INTRODUCTION

Conversion to Catholicism among the elite was a significant and noted feature of English society and politics in the Caroline era before the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642.[1] Born in southern Ireland of English parents who belonged to the New English colonial leadership (**document X**), Francis Slingsby's spiritual journey merits his inclusion amongst those young Englishmen who embraced Catholicism in the early seventeenth century. Among these were Tobie Matthew (son of Tobie Matthew, archbishop of York) who converted at Florence in 1607; and Cecil Calvert, who travelled to Rome in 1623 aged eighteen and became a Catholic there; Cecil's father was Sir George Calvert, 1st baron Baltimore, who himself converted in October–November 1624, after his resignation as secretary of state to James I. The courtier Walter Montagu (son of Henry Montagu, 1st earl of Manchester) was received into the Catholic Church while serving in France in 1635, allegedly as a result of a spiritual experience after attending the exorcism of some Ursuline nuns at Loudun.[2] To these must be added the numerous young men, with less prominent profiles in public life, whose denominational stories feature in their *Responsa*, or autobiographical statements made on entering the English colleges at Rome and Valladolid.[3]

The exceptionally rich documentation for Francis Slingsby (1611–1642) sets in relief one young man's conversion to Catholicism, and its consequences for himself and his immediate family.[4] He was schooled at home in Cork, southern Ireland, until the age of about

[1] On the growing public profile of Catholicism at the English court in the 1630s, including the role of converts, see Caroline Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1983), 38–71.

[2] Toby Matthew (1577–1655), *ODNB*; Cecil Calvert 2nd baron Baltimore (1605–1675), *ODNB*; George Calvert, 1st baron Baltimore (1579/80–1632), *ODNB*; Walter Montagu, (1604/5–1677), *ODNB*.

[3] Kenny (ed.), *Responsa scholarum 1598–1621* and *Responsa scholarum 1621–1685*; for an analysis of these materials, and the similar series for Valladolid, see Lucy Underwood, 'Youth, religious identity and autobiography at the English colleges in Rome and Valladolid, 1592–1685', *Historical Journal*, 55:2 (2012), 349–374.

[4] For an exposition of the conversion process in late Elizabethan and Jacobean England, see Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge, 1996).

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thirteen; as he drily noted later, 'I was educated in the fear of God' (**document 38**). He was then sent to Trinity College, Oxford, and having studied philosophy and mathematics, he graduated with a BA in February 1629.[5] After a stay in France (with a visit to the Spanish Netherlands), he arrived in Rome about June 1633 and, following a summer-long encounter with the Jesuits of the English College, he formally converted on 8 September 1633, and soon afterwards he requested to join the Society of Jesus; as we shall see he eventually joined the Society in Rome on 30 September 1641 (**documents X; 38**). From July 1633 until his death in Naples on 6 December 1642, members of the Society of Jesus – by turn English, Irish, and Italian, as he moved from Rome to Ireland, and then back to Rome – accompanied him as spiritual guides, mentors, college personnel, professors, and fellow-novices.

For his life before his conversion, little documentation has survived, apart from a minimal record of the beginning and end of his time in Oxford. The documents in this edition date to the period after his conversion; these comprise correspondence with various Jesuits, chiefly John Gerard (1564–1637), his spiritual father, and items relating to his ecclesiastical progress while in Rome from 1639, and copies of a letter from his father, Sir Francis Slingsby, and another from his mother Dame Elizabeth Slingsby, together with a letter from his brother Henry Slingsby, and a recommendation from Cardinal Francesco Barberini to Queen Henrietta Maria; these documents are presented here in Part I of this edition. Posthumous materials mainly comprise spiritual testimonies commissioned by Jesuit authorities from contemporaries; these are presented in Part II of this collection.

