel Woolf (eds), *Local Identities in Late Medieval and Early Modern England* (New York, 2007), 131–155. For George Medley's will and codicil in 1562, see Mi, 7/183/12.

[134] Mi, 6/171/10. See also 6/171/11–12, 14; *CPR 1560–1563*, Elizabeth I, ii, 180, dated 28 Feb. 1560/1.

[135] See Mi, 6/178/49 for the indenture of the release, signed by Knollys, Francis Willoughby, Matthew Arundell, and Margaret Arundell, and also Mi, 6/171/15, 17–18, for a licence to assign custody of the ward. The estate had to reimburse Knollys £1,500 for the losses he would sustain as a result of this transfer. Some of this £1,500 was paid by Margaret, his sister, and her husband Matthew Arundell, a point that Margaret makes in a letter to Francis about the time of Francis's marriage with Elizabeth Lyttleton. See also Friedman, *House and Household*, 21.

[136] Elizabeth Knollys did not marry until she was 29 years of age – a late age at the time – at which time (1578) she married Sir Thomas Leighton of Feckenham, Worcs. He served as Governor of Jersey and Guernsey.

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age. One also wonders whether Francis shared the strongly Protestant beliefs of the Knollys family that had sent them into continental exile under Queen Mary. As an adult Francis does seem to have been a committed Protestant. Alice Friedman speculates that Francis was not comfortable with the court life into which he had been thrust through Knollys.[137] Perhaps the traumas of his early childhood experiences led him to be wary of the court.[138] On the other hand, perhaps he already had another marriage in mind.

The Willoughby Letters: Sir Francis Willoughby, his Marriages, and the Next Generation

Most of the information about the Willoughbys thus far, Cassandra had copied from old papers, a few letters and account books she had found. Although Cassandra continued to draw from these account books, at this juncture she moved on to the family letter collection at the point where Francis Willoughby decided to marry.

Very shortly after Francis Willougby's release from his wardship with the Knollys family he began negotiations for a marriage with Elizabeth Lyttleton of the Lyttleton family of Frankley.[139] At the time (1564) Francis was 17 years of age (Figure 2). Elizabeth

[137] Friedman, *House and Household*, 21. Court life 'required him to enter a world which thwarted his independence and ambition'. One also needs to keep in mind that, by then, he had lost his elder brother and George Medley, his uncle, who died in 1562 and who had taken care of him since his parents' death. It may not have been independence, so much as stability and perhaps family that he desired. R.S. Smith states, 'There is only one record of his ever having visited Court.' R.S. Smith, *Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton Hall* (Nottingham, 1988), 16.

[138] There may have been other reasons for his lack of interest in the life at court. Many years later (in 1626), one of Francis's sons-in-law, Montague Wood, writing to his brother-in-law Percival Willoughby, recalled that 'olde Sir Francis when he came of yeares and had been brede a greate scholler, his officers […] bringinge in ther severall accomptes both of mony and landes he sawe that it was too muche for him to manage himselfe, he wished he had bene lefte one hundrethe powndes by the yeare and his bookes'. Mi, 2/76/3–16, cited in Friedman, *House and Household*, 37; and in Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton', 69.

[139] The Lytteltons were an established Worcestershire family whose prominence was due, in large part, to the family fortunes founded by Sir Thomas Lyttleton (1422–1481), Judge of the Common Pleas and author of 'Lyttleton's Tenures'. Lyttleton is the spelling used by the senior (Frankley) branch of the family. John Lyttleton II, the father of Elizabeth, inherited a substantial estate that was widely scattered. Between 1531 and 1565 he enlarged and consolidated his holdings and from then until his death in 1590, he concentrated on managing his estate and establishing a political name for himself among the north Worcestershire gentry, becoming an MP in 1553, justice of the peace and, by 1556, high sheriff of Worcestershire. J.M.J. Tonks, 'The Lyttletons of Frankley and their Estates', MLitt thesis, University of Oxford, 1978, 7, 15–22, 39–41.

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Figure 2. Francis Willoughby, age 26 (1573), in colour online. Reproduced by permission of Lord Middleton and the University of Nottingham Library Manuscripts Collection.

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Figure 3. Elizabeth Willoughby, age 27 (1573), in colour online. Reproduced by permission of Lord Middleton and the University of Nottingham Library Manuscripts Collection.

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Lyttleton was born in 1546 and was 18 years of age (Figure 3).[140] Francis was attracted to Elizabeth in part because she was the daughter of a neighbouring family with estates in Worcestershire not far from Middleton in Warwickshire. Although Francis does not say so, the fact that the Lyttletons owned coal and limestone on their estate at Halesowen may have attracted him.[141] There were strong family connections; the dowry promised (£1,500) was unusually substantial and was complemented with an offer to board the couple, their horses and six servants for three years.[142] Francis was to promise his wife a 'very reasonable' jointure and settlement of 'but one-third' of his estate on heirs male by her.[143] As Francis put it in a letter to his

[140] According to a portrait copy that now hangs in Wollaton Hall, originally painted in 1573, Elizabeth Willoughby was then 27 years of age. This suggests that she was 18 years of age in 1564, at the date of their marriage. If, as has been suggested above, Introduction n. 118, Francis Willoughby was born Jan. 1546/7, he was a year younger. His portrait copy in Wollaton Hall, painted at the same time, lists his age as 26; he was probably 17 when they married.

In her study of courtship patterns in Kent, Diana O'Hara finds that 'restraints upon too early marriages were internalized by the parties themselves'. Diana O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraint: Rethinking the Making of Marriage in Tudor England* (Manchester, 2000), 159. She cites Martin Ingram, who found, in Wiltshire court cases, some antagonism towards the marriage plans of inexperienced adolescents. These studies, however, focus on ecclesiastical court records and village families. See Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction, 1300–1840* (Oxford, 1986), 211–216, for evidence that it was commonly assumed that men matured only after 25 and women only after 20. Ann Jennalie Cook, *Making a Match: Courtship in Shakespeare and his Society* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), 17–38, cites marital ages of 17–22 for women and 20–25 for men. Reconstitutive evidence supports the theory that early modern England fits the north-west European demographic formation pattern of later marriages between partners of similar ages, although early marriage was more common in the aristocracy and squirearchy. O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraint*, 165. Women were often given their portion of parental bequests at the age of 18 or 21, although sometimes the age of 16 or at the time of marriage was stipulated. According to the data from wills compiled by O'Hara, expectations of 'age of marriage' 'being of age' or 'lawful age' – the age at which property transfers were defined – increased significantly from the late 15th century to 1575–1599, with 80.6% of all wills giving the age for men as 20–24 and 64.2% specifying age 21, while the age of women fell largely between 15 and 24. O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraint*, 175–177. Based on this, while Elizabeth Lyttleton may have been considered of age to marry, Francis was on the young side. See Mi, 5/167/154 for Francis's coming of age and an indenture from Robert Penruddoke detailing records of his estates in 1568.

[141] See Tonks, 'The Lyttletons of Frankley', 33–34, for information on the mineral holdings and investments of the Lyttletons.

[142] Mi, LM 26, fos 55v and 60: see pp. 88, 91–92 below; for the settlement documents, see Mi, 7/ 183/19–25, dated Nov. 1564. The arrangements would appear to have been extraordinarily generous on the bride's side. In wealthy families, settlements would sometimes include the maintenance of the couple for a period of years; normally this was an offer made by the groom's family rather than the bride's. Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London and New York, 1993), 93.

[143] Mi, LM 26, fo. 60, p. 92 below.

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uncle the Lord John Grey of Pirgo, 'After good deliberation it had pleased God to give him a liking to the young Gentlewoman, who had had a good education and was descended from a house of great antiquity, well friended and alyed, dwelling near his house of Middleton. And Mr. Lyttleton's offers with his Daughter being reasonable, could he have his Lordships favour he was fully minded to match himself to her'.[144]

Francis entered into this negotiation with the support of some of his advisers but without consulting his sister Margaret and her husband, Matthew Arundell.[145] Francis consulted, instead, Lord Dudley, earl of Leicester,[146] and others; he also received approval from Lord Grey.[147] His sister accused him of following the advice of George Willoughby, an illegitimate uncle,[148] who had ties to the Lyttleton family.[149] It is possible that George Willoughby, perhaps in

[144] Mi, LM 26, fo. 55v, p. 88 below.

[145] In 1558 Margaret had married Matthew Arundell, of Wardour Castle, Wilts. (knighted in 1574). Her dowry was a modest one of £300. Earlier, from 1450 to 1550, the median dowry for knights' daughters was 200 to 300 marks, a pound being 20 shillings and a mark 13s 4d or ⅔ of a pound. Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450–1550* (Oxford, 2002), 46–47.

[146] He was the surviving son of the duke of Northumberland who had been executed in the wake of the Jane Grey debacle.

[147] Mi, LM 26, fos 55v, 59–60: see pp. 87–88, 91–92 below. John, Lord Grey of Pirgo, died 19 Nov. 1564, one day prior to the date of the marriage settlement.

[148] George was the illegitimate half-brother of the father of Margaret and Francis and, apparently, a recusant at the end of his life. See Mi, LM 26, fo. 43 and Text n. 27. In a letter dated, most probably, in the early 1540s, Henry Grey, 3rd marquis of Dorset writes to Sir John Willoughby, noting that Henry Willoughby was willing to send his illegitimate half-brother George to study abroad: 'I understand that my Brother Wyllughbye [Henry] is wyllyng to send George your kynsman, a yonge man in my opinion moche desyrous of learnyng, to some universytye beyonde the seas ther tarme [to arm] hym sylfe as well wyth good learnyng as the knoledge of foran cuntryes: yow wyll, and that the rather at my requeste, helpe the yonge man in thys hys honeste and godlye travayle wyth some monye yerlye towardes hys exhybytyon, for the tyme he shall ther tarrye, wherunto I truste, (my requeste sett aparte) verye naturall love and the vertuous desyre of the yonge man, wyth consideratyon had how the habylytye of my brother Wyllughbye wyll not stretche suffycyentlye wythout your helpe and others to fynd hym ther wull be a suffycyent spure to prycke yow, besides that ther can be no more godlye thynge done than to helpe forwarde those that be studyous'. Welch, 'Willoughby Letters', 66–67, no. 42; Mi, 7/180/1. In 1546/7 Sir John was giving George Willoughby an annuity of 20s. Welch, 'Willoughby Letters', 66 n. 3. The will of Henry Willoughby gave the Inne called the Castle in Holborne to George Willoughby alias Fox, his bastard brother, and to the heirs of his body. For the will, see Mi, 6/179/35/1–2. For George Willoughby, see Robert Thoroton, *The Antiquities of Nottinghamshire* (London, 1677), 223. For more on George Willoughby (Fox), see Mi, 6/171/28, a letter dated 1570 between Francis and John Lyttleton regarding land that George held. George Willoughby had two sons and a stepson named Richard Repington, a lawyer employed by Francis (Mi, LM 26, fo. 66 and see Text n. 125).