Seeking conversions, and recruitment of suitable candidates to the Society, were priorities for the Jesuit mission in the Stuart kingdoms (England, Ireland, and Scotland).[6] The Slingsby materials illustrate how conversion to Catholicism could lead to intergenerational conflict, and to anxieties and tensions within families, in Ireland as in England, and to civil penalties which an individual's efforts to convert others could entail (**documents 5, 6, 9, 10, 33; XI–XIII, XIV[i]**).

[5] Oxford, Trinity College Archives, III/C/1, 'Caution money received', 1625, fos 253r–254v; Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, IV (London, 1891), 1365.

[6] For England, Jesuit interest in conversions was reflected in the *litterae annuae* (annual letters) of the English Province for the 1630s; a figure was given for the total number of conversions to Catholicism effected by the fathers in the relevant year. Henry Foley (ed.), *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, VII (London, 1883), 1127–1144; for an exploration of the English Jesuit view of conversion, see Michael Questier, '"Like locusts all over the world": Conversion, indoctrination and the Society of Jesus in late Elizabethan and Jacobean England', in Thomas McCoog (ed.), *The Reckoned Expense: Edmund Campion and the Early English Jesuits* (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY, 1996), 265–284.

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Slingsby's story also illuminates the Jesuit presence in both countries, in particular their involvement in gaining converts at this social level, and the recruitment to the Society of young men of suitable educational and social background. There are significant insights into religious identity in Anglophone Ireland and on the place of aristocratic households in promoting Catholic life (**documents XI, XIII**), together with Jesuit ministry among young adults, thus contributing to our understanding of Catholic life in Ireland in the Caroline era.[7] The European links of early Stuart Catholicism on the eve of the Civil War also emerge in various ways: through the Jesuit network linking Ireland, England, the Spanish Netherlands, and Rome; in contacts between the cardinal secretary of state in Rome and Queen Henrietta Maria in favour of an individual who was subject to penal procedures (**documents 1, 18, 24**); and in continental travel by elite Catholic laity, exemplified by the 3rd earl of Castlehaven's visits to France and Rome in 1638–1639 (**documents 35; XII, XIV[iv]**).

Francis Slingsby in Rome, 1633–1634

Francis Slingsby's formal conversion took place on 8 September 1633 at the end of a summer spent in Rome, and the materials cast light on how this happened. After graduating from Oxford in February 1629, at the request of his father and paid by him, Francis then followed the customary practice of a stay in France in order to gain the social and cultural graces deemed requisite for the career in public service Sir Francis envisioned for his eldest son.[8] Based in Paris, Francis followed the usual programme of young English gentlemen: he learned fencing and horsemanship, together with singing, and a musical instrument; he diligently studied French, and later, when in Italy, he learned Italian (**document 38**). It was also reported that he had a brief romantic attachment with a French noblewoman which

[7] On Catholic life in elite households in the Pale in early seventeenth-century Ireland, see Colm Lennon, 'Mass in the manor house: The counter-reformation in Dublin, 1560–1630', in James Kelly and Daire Keogh (eds), *History of the Catholic Diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), 112–126; for an overview of Catholic reform in the 1620s and 1630s, see Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Reformation in Ireland: The Mission of Rinuccini 1645–1649* (Oxford, 2002), 39–81; on the Jesuit presence, see Fergus O'Donoghue, 'The Jesuit mission in Ireland, 1598–1651' (PhD thesis, The Catholic University of America, 1981), and Mary Ann Lyons and Brian Mac Cuarta (eds), *The Jesuit Mission in Early Modern Ireland, 1560–1760* (Dublin, 2022).

[8] On early seventeenth-century English travellers in France and Italy, see Edward Chaney and Timothy Wilks, *The Jacobean Grand Tour: Early Stuart Travellers in Europe* (London and New York, 2014); on their educational programme while in France, see John Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604–1667* (New Haven and London, rev. edn, 1989), 281–321.

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ended with his departure for Italy (**document XIII**). In addition he also travelled to the Spanish Netherlands ('Belgio') probably with a group of his English contemporaries who were on a similar educational programme. While there it was probable that they had contact with some of the many English Catholic institutions where the young gentlemen may have had relatives: the English College at Douai and the recently established English houses of religious orders. Wishing to visit Italy, a group of these Englishmen took the opportunity about May 1633 to join the entourage of Charles de Blanchefort, marquis de Créquy (1578–1638), the recently appointed French ambassador to the Holy See, who was leaving Paris to travel to Rome (**document X**).

On 13 July 1633, shortly after arriving in Rome, De Créquy was entertained to dinner as guest of the English College; Slingsby, and two young Englishmen, surnamed Orplus and Maine, accompanied the ambassador on this occasion, suggesting that all three had been part of his entourage on the journey from Paris.[9] Maine died in Rome some months later (**document 2**). The young men may have been initially suspicious of their Catholic fellow nationals at the English College, but, as Slingsby related these contacts after his conversion, the affability of the English Jesuits won him over. So began for Francis a series of conversations with the fathers at the College, chiefly with John Gerard, in which the young man explored his questions regarding Anglican and Roman claims to represent the authentic church. That he had already experienced doubts was not surprising, given his exposure to intense discussion of these issues while an undergraduate at Oxford (1625–1629). At Trinity College, William Chillingworth, the Anglican controversialist, was moving towards what proved to be a temporary adherence to the Roman Church, precisely in the years when Slingsby was there as an undergraduate.[10] Reflecting the contested place of St Augustine's writings in contemporary controversy in England, and unable to find religious certainty, after some inconclusive exchanges with the fathers, Slingsby decided to take Augustine as his criterion in evaluating the competing claims of the churches. Hearing it alleged while at Oxford that Catholic apologists had altered the original sense of certain passages in Augustine, Slingsby undertook a comparison of key Augustinian texts (used in contemporary polemics) with relevant ancient manuscripts in the Vatican Library (**documents X, XIV[i]**).[11]

[9] Foley (ed.), *Records*, VI, 608.

[10] William Chillingworth (1604–1644), *ODNB*.

[11] On Slingsby's two stays in Rome (1633–1634, 1639–1642), see Brian Mac Cuarta, 'Francis Slingsby and Rome, 1633–1642: From Irish Protestant to Jesuit novice', in

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When he shared with his English companions that he was moving towards the Roman Church, they were aghast, and sought to dissuade him in various ways, including a proposed trip to Geneva, to consult the ministers there; they also sought to test his virtue by arranging an impromptu visit to a Roman courtesan, from which Slingsby emerged with virtue intact. Having made the customary abjuration of heresy supervised by the Holy Office (or Inquisition), he was formally received into the Catholic Church on 8 September 1633. Thereafter he undertook an eight-day spiritual retreat with John Gerard, in the course of which he decided to become a Jesuit; quotes from his spiritual notebook, integrated into a posthumous relation, express his motivation (**documents 38; X**). His life thereafter was consistent with that aim. About March 1634, at the tomb of Aloysius Gonzaga he made a private vow to enter the Society (**documents 38; XIV[i]**): the Italian Jesuit student Gonzaga (1568–1591) renounced a noble title, great wealth, and the prospect of a glittering public career in order to join the Society, thereby incurring the wrath of his father; John Gerard doubtless presented young Gonzaga's life to Slingsby as Francis was struggling to reconcile a vocation to the Society with the opposing expectations of his own family.[12] Later, in letters from Ireland, Slingsby would ask Gerard to pray for him at Gonzaga's tomb (**documents 16, 26**); Slingsby's devotion exemplifies how English Jesuits in Rome were fostering the cult of their young Italian confrere as an exemplar for those facing family opposition to a religious vocation.

Francis Slingsby in Ireland, 1634–1637

Conflict in one family of the Anglo-Irish elite following conversion to Catholicism is a major theme in these documents.[13] On becoming a Catholic, Francis wrote to his parents, informing them of this step.

Alexandra Maclennan (ed.), *The Irish Catholic Diaspora: Five Centuries of Global Presence* (Oxford, 2023), 47–64.