[149] It is notable that the negotiations conducted around the marriage of Francis and Elizabeth were done by men in the family. Erickson has noted that marriage negotiations

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consultation with the Pagets, promoted the Lyttleton arrangement because of the shared Catholic leanings among them.[150] On the other hand, Dudley would not have shared these religious proclivities, and John Grey, at least in 1560, was denouncing the 'Pagetyan' faction at court.[151]

The marriage agreement was drawn up on 20 November 1564. Almost immediately, in 1564, Matthew Arundell made clear his opposition to the marriage, and Lady Arundell 'used her outmost' to break the match.[152] The promise that Sir John Lyttleton made, of a dowry or portion of £1,500,[153] was generous by the standards of the time,[154] and it was backed up by an agreement by Sir John and his son Gilbert to pay £2,000 if they did not perform the covenants agreed upon. Nonetheless, Margaret and Matthew Arundell were suspicious of Sir John's promises, as it turned out for good reason.[155] In 1566 and 1567 it appears that Francis and Elizabeth

in the upper classes in early modern England were largely carried out by women. Erickson, *Women and Property*, 93. Perhaps this was another reason for the negative views that Margaret Arundell held regarding the marriage.

[150] Forty years after Francis's marriage, by which time he was dead, his Lyttleton nephew, Humphrey, was arrested for protecting fugitives implicated in the Gunpowder Plot, while another Lyttleton, probably Humphrey's nephew, Stephen, was the tenant of the only place (Holbeche House in Staffordshire) where any gunpowder exploded. Both of these Lyttletons were executed as co-conspirators in the plot.

[151] Michael C. Questier, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion, c.1550–1640* (Cambridge, 2006).

[152] Cassandra's assessment of this situation was that Lady Arundell was in the habit of governing her younger brother and was highly offended that he had taken the decision to marry Elizabeth Lyttleton without consulting her. 'She writes that she marvels much that his hast should be so great, and his estimation of her so little, as never to consult her in the matter'. Mi, LM 26, fo. 56: see p. 89 below. Margaret rebutted any accusation that she was against his marriage in the expectation that she might enjoy Francis's estate. Mi, LM 26, fos 58–59: see p. 91 below. The marriage was particularly troubled by the poor relationship between Elizabeth and Margaret Arundell, who, herself may have married when she was only 15 while her husband Matthew was perhaps 25–27 years of age.

[153] Mi, LM 26, fo. 60: see p. 92 below; Mi, 7/183/19.

[154] J.P. Cooper's study of knightly families in the 16th century finds an average portion of £286 in the first half of the century and £859 in the latter half. By the early 17th century, in upper gentry families, portions ranged from £1,000 to £5,000. J.P. Cooper, 'Patterns of inheritance and settlement by great landowners from the 15th to the 18th centuries', in J. Goody, J. Thirsk and E.P. Thompson (eds), *Family and Inheritance: Rural Society in Western Europe, 1200–1800* (Cambridge, 1976), 192–327.

[155] The Lyttleton family seems to have been contentious. See a letter from Hugh Willoughby, uncle to Francis Willoughby, regarding all his debts where he states that he owes Edward Lytleton £16 and has no 'grayte trust in hym but that he wyll sowe [sue] his oblygacion'. Mi, 6/135/32; Welch, 'Willoughby Letters', 79–82. There is a complicated marriage settlement in 1564 that appears to be in the Lyttleton favour made between John Lyttleton and Richard Smyth regarding the marriage of William, youngest son of John Lyttleton, with Margaret Smyth, sole heiress of Richard Smyth, in which John Lyttleton agrees to a payment of £1,300 and maintenance of the couple; the couple will receive

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were living with her family, per the marriage settlement, since there are letters between Francis and Sir John Lyttleton that seem to have been written while Francis was away from Frankley, but from 1568 forward, when Francis was 21 and had come into control of his estates, they set up an independent household.[156] In 1569 Sir John Lyttleton sent Francis £110, apologizing for not paying the whole sum of money due.[157] By perhaps 1572–1574 Francis writes to his sister that the bargain between his father-in-law and himself is broken off, because he can have no good assurance for the money, and he fears he shall be compelled to sue him.[158]

Elizabeth Willoughby took it amiss from the very beginning that she did not have the favour (but rather the disfavour) of her sister-in-law; this rift was never healed. Indeed, relatively early in the marriage Elizabeth wrote to her brother-in-law Matthew Arundell making it clear that she did not desire her sister-in-law's presence in her home. The language is strong: 'she is resolved never to stay in the house where his Wife is'.[159] While in the beginning, Francis Willoughby defended his wife,[160] eventually he began to blame her.

Marriage, in Elizabethan England, was not normally only (and sometimes not ever) a matter of the heart; it was an economic decision with status implications and normally effected in the midst of consultations and, very commonly, with go-betweens.[161] This upset between brother and sister, which produced a good many letters between them, seems to have set the tone for a destructive and long-lasting antagonism between Margaret Willoughby Arundell and Elizabeth Lyttleton Willoughby. In the event, Francis Willoughby never did receive the full amount of the dowry promised him by Elizabeth's father.[162] This not only confirmed Margaret's suspicions

Richard Smyth's estate on the death of Richard and his wife Frances. In default of any issue from William and Margaret, the estate would devolve to William and any other heirs of his body. Mi, 6/176/156 and 6/176/158–159. The estate appears to have conveyed to the Lyttletons in 1575/76. Mi, 6/176/160. See below, pp. 90–91 and Text n. 97.

[156] In 1568, just after coming of age, a 'receipt was made out in the form of an indenture between Francis and Robert Penruddoke, the chief steward for the Dorset estates, detailing the court rolls, accounts and other evidences then being handed over by Penruddoke to Francis'. Welch, 'Willoughby Letters', 6; Mi, 5/167/154. Francis received licence to enter into his inheritance on 10 May 1568. *CPR 1566–1569* Elizabeth I, iv, 150.

[157] Mi, LM 26, fo. 63: see p. 95 below.

[158] Mi, LM 26, fo. 67: see p. 99 below.

[159] Mi, LM 26, fo. 68: see p. 99 below.

[160] Mi, LM 26, fo. 72: see p. 105 below.

[161] O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraint*, ch. 3.

[162] Mi, LM 26, fo. 67: see p. 99 below.

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but may have led Francis to value his wife less, as appears to be the case already by *c.*1570.

The marriage between Francis Willoughby and Elizabeth Lyttleton was not a success, as the letters make clear.[163] The decision to marry seems to have been taken in some haste,[164] and the marriage suffered from the relatively young age at which they wed, a point that Elizabeth Willoughby makes clear later with regard to her own behaviour. A further exacerbation in the marriage was the number of children Elizabeth Willoughby bore, and the toll that it took on her health. While we know of six living children, all female, and one male child who perhaps lived to the age of two,[165] Elizabeth also had a number of miscarriages.[166] In a letter to her husband *c.*1579, she notes that she had borne him 12 children.[167] Whether it was on account of her constant pregnancies, on account of Francis's constant 'dealing' with her (as she put it),[168] or due to reasons that we cannot now access, Elizabeth seems to have become easily angered.

By *c.*1572 Lady Arundell was recommending that the next time Elizabeth Willoughby fell into one of her rages Francis and Elizabeth should repair to Elizabeth's father's house 'till such time as she should have lost her willfullness, and would apply herself to please him'. Another solution she suggested would be for Francis to leave his wife and spend time at her household.[169] By March 1573 the letters report that Elizabeth Willoughby was very ill and in London for help. Since Francis could not accompany her, he appealed to Thomas Willoughby (father of Sir Percival, their future son-in-law), living apparently in Kent, to help his wife in London.[170] At about the same time letters detail a plot on the part of at least six of Francis Willoughby's servants to defame Lady Willoughby.[171] Meanwhile Lady Arundell did her best to question the servants in

[163] A pamphlet written for Middleton Hall describes the marriage as 'one of the worst marriages ever recorded in any detail'.

[164] Mi, LM 26, fo. 59: see p. 91 below where Margaret writes that they were marrying 'more in hast then they needed'.

[165] Francis, d. Dec. 1580; in Feb. 1578 Elizabeth reported that she was pregnant. In Dec. 1579 she was in need of a nurse for her son. It is likely that Francis was born in the late summer or early fall of the year in 1578. He was therefore perhaps two years old when he died.

[166] Mi, LM 26, fo. 67: see p. 99 below.

[167] Mi, LM 26, fo. 98: see p. 130 below.

[168] Mi, LM 26, fo. 67: see p. 99 below.

[169] Mi, LM 26, fo. 68: see p. 100 below.

[170] Mi, LM 26, fos 72–73: see pp. 105–106 below.

[171] Mi, LM 26, fo. 69: see pp. 101–102 below. These 'servants' were often younger, unlanded sons of gentry families who served in the household.

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order to pick up information she could use against Lady Willoughby. One particular defamatory piece of information that Cassandra records is Elizabeth's friendship with a Mistress Haddam [Juliana Stanhope, wife of John Hotham].[172] She is represented by Margaret together with the 'cabal' of servants as 'a vile woman' and, a little later on, as a dishonest person.[173]

During the 1570s Francis and Elizabeth lived handsomely, with their wealth coming from rents and fines,[174] coal receipts,[175] wood sales, and interest on loans to others including a loan of £1,900 to the earl of Huntingdon. They were also buying land, making charitable gifts (e.g. to the poor, to prisoners and to widows) and maintaining a lavish style of living and hospitality.[176] They most likely hosted Queen Elizabeth at Middleton in 1575, and they regularly dined with thirty to forty friends and neighbours, including the earls of Rutland and Huntingdon. Cassandra lists forty-eight servants at this time; she also records one account of household expenditures of approximately £1,400 over fourteen months, costs that were recorded by only one of their household accountants. One such account book provides extremely detailed expenses paid by Thomas Shawe between November 1572 and February 1575. Included, for example, are necessities for the children, payments to Elizabeth Willoughby (for example, £40 in November 1572), payments for doctors' visits and various medical and herbal concoctions, alms to the poor, payments for everyday things like reeds, horsemeat and the shoeing of horses, for musicians, supplies for the dogs, books and paper, wages for the servants, etc.[177] The totals for the month of November 1572 were £111 3s 2d, while the weekly sums for November 1574 were between £30–£40.[178] Francis lived the life of a country aristocrat, despite belonging to the upper gentry, spending

> somewhere in the region of £1,200 per annum on household expenses […] In November 1572 a bill paid to a London grocer amounted to £22 8s 10d, with

[172] Mi, LM 26, fos 70–72: see pp. 103–105 below and Text n. 141.

[173] Mi, LM 26, fos 71–72: p. 105 below.

[174] In a 'Liber Concessionum', dated 1573/4 there is a list of leases up for renewal; the fines listed as paid were £2,600. Smith, *Sir Francis Willoughby*, 17. Smith notes that the rents were unrealistically low. Therefore any profits derived from the lands came from fines which, if land was lent out for three lives, would have been levied after decades rather than years.

[175] *Ibid.* 15, where he mentions the rise in coal revenues in the 1560s and 1570s, 'though the need to install horse–driven pumps in the Wollaton coalfield for the first time in 1573 foreshadowed the difficulties to come'. See also Richard S. Smith, *Early Coal-Mining around Nottingham 1500–1650* (Nottingham, 1989).

[176] *Ibid.* 12; Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton', 36–37.

[177] Mi, A 57, fos 8–93; excerpts in *HMC Middleton*, 421–451

[178] No monthly tallies were given in 1574.

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> an extra 6d paid out in tolls for the three horses which carried the goods to Nottingham. The order contained luxury spices including pepper, nutmegs, ginger, cinnamon, mace, cloves, dates, prunes, raisins, currants, liquorice, aniseed, almonds, and rice as well as 190 pounds of sugar of varying quality […] Fish and wine were brought in from Hull, but much of the produce which ended up on Sir Francis's table would have come from his own lands […] Sir Francis spent at least £20 a year on musicians' wages and occasionally had companies of visiting players under noble patronage perform at Wollaton Old Hall.[179]

Letters between Francis and Elizabeth do not appear in this collection until 1574, at which time Elizabeth was in London in poor health and Francis had remained behind to attend to 'earnest business'. The very first letter we have from Elizabeth is a dramatic notice of her health, where she states that she would prefer death to living continually sick. Shortly thereafter, Cassandra notes that these and many more letters in the library show that Sir Francis and his Lady lived very unhappily together, a conclusion she repeats concerning their correspondence in the summer of 1575.[180]

By 1575 Elizabeth Willoughby was increasingly not at home, neither at Wollaton, at their property in Middleton, nor wherever else they owned houses. Francis, while concerned for her health, was also concerned with his expenses maintaining her journeys and separate stays 'in other mens houses'.[181] He was also considering an alteration in their marriage settlement.[182] By now George Willoughby, who had helped arrange the marriage, was recommending that Francis banish Elizabeth.[183] In very many letters at this time, Francis writes of his wife's wilfulness.[184] In a letter to John Lyttleton, Francis says that he expects to meet his wife at Middleton, 'where, (if she would goe thither) she should be used as became Sir John Lyttletons Daughter and his Wife, but if she refused, she should have but small maintenance or comfort from him'.[185] The father, intervening, assures Francis that he 'hoped [she] would suffer reason to take place, for she had now faithfully promised that she would be directed by her Husband as duty required, and that she would refer her self and cause to him, to order as he should think well off [of], and that at

[179] Marshall, *Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family*, 22; see also Mi, A 57; *HMC Middleton*, 421–451.
[180] Mi LM 26, fos 72–72v, 74, 85: see pp. 105–108, 117 below.
[181] Mi, LM 26, fo. 74: see p. 108 below.
[182] Mi, LM 26, fo. 85: see p. 118 below.
[183] Mi, LM 26, fo. 85: see p. 118 below.
[184] See, for example, Mi, LM 26, fos 74, 75: see pp. 108–109 below.
[185] Mi, LM 26, fos 74–75: see p. 108 below.

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her return from Buxton[186] she would come to Middleton to him, and remain there, or at any other place, where he should think good, not weighing her health, or life, so much as contenting him'.[187]

In the summer of 1575 Francis Willoughby was knighted. On 20 July 1575 Lord Burghley wrote that the Queen, after her progress to Kenilworth, planned to visit Wollaton; at the same time Sir Francis Knollys wrote to Francis to give him notice of the Queen's coming to Wollaton: 'Her Majesty is determined to tary two days at your house that is to say tomorrow night and Thursday all day, whereof I thought good to advertise you betimes'. Instead she seems to have visited Middleton Hall rather than Wollaton. John Nichols, in his standard work on Queen Elizabeth's progresses, notes that 'whilst the Queen was at Kenilworth, we are told […] that she had invitations to visit Lichfield, Worcester and Middleton. There are accounts of her being at the two first of these places, but I cannot find that she was at Middleton'.[188] Mary Hill Cole, in a recent study of Elizabeth's progresses, concludes that from 28 to 29 July 1575 Elizabeth did visit Francis at Middleton, where he was knighted.[189] Although Cassandra thinks that, during this interlude in 1575, the marriage returned to relative calm, it did not remain so.

By late 1575 Francis had become extremely disenchanted with his marriage. In a letter to his father-in-law he charges Elizabeth with 'froward humour' and particularly with preventing Lady Arundell from visiting over the past eight years and when she did visit, Elizabeth had called her names and refused to eat, drink or sleep until she was revenged of her.[190] Cassandra writes that, 'There are many letters which shew that towards the end of the summer An.D. 1575 Sir Francis Willughby and his Lady lived very unhappily together.'[191] One letter, in particular, written by Sir Francis to Sir John Lyttleton in 1575 is full of complaints:

> amongst other things he writes that one day at Wollaton, as he was talking with Mary his fool of going to Kinsbury, his Wife answer'd she would not goe thither, upon which he asked her if she would stay at Wollaton, or goe

[186] Buxton was a fashionable spa and resort in Derbyshire frequented by Burghley, Leicester, and Mary, Queen of Scots, among others. See fo.74 and Text n. 148.

[187] Mi, LM 26, fo. 75: see pp. 108–109 below.

[188] Mi, LM 26, fo. 76: see p. 110 below. John Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1823), xviii.

[189] Mary Hill Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony* (Amherst, 1999), 188; see also Text n. 106.

[190] Mi, LM 26, fos 86–87: see p. 119 below.

[191] Mi, LM 26, fo. 85: see p. 117 below.

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> to Middleton. She answer'd that she would not stay there, and that if she had not been lately very sick; he would not have found her there, for she would have gone before he had returned. He asked her whither, to which she answer'd, her friends would not see her destitute, and she would not bear so much as she had done, and that she would not with her good will tarry any longer with him, who she said kept her but as a fool, to jest, and flout at.[192]

Between 1575 and 1578, it is not clear exactly where Elizabeth Willoughby was, but the letters suggest that she may have gone back to her parents' household part of this time, although her father was, at times, considering disowning her. In early 1578, at Kingsbury Hall, Warwickshire, Francis Willoughby confronted his wife in the Gallery in front of influential friends and servants after a dinner that was originally designed to reconcile them. A long written account of what happened, abbreviated by Cassandra, reported:

> after they had supped at Kinsbury Sir Francis Willughby sent to his Lady (who had before refused to come to supper) to requir her to speak with him. She sent word she would speak with him in the Gallery, where they all went. What Sir Francis said at first going into the Gallery was not heard by the company, but his Lady answer'd in great coller, I will blaze your armes and make you better known. Sir Francis pressed her to be reconciled to his Sister, which she refused. He then asked her if in all other things she would be ruled by him, to which she answer'd she would not be ruled by him. Upon which Sir Fowlk Grevell [1st Baron Brooke] said why, Madam, will you refuse to be ruled by your husband. She answer'd she was the Queens sworn servant and knew not but Sir Francis might command her something against her Majesties proceedings, to which Sir Fowlk said that was an evil objection for a Wife to lay to her Husband.[193]

She answered that 'her heart was hardned against Sir Francis, and she could not love him as she had done'.[194]

Matters went from bad to worse as Elizabeth Willoughby became convinced that some of the servants were out to murder her; nor would she stay alone in the house with Joahn, one of the servants,

[192] Mi, LM 26, fo. 85: see p. 118 below.

[193] Mi, LM 26, fos 89–90: see pp. 122–123 below. Barbara J. Todd notes that there were two exceptions in the common law to a wife's subservience to her husband. One was with regard to her own soul and the second was 'the acknowledgement that all women, including wives, bore personal allegiance to their sovereign under common law'. Barbara J. Todd, 'Written in her heart: Married women's separate allegiance in English law', in Tim Stretton and Krista J. Kesselring (eds), *Married Women and the Law: Coverture in England and the Common Law World* (London, 2013), 163–191. Todd documents the challenge to this principle in the 17th century and later.

[194] Mi, LM 26, fo. 90: see p. 123 below.