[12] Gonzaga died in Rome while tending to plague victims; he was beatified in 1605. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, sub nomine*.

[13] On intergenerational conflict arising from youthful adherence to recusancy in early modern England, see Alison Shell, '"Furor juvenilis": Post-Reformation English Catholicism and exemplary youthful behaviour', in Ethan Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation'* (Manchester, 2005), 185–206; Lucy Underwood, *Childhood, Youth and Religious Dissent in Post-Reformation England* (Basingstoke, 2014); Robert Scully, '"He may be a father to the soul that is a son to the body": Robert Southwell (1561–1595) and divided family loyalties in the English and Catholic reformations', *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, 9:4 (2022), 511–529; and on this conflict in the English reformation more generally, Alexandra Walsham, 'The reformation of the generations: youth, age and religious change in England *c.*1500–1700', *Transactions Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 21 (2011), 93–121.

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Copies of the separate replies of his father and his mother are presented (**documents 5, 6**), illustrating their emotions on learning of this unexpected development, and their bitter disappointment for the family's prospects which this flagrant recusancy would entail. Slingsby left the English College on or shortly after 2 May 1634. In the preceding weeks he had prepared for departure by purchasing bags, locks, a set of horse's trappings, umbrellas, and shirts; since he was taking books, perhaps some he had acquired while living in Rome, he bought book-clasps; he also arranged for a letter of credit for use in Paris.[14] Letters from Slingsby to former companions among the fathers in the English College illuminate the return journey from Rome to Ireland, which he undertook in May–July 1634, with stops and Jesuit contacts recorded in Piacenza, Milan, Paris, and in English Jesuit institutions in the Spanish Netherlands (the school at St Omers founded in 1593, and the novitiate at nearby Watten) (**documents 2–4**). The vibrant English Catholic community in Paris, where he remained for two weeks in mid June, was hinted at in Slingsby's remark that so many English wanted to meet him, suggesting also that the fame of his Roman conversion had preceded him; later he encountered similar curiosity on reaching Dublin (**document X**).

His arrival in England highlighted the inconveniences and surveillance which some Catholics experienced on entering the country, but also the protection offered by senior figures in the government, members of the privy council.[15] Francis landed from the Spanish Netherlands at Gravesend just east of London about July 1634. The port searcher discovered his books, letters, and papers. The searcher was summoned before the privy council and the council was informed of Slingsby's Roman identity; however no measures were taken against him.[16] Significantly it was thanks to a Spaniard that he was brought to meet two leading Jesuits in London, suggesting that Francis first made for the chapel at the Spanish embassy, a public Catholic venue (**documents 4, 7**). After some days in the capital he proceeded unhindered northwards, meeting his brother Henry en route, before sailing (from Chester) to Dublin.

[14] FS settled his account with the college bursar on 2 May 1634, Archivum Venerabilis Collegii Anglorum de Urbe (Archive of the Venerable English College in Rome), Depositi 311, 58.

[15] Sir Francis Windebank, one of the secretaries of state, ensured the implementation of acts of clemency desired by the king or queen or prominent courtiers for individual Catholics. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*, 34, 41–42, 141.

[16] Appearance of searcher of Gravesend before privy council, 10 July/20 July 1634, TNA, PC 2/44, fo. 33r.

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Reaching that city about the end of July 1634, Slingsby joined other young people of his own background at the vice-regal court in Dublin Castle (**document XI**).[17] There he met Thomas Wentworth, the lord deputy, who had arrived in Dublin just a year earlier, in July 1633. Rejecting the possibility of practicing Catholicism privately, offered by their mentors to many new converts, Slingsby flagrantly proclaimed his new adherence (**document XIV[i]**).

In an interview with the Irish Jesuit mission superior, Robert Nugent, then residing at Kilkea in the castle of Elizabeth Fitzgerald, dowager countess of Kildare, it was arranged that the young convert would visit his family in County Cork, and seek their conversion.[18] In conversations over several days in the family home, in which father and son presented their opposing positions, Sir Francis sought to dissuade his eldest son and heir from his change of religion (**document X**), emphasizing the loss to the family's prospects of wealth and honours in public service which adherence to the Roman Church would entail. Significantly other family members then present were influenced by Francis; by the end of August 1634 his brother Henry had been received into the Roman Church, and his mother Dame Elizabeth and his sister Ann Cosby similarly were strongly drawn to embracing Catholicism (**documents 8, 10; X, XIII**); Dame Elizabeth's new religious inclination further complicated the marriage, for Sir Francis and his wife (she was twenty years younger) had already been estranged for a number of years (**documents 12, 17; XIII**). A further disturbing undercurrent in Francis's relationship with his parents was his decision to enter the Society of Jesus, though this did not become explicit until after his sudden departure from Ireland to Rome in late 1637 (**document 27**). However, the son's evasive and casuistic answers to his mother's probing regarding marriage intentions are related in one text (**document XII**).

As part of the conversion process, shortly after the family gathering, Dame Elizabeth, Ann Cosby, and Henry Slingsby travelled with Francis to meet the Jesuit mission superior then residing in the castle of the dowager countess of Kildare. There the three candidates were

[17] On the fabric and layout of Dublin Castle in the early seventeenth century, see John Montague, 'Dublin Castle 1560–1684', in Sean Duffy et al. (eds), *Dublin Castle: From Fortress to Palace*, I: *Vikings to Victorians: A History of Dublin Castle to 1850* (Dublin, 2022), 75–122; on the Wentworths' viceregal court, see Fiona Pogson, 'Elizabeth Wentworth, countess of Strafford, and her role in the vice-regal household in Ireland', *The Court Historian*, 26:2 (2021), 175–188.

[18] On Francis's endeavours to gain his family for the Roman Church, see Brian Mac Cuarta, 'Jesuit conversions in Wentworth's Ireland: The Slingsby family, County Cork, in the 1630s', in Mary Ann Lyons and Brian Mac Cuarta (eds), *The Jesuit Mission in Early Modern Ireland, 1560–1760* (Dublin, 2022), 167–192.

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interviewed by Robert Nugent, the mission superior, and William Malone, superior of the Dublin Jesuits. Of particular interest is the contrast between their ready acceptance into the Catholic Church of Henry Slingsby, Francis's twenty-one-year old brother, and the deferral they indicated for Dame Elizabeth Slingsby and her daughter Ann Cosby. This delay arose from the Jesuits' assessment of pressures facing New English women who wanted to convert, including the opposition of their husbands, and the fathers' perception of feminine weakness (**document X**); in addition, lack of suitable Catholic company where they lived, and fears of the family and social isolation that conversion would entail, increased the women's uncertainty. The returned convert did not see them during the year he was in confinement (November 1634 to November 1635) (**document 15**); thereafter he was able to visit them, and accompany them towards conversion, and guide Ann Cosby in making her household Catholic (**documents 18, 23; XIII**). More than two years after the initial encounter with Francis on his homecoming, both women became Catholics; on 3 December 1636 Ann Cosby was received into the Roman Church (**documents 23, 26; X**).

In autumn 1634, in the wake of Francis's involvement in the conversion of his brother and several other young men in Dublin, the father's vigorous measures against the elder son may be delineated. In contemporary England, among the means used to seek the adherence of recusants to the established church was the conference or theological exchange between the individual and a Protestant divine.[19] Evidence on this procedure as it involved laity in Ireland is rare. Several documents attest to two encounters of Archbishop James Ussher with Francis Slingsby in summer 1634; in August, the second exchange, before a sizeable gathering of the Irish political elite in Dublin for parliament, ended dramatically with the departure of the archbishop, thus giving victory to the youthful Slingsby, and causing Catholic jubilation (**documents 8; X–XIII, XIV[i]**).[20]

Thereafter, as a result of a series of charges made by Sir Francis – 'filling halfe a dozen sheetes of paper with complaints and accusations against mee' (**document 10**) – and presented to Lord Deputy Wentworth, young Slingsby was arrested in early November 1634 and imprisoned in Dublin Castle. The principal charge was that of drawing several young men to embrace the Roman tradition; he was also

[19] On the use of conferences to win over recusants in the Elizabethan and Jacobean era, see Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion*, 172–173.