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whom she claimed was Francis's whore.[195] In February 1578 she was threatening suicide if she could not leave the house and go to an inn. Francis, as a result, placed her under close watch by the servants; she was not allowed to see her friends or to have anything to do with the children. She could not discharge or receive any servant or send any servant with a message to any place. She could not order any horse for her use or buy anything. Francis further ordered 'That she have no authority to command any thing in the house except necessary diet for herself'.[196] In response, she left the house to confer with her brother and other friends and relatives, was locked out by the servants and forced to move to a house provided for her by the Mayor and Aldermen of Coventry.[197] By her account, she was also pregnant at the time. From this point forward Elizabeth seems to have returned briefly to her father, then to have moved to Berkswell, Warwickshire, the home of Thomas Marrow, her brother-in-law, wandered 'from place to place' and finally settled in London, by which time she had given birth to their son.

Despite very many letters in which Elizabeth Willoughby alternately offers her submission, asks for an allowance and complains about her daughters being taken away from her, Sir Francis was unwilling to help or take her back. Subsequently her cause and a request for allowance from Francis was to be heard by the earl of Leicester and Sir Francis Walsingham and brought to the Queen.[198] Lady Arundell subsequently reported, in an undated letter, that Elizabeth brought witnesses up before the Secretary, Walsingham; she urges Francis to provide a catalogue of his wife's faults to send to Walsingham and Leicester to prevent them from interceding with the Queen on his wife's behalf.[199] In response to

[195] This claim was not included in Cassandra's final copy, but it is included in her draft copy. STB Box 2(1), book 1, fo. 22v. On Joahn, see Text n. 200.

[196] Mi, LM 26, fos 92–93, pp. 125–126 below.

[197] Coventry was perhaps 20 miles from Kingsbury, while Middleton was perhaps 4 miles from Kingsbury in the opposite direction.

[198] It is possible that this case came through the court of requests, which functioned as an equity court under the Privy Seal. This court, as did chancery, functioned alongside the common law courts. The power exercised in the court of requests was an extension of the monarch's prerogative right to hear and determine subjects' complaints. Tim Stretton (ed.), *Marital Litigation in the Court of Requests 1542–1642*, Camden 5th ser., 32 (Cambridge, 2008), 8. See also Stretton, *Women Waging Law in Elizabethan England*. A number of disputes between spouses came to this court, which was an important avenue for married women to receive more equitable treatment than they would have received at common law. The records, however, as reported by Tim Stretton in 2008, are in disrepair and difficult to use. The finding aids are also insufficient. The current handwritten catalogue in the National Archives does not list the over 300 bundles of cases chronologically or alphabetically.

[199] Mi, LM 26, fos 103–104: see p. 135 below.

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Elizabeth's request for support, Lord Burghley's secretary, Sir Michael Hicks, wrote:

> according to ye ordinance of God and the covenants of your marriage, yow [must] endevor to subdue and submytt yor will to ye plesure of yor hedd, in all honest and lawfull things seking rathr to wynne his good will wth covering his faultes, and bearing with his infirmyties, then to wreste hym to your owne […] the wch although it may seme hard to fleshe and bloude, yett is it warranted by ye woorde of God, wch byndes all women […] to yelde due benevolence and obedyence to their husbands.[200]

By 1582, it appears that Queen Elizabeth had responded positively to Elizabeth Willoughby's request, for Francis was obliged to allow her £200 a year for separate maintenance.[201] But already, in December 1580, their young son had died and Lady Willoughby was requesting to return to Francis with the hope that, although approaching forty years of age, she might still bear him a son. It is very likely that by this time Francis was no longer faithful to the marriage. There is evidence for at least one illegitimate child by 1584/5 – a William Deverell alias Willoughby, son of Katharine Deverell.[202] Now that Francis had turned against his wife, she had very little male support during their separation, a serious concern in a patriarchal society. With no sons to buttress her position, a father who was maintaining his distance from her, and no male in-laws in evidence to help her, she was dependent on friends and possibly her brothers, none of whom was sufficient. Elizabeth badly needed to return to Wollaton.

In 1585 an exchange of letters took place between Elizabeth Willoughby and Francis, one of which is copied in its entirety in

[200] BL, Lansdowne MS 101/41, quoted in Friedman, *House and Household*, 64

[201] Mi, LM 26, fo. 104: see p. 136 below. Elizabeth could, potentially, also have requested maintenance from the ecclesiastical courts. In 1610 members of Parliament complained about the Ecclesiastical Commission granting alimony to separated wives 'to the great encouragement of wives to be disobedient and contemptuous against their husbands', E.R. Foster (ed.), *Acts of Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, II (New Haven, CT, 1966), 265, cited in D.M. Palliser, *The Age of Elizabeth: England under the Later Tudors 1547–1603*, 2nd edn (New York, 1992), 74.

[202] STB Box 2(2), Uncatalogued half-sheet of paper signed 'Rob^{t} Barnard Vic^{r}'. According to this paper, found in Cassandra's notes to her history in the Huntington Library, by 1584/5 Sir Francis had fathered an illegitimate son. The note reads: 'William Deverell alias Willoughby son of Katharine Deverell and as she has confess'd him, the son of Sir Francis Willoughby Knt of Nottinghamshire Baptized the 4th day of March 1584. This is a tru copy taken out of the Register of Laughton in the morthing [Laughton-en-le-Morthen] in the County of York, and attested by Robert Barnard Vicar.' For a William Willoughby recorded in Yorkshire early in the 17th century, see Text n. 281.

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the appendix to this introduction. These letters were designed to produce amity between them; but it was not until early in 1588 that Elizabeth finally returned to Francis and to Wollaton Hall.[203] Subsequently, there are far fewer letters between them leading up to her death in 1595.[204]

The subservience Francis expected from a wife with a sharp tongue and strong sense of her own entitlement resulted in a thoroughly unhappy marriage; it was Elizabeth Willoughby, however, who suffered the most as a result. In addition to her twelve pregnancies and the deaths of six of her children, she had an unfaithful husband whose correspondence suggests a too ready willingness to believe the worst of people and a hardness of heart toward his dependents as well as his own children, a meddling and ill-disposed sister-in-law, threats and the actuality of imprisonment in her own home, ten years of banishment with, much of that time, an inadequate allowance, and many years of sickness and separation from her children. During all this time, Elizabeth Willoughby alternately refused obedience and promised submission to her husband.

Cassandra's Account, in addition to detailing the story of a dysfunctional marriage, tells us a great deal about the role that servants played in a large household (including copying down several sets of orders for the servants to follow), a bit about the cultural interests of Sir Francis, and about the relationship of the family to the court; it also provides information, unsystematically, on various detailed land transactions and marriage settlements. What her account does not tell us is about Sir Francis's entrepreneurial efforts,[205] his building of Wollaton Hall or the various local and provincial offices and responsibilities that Francis held.[206]

[203] Mi, LM 26, fos 134, 136: see pp. 173–174, 176 of the edited text.

[204] On the date of Elizabeth Willoughby's death, see fo. 141: see Text n. 353.

[205] For this, see Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', esp. ch. 4; Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton'; Smith, 'A woad growing project', 27–46.

[206] Sir Francis received commissions relating to musters in the counties of Kent, Warwick and Nottingham, in 1577, 1580, 1589, 1591, and 1594. He was made high sheriff of Nottinghamshire in 1579 and in 1588–1589: see a 1588 letter of John Adams to Percival Willoughby: 'I am sory Sir Frauncis is made shiryf this yeare. Let his under-shiryfe take heed for his yeare to come. All the judges of the Comon Plees have taken order to oversee all the offences of undershirifes to be duely and severely punished and also hathe appointed on to followe the informations against them. Lett him therefore beware.' Mi, C 18/1; *HMC Middleton*, 158. He must have been made sheriff again in 1593/4 as there is an acquittance of the Pipe for him as sheriff of Nottingham. He was also justice of the peace at the Quarter Session in 1580, as his rulings for that year have survived in the Willoughby MS collection. See the range of materials in Mi, O. In 1592 Francis received a commission to administer the oath of supremacy within the county of Nottingham.

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Although Francis, in 1575, understood that 'his estate was very well know[n] both to Her Majesty and the whol Cownsel to be nothing inferiour to the best'[207] – to the point that Lord Burghley thought to include him as a possible peer[208] – , he ended his life in serious debt. He ran into financial difficulties in the 1580s in the building of Wollaton Hall, in the costs of some of his entrepreneurial enterprises that failed and generated legal costs, and in paying dowries for three of his daughters in the 1580s.[209] By 1581 he was already beginning to borrow rather than lend money, first £300, then £500, then £2,181, £1,468, and then £2,007 between 1581 and 1585.[210] By 1587–1588 a list of debts to be paid off that year amounted to £11, 956.[211]

Cassandra estimated the cost of building Wollaton Hall (Figure 1) to have been £80,000 – a stupendous figure if anywhere close to accurate.[212] P.E. Rossell, who has studied the annual building expenses from 1581–1588, has figures that add up to £5,763 and estimates that the total may have been as high as £8,000,[213] a far more reasonable estimate although probably too low.[214] Francis also had to consider the cost of having six daughters at a time when there was considerable inflation in the cash dowries required for marriage.[215]

[207] *HMC Middleton*, 538; Mi, LM 26, fo. 76: see p. 109 below.

[208] Smith, *Sir Francis Willoughby*, 19.

[209] The best description of the financial difficulties Francis (and subsequently his son-in-law Percival Willoughby) endured is in Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton', 46–70.

[210] Smith, *Sir Francis Willoughby*, 22 notes that 'One of the mysteries of Sir Francis's ever deeper involvement in debt is that he could not bring himself to sell land on a sufficient scale to clear himself from debt'. See also Smith, 'The Willoughbys of Wollaton', 48.

[211] *Ibid.* 51, citing Mi, 6/170/132.

[212] *HMC Middleton*, 566 and n. 1; Mi, LM 26, fo. 129.

[213] P.E. Rossell, 'The Building of Wollaton Hall, 1580–1588', 2 vols, MA thesis, University of Sheffield, 1957, cited in Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', 192.