[20] For Ussher's views on theological issues in dispute with the Roman Church of his day, see Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England* (Oxford, 2007), 57–84.

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accused of jocularly repeating the popular saying that the established church derived from the breeches of Henry VIII (**documents 10; X, XII**). Francis faced a hearing by members of the Irish privy council; he could have been freed on bonds of a thousand pounds, but the father was clearly unwilling to liberate his son (**document 9**). The prison experience adds to our understanding of legal measures in Ireland against Catholic figures in the Caroline era.[21] We learn how Jesuits supported him while in prison, and of the impact he exercised on those with whom he came in contact, especially with James Touchet (1612–1684), 3rd earl of Castlehaven, then in his early twenties (**document XI**). While Francis was incarcerated, Bishop John Bramhall[22] also sought a theological encounter (**documents XII, XIV[i]**), and this account too adds a lay dimension to our knowledge of religious controversy in early seventeenth-century Dublin.[23]

The relationship between father and son in the wake of these conversions moved from deep rift to partial reconciliation; after his release, in 1636 Francis was living in Dublin, and Sir Francis entrusted to his son the task of seeking a fresh patent for the family's plantation estates in north County Cork (**documents 5, 18; XI, XIII**). The young man persisted, though unsuccessfully, in seeking to win Sir Francis for Rome; while travelling in France in 1638, Francis regularly arranged for masses to be offered for his father's conversion (**document XIV[iv]**). Similarly we learn of Henry Slingsby's profound appreciation of the exemplary life of his elder brother, which led to his own conversion (**documents X, XV**). Issues relating to a family's patrimony sometimes complicated a person's entrance into religious life; the father's anger at the sons' conversion made the settlement uncertain, though Francis expressed hopes of being able to support colleges, presumably under Jesuit aegis, in Ireland, England and Rome, and Francis's renunciation of his inheritance (as eldest son) to his brother Henry, and their hopes for endowing a new Irish college in the Spanish Netherlands ('Belgium') feature in several items (**documents XI, XIV[ii]; 34–36**).

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[21] On the imprisonment of some Catholic bishops in Dublin Castle in the 1620s and 1630s, see Brian Mac Cuarta, *Catholic Revival in the North of Ireland, 1603–41* (Dublin, 2007), 95–96, 123.

[22] John Bramhall (1594–1663) came to Ireland as an associate of Lord Deputy Wentworth in July 1633; Bramhall was consecrated Church of Ireland bishop of Derry, 26 May 1634, *ODNB*.

[23] For an overview, see Declan Gaffney, 'The practice of religious controversy in Dublin, 1600–1641', in W.J. Sheils and Diana Wood (eds), *The Churches, Ireland and the Irish* (Oxford and New York, 1989), 145–158.

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The European context for Catholic life in Ireland and England (especially regarding the Jesuit mission) emerges in these texts. The Society's international network supported the life and mission of this young convert on his return to Ireland. One effective strategy was to elicit the engagement of Cardinal Francesco Barberini (nephew of Pope Urban VIII) in his role as secretary of state. Barberini's involvement was facilitated by the Scotsman George Conn, his secretary, who subsequently served as papal representative to Queen Henrietta Maria in London from July 1636 to August 1639. While in London, Conn's closeness to the Society of Jesus was viewed with some suspicion, not least by the English secular clergy; the Slingsby materials provide detail on that relationship.[24]

Barberini wrote a recommendation of Slingsby to Queen Henrietta Maria, when the young man was travelling from Rome via London to Dublin in summer 1634 (**document 1**). When he was imprisoned in Dublin Castle in early November 1634, Father General Vitelleschi took a personal interest in his fate, and encouraged efforts to secure his release; the cardinal sent a letter to the prisoner during this time (**document XIII**). Already in 1635 English Jesuits in Rome were considering an approach to Conn in an effort to seek a full discharge (**document 14**). Following letters from the secretary of state to Queen Henrietta Maria, and to her sister Christine Marie, duchess of Savoy, the queen interceded with Lord Deputy Wentworth, thus securing Slingsby's release about May 1635, and full liberation by mid November (**documents 15, 18; XII, XIV[i]**). Francis's letter of thanks to Barberini is included here (**document 24**).