[214] Mi, LM 26, fo. 129: see Text n. 295.

[215] O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraint*, 211. Three of his daughters married in the 1580s. Bridget received a dowry of only 2,000 marks, perhaps because of expectations that the bulk of the estates would be settled on her and Percival. Mi, 5/168/74–76; Mi, 1/7/3, dating between 1581 and Nov. 1584. The wedding expenses in 1580 amounted to £1,213 2s 4d: Mi, A 60/2, fo. 1; see also *HMC Middleton*, 555. Total expenses for 1580–1585 were over £13,400, including £4,737 3s 5d in lands purchased. Mi, A 60/2, fos 2–2v. See a letter written by Francis to Thomas Willoughby (Mi, 2/76/3/4) relating to debts. Francis continued to buy, not selling sufficient lands to pay his debts. Smith, *Sir Francis Willoughby*, 22–26. For the marriage of Dorothy Willoughby with Henry Hastings, Francis agreed to settle land worth £200 per annum on the couple and to give £2,000 with his daughter in 1585. Mi, 6/170/127. Cf. also Mi, 6/170/131.2 and Mi, 2/76/3/7. For Margaret Willoughby's marriage to Robert Spencer in 1587, see M.E. Finch, *The Wealth of Five Northamptonshire Families, 1540–1640*, Northamptonshire Record Society, XIX (1956), 54. For the marriage settlement document, see Mi, 6/178/86. See also Mi, 6/178/88–94. Margaret's dowry was £4,000, and Robert had hopes that Francis would settle part of his estate on them in the future.

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Francis compromised his estates even further after Elizabeth's death in June, 1595 when he precipitously married a recent widow, Dorothy Tamworth,[216] by August 1595. In this hasty marriage, performed before any settlement could be drawn up,[217] Francis planned to provide her a jointure of several lordships worth approximately 2,000 marks a year. She, however, 'liking the land tyed for her security better than the joynture which was to have been settled upon her, took care to prevent that settlement from being made'.[218] Sir Francis seems to have leased out (for up to three lives) the greatest part of his estate, the properties at Wollaton, Cossall, Trowell, Middleton and Kingsbury that were to be settled on Sir Percival Willoughby as his heir. The money from these leases, as well as from the sale of other lands and woods, Francis secured for his new wife. The result was a series of bills in chancery between Sir Francis and Sir Percival. In 1595 John Spencer wrote to Sir Francis to remind him that interest was due on £22,000 by All Saints Day.[219] For the year 1596, Cassandra writes, 'thus having charged his estate with as much money as it could bear […] to raise a great sum of money for his Lady, he fell very sick. There is a tradition in the family that his friends suspected his Lady had given him poyson, but whither that was so, or not, is uncertain'.[220] Francis Willoughby died in November 1596 and was buried quickly and unceremoniously at St Giles Cripplegate, London, on 16 November 1596.[221] Percival and Bridget Willoughby greatly feared that Dorothy Tamworth Willoughby, now widowed but pregnant, would give birth to a male heir. In the end she gave birth to a daughter, Frances, but she nonetheless kept possession of all the revenues from the estates that Sir Francis Willoughby left. Percival and Bridget, thenceforth, were involved in many costly law suits against Dorothy

[216] Dorothy Colby Tamworth (1565–5 Apr. 1621) was the daughter of Thomas Colby (*c.*1530–5 Mar. 1588), of Sherfield-upon-Ludden, Hampshire (Hants), a 'puritan west country lawyer' (http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/colby-thomas-i-1530-88) of Grey's Inn and Elizabeth Gilbert, daughter of Edward Gilbert, alderman of London. She was named her father's heir at an Inquisition *post mortem* held on 11 Dec. 1588. She married her first husband, John Tamworth of Leake, Lancs (1562–18 Feb. 1594), in 1583. He was a squire of the body to Queen Elizabeth. Less than two years after Dorothy was widowed, she received a visit from William Russell, steward in the employ of Sir Francis who was under orders to find Francis Willoughby a new wife.

[217] Mi, LM 26, fo. 145: see pp. 185–186 below.

[218] Mi, LM 26, fos 145–46: see p. 186 below.

[219] Mi, LM 26, fo. 184: see p. 236 below.

[220] Mi, LM 26, fo. 156: see p. 197 below.

[221] See the parish register for St Giles Cripplegate, London Metropolitan Archives A/002/MSO6419/001, under 16 Nov. 1596.

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Willoughby, one consequence of which was that Lady Willoughby (very shortly thereafter Lady Wharton because of a third marriage) bribed the Lord Chancellor Francis Bacon to the amount of £310, and this became one of the charges against Lord Bacon that brought him down.[222] Percival was left with debts of £4,000 for the portions of three of Francis's daughters, £1,786 in debts that Sir Francis owed, £3,050 for iron works that Percival was bound to pay, £1,370 of interest due on loans that Sir Francis left, and a debt of £21,000 that Percival was bound for based on Francis's promise to leave to him and his wife the whole remainder of his estate. The cost to Sir Percival to regain his inheritance at court was £3,000. As Cassandra sums it up, 'Thus when Sir Percivall first enjoy'd Sir Francis Willughbys estate he found himself engaged in excessive troubles, for from those 5 Lordships which were settled upon him he could receive but 550li—16sh—0d per annum, and those Lordships were charged with the debt of 35156li'.[223] She aptly describes the estate that Sir Percival received as 'shattered'.

Cassandra's assessment of Francis was that he was a man of great piety and learning. He had a substantial library of the most valuable books of his time, of which only a handful remain, including, among the medieval manuscripts, an Anglo-Norman penitentiary and a book of sermons, several French romances, fragments from the *South English Legendary,* the *Confessio Amantis* of John Gower, and a Middle English *Speculum Vitae* and *The Lay Folks' Catechism.*[224] Cassandra saw many notes and remarks in Francis's books as well as several other small manuscripts and 'pious discourses' written by Francis on theological subjects, some of which 'seem to have been heads of sermons for his chaplains to preach upon'.[225] Francis's surviving lute book includes forty-seven pieces of music, three of them written by Francis;[226] he also translated at least a portion of *De Re Metallica* by Agricola from the Latin into English.[227] The surviving

[222] Mi, LM 26, fo. 157v: see p. 199 below.

[223] Mi, LM 26, fos 159–160: see pp. 201–202 below.

[224] Mi LM 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Ralph Hanna and Thorlac Turville-Petre (eds), *The Wollaton Medieval Manuscripts: Texts, Owners and Readers* (York, 2010) describe various medieval MSS in the Willoughby archives, a number of which are legal, devotional or liturgical in character.

[225] Mi, LM 26, fo. 160: see p. 202 below. 'This Sir Francis was a man of great piety and learning. There is still remaining a collection which he made of the most valuable books of his time, and many notes and remarks upon them writ with his own hand. There is also in the Library severall other little manuscripts writ by himself upon divine subjects some of which seem to have been heads of sermons for his chaplains to preach upon.'

[226] *The Lute Book of Francis Willoughby, c.1575,* facs. edn, with introduction by Jeffrey Alexander and Robert Spencer (Kilkenny, Ireland, 1978); Mi, LM 16.

[227] Mi, X 2/5. The surviving portion deals with the problem of flooding in the mines and of pumping, an issue for the Wolloughby mines as they dug deeper for coal.

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sixteenth-century printed books that Francis owned, and in which he wrote marginal notes are: Elyot's *The boke named the Gouvernour* (1531); John Brentius, *In evangelii quod inscribitur, secundum Lucam, duodecim priora capita Homiliae centum et decem* (1537); *Breviarium seu Portiforium ad usum ecclesie Sarisburiensis* (1561); *Les oeuvres de Clement Marot* (1564); *The works of Thomas Becon* (1564); Raphael Holinshed, *The first volume of the chronicles of England* (1577); Wolfgang Musculus, *Common places of Christian religion* (1578), and three volumes of Richard Hakluyt, *The principall navigations, voiages and discoveries of the England nation* (1589).[228] There may have been a *Romance of Godfrey of Bologne*, printed by Caxton in 1481, also in the library.[229] There are extant notes in Francis Willoughby's hand from John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, a copy of which may also have been in the library.[230] Alice Friedman has estimated, based on a *c.*1690 shelf list and a much later sale catalogue, that Francis had a library of roughly two hundred fifty volumes.[231] The Christie's sale catalogue, from 1925, included a copy of Erasmus's *Apophthegms* (1542) with the signatures of both Francis and Elizabeth,[232] as well as a copy of Foxe's *Ecclesiasticall History* (1570 edition) with the initials FW in it. Friedman remarks 'that a number of Willoughby's speeches before the Quarter Sessions included quotes from this volume'.[233] W.H. Stevenson describes a few additional books that are now not in the Middleton archives, viz. a *c.*1400 manuscript of John of Trevisa's *Polychronicon* with the signatures of Master Gabryell Barwyke and Alys Jeaycoote, a fifteenth-century manuscript of Lydgate's translation of John Bochas's *Book of Princes*, and a 1520 copy of the *Sarum Antiphonale*, printed in Cologne and given by Henry Willoughby to his chapel of St Thomas.[234]

Drawing upon the late seventeenth-century catalogue from Wollaton Hall and looking for those books with sixteenth-century imprints, Friedman notes the marked emphasis on English language books and a focus on mathematics, geography, natural science, and law, including books on mechanics and experimental science. Among the sixteenth-century imprints were a collection of books on medicine, popular

[228] Mi, LP 1–10.

[229] Mi, F 15/1–15. It was sold from the Willoughby collection in 1883.

[230] Mi, O 16/1.

[231] Friedman, *House and Household*, 30; for a description of the late 17th-century shelf list, see William Poole, 'The Willughby Library at the Time of Francis the Naturalist', in Tim Birkhead (ed.), *Virtuoso by Nature: The Scientific Worlds of Francis Willughby FRS (1635–1672)* (Leiden, 2016), 227–243.

[232] STC 10443; printed by Richard Grafton with a preface by William Tyndal, in English; currently at the Folger Library.

[233] Friedman, *House and Household*, 30. See Mi, O 16/7/1, which is a copy, in Francis Willoughby's hand, of excerpts from Foxe.

[234] *HMC Middleton*, 621–622.

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works, some twenty or thirty books on religious themes, some Latin works of philosophy and literature, a few advice handbooks, four primers or dictionaries, and, as might be expected from someone who invested in the significant and advanced architectural programme of Wollaton Hall, a number of books on art and architecture.[235] One cannot assume, however, that the sixteenth-century imprints were all collected in the sixteenth century, although one book listed, the *Historie of Man, Sucked from the Sappe of the Most Approved Anathomistes*, written by John Banister, surgeon and physician to the Willoughby household in the 1570s, includes a dedication to Sir Francis in which he praises Sir Francis for his scholarly seclusion 'in Ciceros ocium'.[236]

Sir Francis's papers feature charges by him as justice at the Quarter Sessions, examinations of witnesses and notes on his reading.[237] In one of these papers, Francis addresses Justice: 'Justice is as a magistrate whose office is to give to everye man his owne, to defend the godlye, and to punishe the wicked. The mouth of justice is the true witnes giver, who speaketh nothinge but truth itselfe'. Witnesses, according to Francis, sometimes speak too much while others speak too little, '[they] halte betwixt trueth and lyinge: [they] denye God, dissemble with the truth, & deceave men'. Francis goes on to discuss the role of the jury and the magistrate, impediments to the truth, causes for assembly of the Quarter Session, referencing at points Alexander the Great, Solomon and Moses 'the magistrate'.[238] In other notes of charges, Francis cites the example of Numa Pompilius, presumably invoking Livy's *History of Rome*, citing a king who was skilled in both human and divine laws, perhaps, as John Hayden suggests, championing the Elizabethan Settlement with this parallel.[239] In a third document Francis brings in 'good king' John to support the need for law and order.[240]

[235] Friedman, *House and Household*, 30–33 provides a much more detailed description of some of these books. She assumes, however, that the 16th-century imprints in the surviving library catalogue of *c.*1690 were included in the 16th-century library. The catalogue is Mi, I 17/1/1. In addition, there is a surviving Forest Book, relating to Sherwood Forest, in the Middleton MSS Collection. Mi, L 3/ 1 & 2. It is the earliest extant version in English of a forest book for Sherwood Forest, written in a late 15th-century hand and, in the latter part, in a late 16th-century hand. See Helen E. Boulton (ed.), *The Sherwood Forest Book*, TSRS, XXIII (Nottingham, 1965), 12–17.

[236] Poole, 'The Willoughby Library', 228.

[237] *HMC Middleton*, 284; Mi, O 16/6, 16/9, 16/14, 2/2/5, all dated *c.*1580; Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', ch. 5.

[238] Mi, O 16/6; Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', 160–165.

[239] Mi, O 16/14; Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', 166.

[240] Mi, O 16/9; Carole Levin, *Propaganda in the English Reformation: Heroic and Villainous Images of King John* (Lewiston, NY, 1988), 107. She describes the 16th-century heroic image of King John used to de-legitimize any idea of rebellion.

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One of the tasks of the justices of the peace was to remove recusants from office. On 22 October 1592 the Privy Council wrote to Sir Francis, Thomas Markham,[241] Sir Thomas Stanhope and others to remove, as justices of the peace, anyone refusing an oath to her Majesty's supremacy, not participating in common prayer at divine service and not attending church. The names of those who refused were to be furnished to the Lord Keeper.[242]

Surprisingly, the letters offer very little insight into the religious sensibilities of Francis, his wife or their children.[243] This correspondence suggests that religious differences, for the most part, were of less importance than local and kinship connections.[244] Although religion may have been a positive consideration in the marriage of Margaret Willoughby to Matthew Arundell, a family with strong Catholic connections at the English court,[245] Catholicism would appear to have been a negative consideration a few decades later in the marriage of one of the Willoughby daughters, Margaret, described below.[246]

Elizabeth Lyttleton Willoughby came from a family with Catholic leanings. Her father, John Lyttleton, had enjoyed influence at the court of Mary Tudor, and Gilbert, his heir and her brother, had married into an influential Catholic family (Coningsby of Hampton Court, Hereford).[247] According to one study, John Lyttleton remained a Catholic sympathiser to the end, and seems to have used his position in the county 'to soften the impact of anti-Catholic legislation on his neighbours'.[248] At the same time, in his position as custos rotulorum in 1581, he was involved in

[241] On the Catholic sympathies of Thomas Markham's family, particularly his wife and three of his sons, see below, pp. 55–56 and n. 259.

[242] Mi, O 2/2/6; *Acts of the Privy Council*, XXIII (1592), pp. 253–261; Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', 168–169.

[243] Similarly the Wollaton library catalogue from 1690 is 'almost barren of patristic authors or of any scholarly contributions to the endless confessional polemics of the day', although it did include devotional literature and sermons. Poole, 'The Willoughby Library', 240.

[244] On this issue in Elizabethan England, see Richard Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England* (Minneapolis, MN, 1981); Peter S. Bearman, *Relations into Rhetoric: Local Elite Social Structure in Norfolk, 1540–1640* (Rutgers, NJ, 1993); Norman Jones, *Governing by Virtue: Lord Burghley and the Management of Elizabethan England* (Oxford, 2015), 6–7. In Nottinghamshire, as opposed to Monmouthshire, Lancashire, Durham and Warwickshire, there appear to have been few Catholics. And this may help explain the absence of religious concerns.

[245] On the Arundells and their Catholic network, see Questier, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England*.

[246] See p. 55 below.

[247] Tonks, 'The Lyttletons of Frankley', 17.

[248] *Ibid.* 41.

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proceedings against recusants,[249] and he was on good terms with Bishop Babington of Worcester, including inviting him to hunt.[250] His youngest son George was a Catholic recusant, and his grandson, Humphrey, was executed in 1606 for his participation in the Gunpowder Plot.[251] Francis Willoughby, on the other hand, seems to have been resolutely Protestant, quite likely influenced in this direction by the Grey family and perhaps also during the four years (1560–1564) he spent as a ward of Francis Knollys, whose fervent evangelical Protestantism entailed spending much of the reign of Queen Mary in exile.

While, as noted above, Francis wrote sermons or sermon headings for his chaplains to preach, none of these survive. The best testimony of Francis Willoughby's commitment to Protestantism is the marginalia in his copy of Musculus's *Commonplaces of Christian Religion*, where he shows particular interest in the sections relating to free will, election, and the sacraments (particularly the eucharist or lord's supper). Also, in a separate page glued onto the back cover of a 1542 copy of Erasmus' *Apophthegms*, along with the names of Francis and Elizabeth Willoughby is a fragment 'regarding wealth' with Calvinist language.[252] The preamble of his 1572 will is further suggestive of strong Protestant sensibilities: 'first I bequeath & commend my soule & all that I am & shallbe unto the great mercye of my savior & redeemer Jesus Cryst by whose death & passion I trust to be part taker of the kingdume prepared for god hys elected'.[253] His 1578 draft will has an even more lengthy Protestant preamble, but this seems to have been copied from the will of the earl of Essex.[254] In 1583, and again in 1592, Sir Francis was among the JPs and 'persons of great calling', passing guilty judgments and committed to safekeeping recusants in the shire.[255] And yet, the family had long-lasting ties with Catholic families – the Pagets, Catesbys, Lyttletons, Markhams, Arundells, and also George Willoughby, who is listed from 1593–1595 in the Recusant Rolls.

[249] J.W. Willis-Bund and William Page (eds), *A History of the County of Worcester: II*, VCH (London, 1971), 214.

[250] Adrian Morey, *The Catholic Subjects of Elizabeth I* (London and Boston, and Totowa, NJ, 1978), 136.

[251] Tonks, 'The Lytteltons of Frankley', 40, 48; see also H. Bowler (ed.), *Recusant Roll No. 2 (1593–1594)*, Catholic Record Society, 57 (1965), 149–150.

[252] 'that by pryde ye do atribute nothing unto your selves, but do discretely consyder, that the thynge whiche ye have, ye have it by the fre goodnes of God in Jesu Christ, & not by your owne merites & deseruynes, but by fayth whiche ye have for to helpe them which have nede of it'. Folger Library, STC 10443

[253] Mi, 1/13/4–4a.

[254] Mi, 1/13/10–11.

[255] Hayden, 'Sir Francis Willoughby of Wollaton', 168.

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There are suggestions of anti-Catholicism in a series of exchanges between the Willoughby and Markham families, when Margaret Willoughby, the third daughter of Francis and Elizabeth, and Griffin Markham, a cousin and suitor to Margaret, were engaged in marriage negotiations. They were kinsfolk as Margaret Markham was the first wife of Henry Willoughby (d.1528) and the great-grandmother of Francis Willoughby. The families had spent time together when the children were young, and Griffin, writing from Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge *c.*1585/6 had high hopes for and expectations of a marriage with Margaret.[256] His many love letters to her, signed 'Yours to command while life doth last' or 'yours to trust until he be dust', detail his infatuation with and commitment to her. Although there is some suggestion, by Cassandra, that Francis Willoughby did not like the terms of the marriage, a letter from Elizabeth Willoughby to her daughter makes clear that religion was at the bottom of it, and that the Markhams were suspected of popery.[257] From the extended exchange of letters regarding the possible match, it appears that Margaret, while protesting her constant obedience to her father and her commitment not to proceed without his consent, may have given Griffin hope. Elizabeth Willoughby was, however, completely opposed to the marriage, writing,

> I desire the Almighty to bless you, and continue you in that faith which your Father and I carefully desired you should learn from your cradle, and as a Mother I charge and exhort you not to enter into any union which may draw you from the same. Marriage is honourable, but if religion fail on the one party, it is in my opinion a wicked joyning of the faithfull with the ungodly. I write this because I hear of a marriage motion'd to you, which for the religion suspected, or professed, is not to be received. I also hear that to procure your good will tokens have been given you which are markes and signs of popery, I mean crucifixes and such like. Either you must in time go back or God hath lost a servant, and my self a Daughter.[258]

[256] Mi, LM 26 fos 174–180: see pp. 220–230 below.