Later efforts to extricate the protégé from Ireland (so as to begin his novitiate in Rome) included an overture by John Gerard to George Conn in the summer of 1636 (**documents 22, 23**); consideration was given to seeking a letter from Queen Henrietta Maria to Lord Deputy Wentworth in Dublin, nominating Slingsby as one of her servants. On learning that Conn in London estimated that this was impossible, the Roman prelate offered to accommodate him in his palace (**document 26**). Arising from the desire of Ann Cosby (Slingsby's sister) and Dame Elizabeth Slingsby to convert, in late 1636 Francis and the women were facing an indictment before the Irish ecclesiastical court of high commission, and he quotes one petition brought against them. In order to have protection against these proceedings, Slingsby reported that he had written to Conn (**document 23**). Barberini's interest in Francis's wellbeing extended

[24] George Conn (d. 1640), *ODNB*; Michael Questier (ed.), *Newsletters from the Caroline Court, 1631–1638: Catholicism and the Politics of the Personal Rule* (Cambridge, 2005), 25.

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to aiding his brother Henry in Ireland, who by early 1641 was heavily in debt; the cardinal's support was probably mediated by means of Carlo Rossetti, papal representative in London (**document 36**).[25]

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As for recruitment to the Society, a loosely coordinated approach between English and Irish Jesuits, and Father General in Rome, may be observed regarding Slingsby, a candidate of the social and cultural elite (**documents 14, 17, 21, 25**). This responded to the dynamics of the early Stuart Catholic community, in which some families originated in England or Scotland before moving to Ireland.[26] A central issue in the correspondence between Slingsby and John Gerard was the timing of the younger man's departure from Ireland to begin the novitiate in Rome. Here tensions between Irish and English Jesuits emerged. Two family issues detained Francis in Ireland: firstly, it was necessary to settle his patrimony (he was the eldest son), which could prove time-consuming, with no guaranteed satisfactory outcome (**document 26**); and, secondly, he was involved in accompanying his mother and sister towards entering the Catholic Church (**documents 22, 23**). The Jesuit leadership in Ireland gave priority to securing the patrimony for Francis, and so ultimately for the Society (**documents 12, 16, 17, 25, 26**); Edward Knott represented the English Jesuit experience that such delays by propertied candidates proved of little benefit to the Society (**document 14**); Rome-based Jesuits wanted Francis to travel there as soon as possible, as John Gerard emphasized. In two missives (**documents 26, 27**) the veteran English Jesuit offered spiritual counsel to a young man on leaving both his patrimony, and his family, in order to join the Society. The Jesuit general, Muzio Vitelleschi, displayed a personal interest in this candidate, and he followed Slingsby's imprisonment with concern;[27] he sent several letters to him in Dublin (**documents 20, 28,**

[25] Carlo Rossetti (1614–1681), papal representative to Queen Henrietta Maria in London, August 1639–July 1641, *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/carlo-rossetti_(Dizionario-Biografico)/?search=ROSSETTI%2C%20Carlo (accessed 25 April 2024).

[26] For English Catholics in Ireland, see David Edwards, '"A haven of popery": English Catholic migration to Ireland in the age of plantations', in Alan Ford and John McCafferty (eds), *The Origins of Sectarianism in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005), 95–126; on Scottish Catholics in Ulster, see Brian Mac Cuarta, 'Scots Catholics in Ulster, 1603–41', in David Edwards with Simon Egan (eds), *The Scots in Early Stuart Ireland* (Manchester, 2016), 141–168.