[257] Mi, LM 26, fo. 180: see pp. 229–230 below. Griffin Markham was exiled from England in 1605 for his recusancy and involvement in the Bye and Main Plots against James I. While in the Low Countries he was appointed lieutenant of the English army by Thomas Arundell, the son of Margaret Willoughby and Matthew Arundell. Questier, *Catholicism and Community*, 89. Griffin Markham married Anne Roos, the daughter of Peter Roos, Esq., of Laxton, in 1592. Bridenbaugh notes that 'Lady Markham, wife of Sir Griffin, appeared at [Paul's Cross] in 1618 to do penance for marrying one of her servants while her husband was still alive. She had to stand again at other places and pay a fine of £1000'. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Vexed and Troubled Englishmen, 1580–1642* (Oxford, 1968), 372.

[258] Mi, LM 26, fo. 180v: see p. 230 below.

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In the end Griffin's mother Mary, heiress of Rice Griffin of Braybrooke and Dingley, Northamptonshire, also ruled against the match, noting that having Margaret Willoughby in her home would disturb her devotions.[259] Whatever Margaret's feelings, she was constrained by having to show her father any letters between herself and Markham and to divulge any conversation they may have had.[260]

The subsequent marriage of Margaret with Robert Spencer in 1587 seems to have been, as far as Cassandra can judge (and as far as we can see) a happy marriage.[261] The same cannot be said for Dorothy Willoughby, Francis and Elizabeth's second daughter who married Henry Hastings, nephew of his namesake, the third earl of Huntingdon, after negotiations that lasted from 1584 to 1587.[262] Cassandra copies part of a communication from one of Francis Willoughby's friends listing ten considerations against the match.[263] Once they were married, however, Sir Francis was more than a little reluctant to provide a property to Dorothy and Henry, and Henry Hastings, perhaps due in part to their straightened circumstances and Francis's unwillingness, for years, to part with a property called the Woodland, 'used his Wife very ill'.[264] By the period 1615–1628, thirty to forty years into the marriage, Dorothy writes a great many letters to Bridget and Percival Willoughby[265] on business and family matters, but interspersed among these letters she writes at some length that her husband threatens to lock her up and use her like a dog; her children dissemble with her to their own advantage; the people around her, as well as her husband, will poison her before long; they write letters in her hand which she never saw; her husband

[259] Mary Markham came from a staunchly Catholic family, although her husband, Thomas Markham, seems to have conformed. Their sons, however, remained Catholic, with Robert fleeing to Rome, Griffin as noted above, and his two brothers, Charles and Thomas, involved in treasonous activities in the 1603 plots. Their daughter married Nicholas Longford, a Derbyshire recusant. 'Markhams' house at Ollerton became a centre for Catholicism for many years.' Cobbing and Priestland, *Sir Thomas Stanhope of Shelford*, 198. See also W.J. Tighe, 'A Nottinghamshire gentleman in court and country: The career of Thomas Markham of Ollerton (1530–1607)', *TTS*, 90 (1986), 30–45; D.F. Markham, *History of the Markham Family* (London, 1854); and Mark Nicholls, 'Treason's reward: The punishment of conspirators in the Bye Plot of 1603', *The Historical Journal*, 38 (1995), 821–842.

[260] See Mi, 5/168/80 – a copy of a draft and undated marriage settlement between Sir Francis Willoughby and Thomas Markham, Esq., 1585/6, 28 Elizabeth.

[261] See the Inquisition *post mortem* for Francis Willoughby, 4 September 1597, that says that Margaret Spencer died prior to the date of the Inquisition. Mi, 1/2/2/1.

[262] Mi, LM 26, fos 162–165, pp. 204–208 below. The marriage took place 9 July 1587.

[263] Mi, LM 26, fo. 164: see pp. 205–206 below.

[264] Mi, LM 26, fo. 168: see p. 211 below.

[265] Mi, LM 26, fos 170–173v: see pp. 214–220 below.

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gives her nothing but meat and drink and neither cloths nor money, threatens to lock her up, and refuses to let her use the coach except to go to church on Sunday. Cassandra concludes that 'By some of the old letters one may believe that the first cause of the unhappyness of Mr. Hastings and his Lady might proceed from his desiring to have her estate in land sold, and her unwillingness to part with it.'[266]

Winifrid Willoughby, the fourth daughter, fared equally poorly. Cassandra did not choose to copy the 'many letters which shew that Lady Willughby used her Daughter Winifrid with very great severity'.[267] By 1589 Edward Willoughby, the brother of Percivall, was pursuing a marriage with Winifrid 'his beloved mistris' but could not gain Lady Willoughby's consent. 'And for fear least Winifrid should steal away and marry him privately, she [Lady Willoughby] kept her locked up, by such hands as he could not convey a letter to her, or get one from her.'[268] By 1590 Edward's concern for Winifrid reached such a pitch that he found a way of getting her away and marrying her privately without the consent of either Francis or Elizabeth; the result, however, was that even after Elizabeth Willoughby's death, Sir Francis refused to see his daughter or to admit her to his house, refusing also to provide the £40 yearly support that was due her. By 1600 Edward Willoughby was in debtor's prison.

The fifth daughter, Abigail, took care of her mother during her final illness and managed the household after her death. A few years after her father's death Abigail married William Pargiter, a Northamptonshire gentleman. About this marriage Cassandra seems to have little information. At the end of this volume, her attention turns to Frances, the youngest daughter, who fled Wollaton on the eve of her mother's death and whose marriage with Montague Wood, probably in 1597,[269] was preceded by the cruelty with which she was treated by her mother and an investigation in 1595 by the ecclesiastical High Commission into whether she had had an affair with John Drake,[270] as well as the loss of both parents soon after she left.

[266] Mi, LM 26, fo. 173v: see p. 220 below.

[267] Mi, LM 26, fo. 185: see p. 237 below.

[268] Mi, LM 26, fo. 186: see p. 239 below.

[269] Mi, LM 26, fos 193v–194, pp. 249–250 n. 488 below. This marriage of Frances and Montague Wood is mentioned in Percival Willoughby's draft letter to Lord Burghley in 1597 where he accuses Francis Willoughby's second wife of inveigling the youngest daughter to marry an apprentice or 'petti merchant of lytle worthe'. See Introduction n. 52.

[270] John Drake, Esq., of Ashe and Mount Drake, Devon (*c.*1560–1628), was, in 1595, captain of a militia in Devon. He later became an active member of Parliament from 1614–1626. Drake appears, however, to have been married to Dorothy Button and to already

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By far the greatest attention Cassandra paid to the daughters of Francis and Elizabeth Willoughby is to the oldest, Bridget, who married her cousin Sir Percival Willoughby of Kent; these were Cassandra's great-grandparents. Bridget seems to have been a refuge and help to her sisters whenever possible. Cassandra follows the story of Percival and Bridget in great detail in this volume and in the second volume edited by Wood. In addition, there are a number of original letters not copied by Cassandra and still in the Middleton archival collection at Nottingham University Library as well as lost letters that were copied down by W.H. Stevenson. They had, by all accounts, a companionate marriage (a marriage with strong ties of affection),[271] enduring together a long series of law suits, particularly in their attempt to retrieve the Willoughby lands from Sir Francis's second wife. This marriage of equal partners stands out in contrast to the dysfunctional marriage of Francis and Elizabeth and Francis Willoughby's insistence on obedience in the marriage, a sentiment that, however difficult the lives of Bridget and Percival may have been, never enters into the correspondence between them.

Amy Louise Erickson, in her book on *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (1993), concludes that early modern women in England did not write about their own experiences, and the best avenue that one can find to determine their attitudes towards people and property is through legal documents. Cassandra Willoughby's project of telling the story of the Willoughby women who preceded her by copying down or abstracting many of their letters, however, has provided a window into a quite complex marital world where premarital settlements were essential, personal relationships determinative, and propertied or monetary support crucial and fought for tenaciously. The Willoughby marriages resist any particular marriage model, and the women often acted in ways that defied prevailing patriarchal sentiments of female obedience to a husband or father.[272] In the case of Elizabeth Willoughby, however, her unwillingness to any longer obey a husband she no longer loved resulted in years of banishment from her family, harsh treatment by her husband, alienation of her daughters, and a great bitterness of spirit as she aged.

have two children in 1595. See Mi, 2/75/2/8/1-4 for the High Commissioner for Ecclesiastical Causes documents.

[271] Lawrence Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (New York, 1977), esp. ch. 8 on 'The Companionate Marriage'.

[272] Although David Underdown has argued that the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods were a time of strained gender relations, Alison Wall has concluded, based on her study of the letters of the sisters Joan and Maria Thynne, that such strained gender relations are more apparent than real and based largely on the greater availability of court records for historians to study. Cited in Palliser, *The Age of Elizabeth*, 75.

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APPENDIX

An illustration of how Cassandra calendared the letters from the family archives can be seen by comparing an extant letter in the British Library with her Account. The sections **not included** in her Account are in bold (Figure 4 and 5).[273]

62v: *My Lady Willoughby to Sr. Fr. Sent about ye end of 1585*

61r: *Sr: Albeit in respect of ye manifold wronges & wantes, wch I have endured for the space of theise 7 yeares paste, I have has* [*sic*] *iuste cause as ever any had to hate even from my very harte, all those who by their lewde & sclanderous reportes have bene the contryvers and contynuers therof. Yet* ***since it hath pleased god now at the lengthe to move yor harte, to make some showe of better inclination towardes me****, I protest unto yow before god I do not only frely & unfaynedly forgive them, but also do mooste humbly thanke yow for vouchsafing me* ***(to my greate comforte)*** *both yor company & conference. A happy entraunce I hope to a full & perfett reconciliation betwixt us.*
To the performance wherof, as there shalbe no wante on my parte in all good & convenient sort to be dyrected by yow. So I truste yow will hold me excused, if by the advise of my good & wise freindes I shall refuse to enter into any hard condicions, ***or be drawne by any action into any danger of ye losse of that litle poore lyving yow allowe me****.*
Wherin as I do not so muche as conceyve any yll opynion of yow towching yor owne disposition & nature, so am I not ignorant of the setled malyce of some, who seke by all driftes & devises they can, to kepe us still asunder.
I could name many, but I will note but one whom yow knowe & I have tryed, who fearing belyke some lykelyhood of our cominge together againe, and fynding yt false reportes tooke not yt effect wth yow wch he expected, like a ~~conninge~~ woodman, channges his course, and comminge to me under the coulor of greate freindshipp, declared unto me how yow were mynded to sue a dyvorce betwxt us, and that to this end ***yow had sent fourthe as it were spyes*** *certaine* ***good*** *fellowes* ***into dyverse corners of ye countrey, who*** *had undertaken to fynd out and bring to light this supposed childe.*
The wch ***infamous & forged sclaunder as it hath bene to*** *my greate* ***greif &*** *discreditt, bruted* ***abroad by them****,*[274] ***so, hath it bene if I may so say) ever readily beleaved by yow****.*
Wheras if it had pleased yow in the begyninge, when it was brought to yow, to have brought me to myne answere, yor mynde might have bene long synce better satisfied, and the reputation of my honest name not so greatly impayred as it is.

[273] BL, Lansdowne 46/31, fos 61–62v; Mi, LM 26, fo. 126: see below pp. 157–158; Friedman, 'Portrait of a marriage', 550–551.

[274] Cassandra writes, 'Which suspicion had been bruted, greatly to her discredit'.

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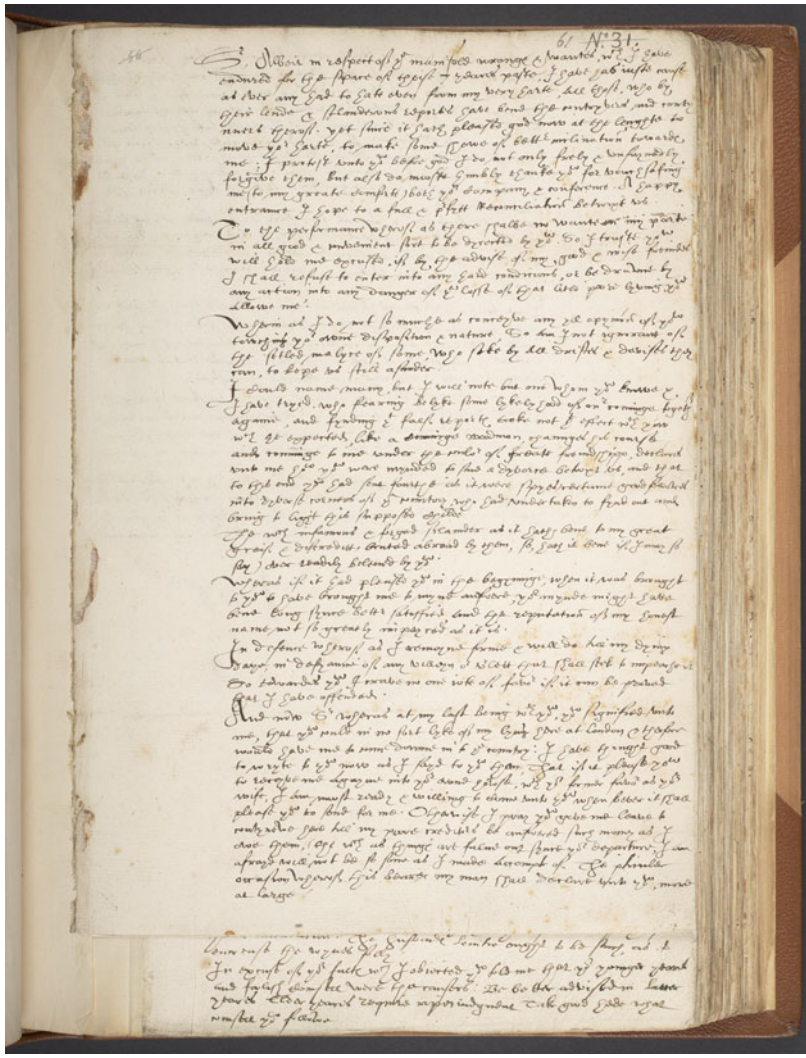


Figure 4. Letter from Lady Elizabeth Willoughby to Sir Francis Willoughby (1585), in colour online. Reproduced by permission of the British Library from Lansdowne MS 46/31, fo. 61r.

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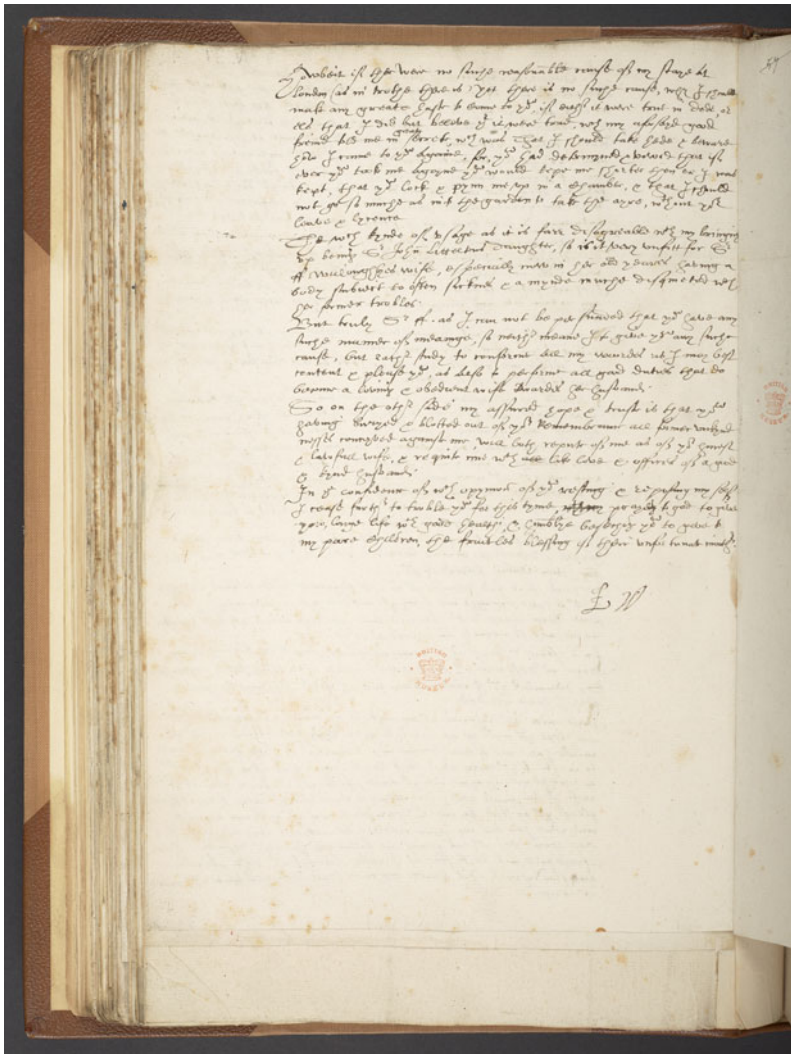


Figure 5. Reverse of letter from Lady Elizabeth Willoughby to Sir Francis Willoughby (1585), in colour online. Reproduced by permission of the British Library from Lansdowne MS 46/31, fo. 61v.

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In defence whereof as I remayne firme & will do till my dying daye, in defyaunce of any villeyn or varlet that shall seek to impeache it. ***So towardes yow I crave no one iote of favor if it can be proved that I have offended.***

And now Sr whereas at my last being wth yow, yow signified unto me, that yow could in no sort lyke of my lyving here at London & therfore would have me to come downe in to ye country: I have thought good to wryte to yow now as I sayd to yow than*, that if it please yow to receyve me agayne into yor owne howse, wth yor former favor as yor wife, I am moost ready & willing to come unto yow,* ***when soever it shall please yow to send for me. Otherwise I pray yow geve me leave to contynewe here till my pore crediters be answered such mony as I owe them, the wch as thinges are faline out synce yor departure, I am afrayd will not be so sone as I made accompt of. The particuler occasion wherof this bearer my man shall declare unto yow, more at large****.*

61v: Howbeit if ther were no suche reasonable cause of my staye at London (as in truthe there is) yet there is no suche cause why I should make any greate haste to come to yow, if eithr it were true in dede, or els that I did but beleve yt it were true, wch my aforsayd good freind told me in great secrete, wch was that I should take hede & beware how I come to yow againe, for yow had determyned & vowed that if ever yow took me agayne, yow would kepe me shorter than ere I was kept, that yow lock and pynn me up in a chamber, & that I should not go so muche as into the garden to take the ayre, wthout yor leave & lycence.

The wch kynde of usage as it is farr desagreable wth my bringing up being Sr John Litteltons daughter, so it is very unfitt for Sr. F Willoughbyes wife, especially now in her old yeares, having a body subiect to often sicknes & a mynde muche disquieted wth her former trobles.

But truly Sr F. as I can not be persuaded that yow have any suche manner of meani[n]ge, so neither meane I to give yow any suche cause, but rather study to conforme all my wordes as I may best content & please yow, as also to performe all good duties that do become a loving & obedient wife towardes her husband.

So on the other side my assured hope & truste is that yow having buryed & blotted out of yor remembrance all former unkyndnesses contryved againste me, will both repute of

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me as of yor honest & lawfull wife, & requite me wth ~~all~~ like love & offices of a good & kynd husband.
In ye confidence of wch opyniones of yow resting & reposing my self, I cease further to troble yow for this tyme, [illeg. word crossed out] *praying to god to give yow, longe life wth good health, & humblye besechi*[*n*]*g yow to geve to my poore children, the fruitles blessing of their unfortunate mother.*

E.W.

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