[27] Vitelleschi to Robert Nugent SJ, Irish mission superior, 10 February 1635, Moynes (ed.), *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 155.

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29), and was quietly insistent that he speedily join the novitiate in Rome.

The collection also highlights the importance of youthful friendship in fostering denominational change, and in supporting the emergence of vocation to religious life. Several significant attachments involving Francis Slingsby may be noted. After the execution of his father in May 1631 on charges of sodomy and rape, James Touchet (bapt. 1612–1684), 3rd earl of Castlehaven, moved to his estate in Maddenstown, County Kildare (west of Dublin); he visited Slingsby in prison in Dublin Castle, and arranged with the lord deputy for Francis to live in his household, which had happened by early May 1635 (**documents 12, 13**). Under Francis's influence, a devout Catholic household emerged, with some oversight from William Malone, Slingsby's Jesuit confessor. Francis used to lead Castlehaven, his siblings, and their friends in prayer in the chapel. Richard Butler (brother of James Butler, 12th earl of Ormond) was a frequent visitor, and he subsequently married a sister of Castlehaven (**documents XI, XIII**).

In late 1637, Slingsby arrived in London destitute, not having received his father's blessing for his departure, en route to join the Jesuit novitiate in Rome. Meeting Castlehaven in London, the peer persuaded Slingsby to join him on his travels through France. The earl's desire to be instructed in mathematics was a significant bond between them; Castlehaven may also have paid for the English mathematical books which Slingsby brought with him to Rome (**documents XII–XIV[iv]**). While in France, the group comprising Castlehaven and the Slingsby brothers Francis and Henry visited Paris and Lyon; like many contemporaries, they also travelled to Loudun (south-west of Orléans), site of the celebrated diabolic possessions and exorcisms in the mid 1630s. We have an account of an encounter between Francis and a demon during this visit (**document XII**).[28] Before Henry's return to Ireland, the two brothers discussed the desirability of using their patrimony to establish a college in the Spanish Netherlands for the training of priests for Ireland (**document XIV[ii]**). In addition to maintaining the two brothers when all three were travelling together in France, the earl also financed Francis's onward journey from Avignon to Rome (**document 35**). The narratives presented here illuminate the young lord's spiritual and intellectual development, and the Castlehaven household in Ireland in the 1630s. These materials complement the

[28] On the exorcisms at Loudun in the 1630s, see Michel De Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun*, trans. Michael Smith (Chicago and London, 2000); Sarah Ferber, *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern France* (London and New York, 2004), 135–140.

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better-known phases of his career, namely the family's domestic turmoil while in England in the 1620s, and the earl's Irish military career in the 1640s together with his later writings as a memorialist of that turbulent decade.[29]

Another friendship was with Elizabeth Fitzgerald, dowager countess of Kildare, the major patron of the Jesuits in early Stuart Ireland.[30] Through her lobbying of Lord Deputy Wentworth, in 1635 she arranged that Slingsby moved from the Castlehaven residence to live for several months in Kilkea Castle, her home in County Kildare which she had given to her kinsman Robert Nugent, superior of the Jesuit mission in Ireland. A young candidate for the Society, Maurice Ward (1619–1663) was among those who had visited Slingsby when imprisoned in Dublin Castle in 1634–1635. Ward was familiar with the Castlehaven household where Slingsby resided after his release (**document XI**); thereafter, Ward and Slingsby spent some months together under Jesuit tutelage in the countess's castle. Reporting a conversation between Robert Nugent and Slingsby from this time, it was Ward, uniquely among those who wrote about him, who related a romantic liaison involving his friend while in France before his conversion. The two men subsequently met occasionally in Rome in 1641–1642, when Ward was a student at the Irish College, and Francis was a Jesuit novice. From Rome, Ward affords glimpses of how they viewed the unfolding conflict in Ireland following the Catholic revolt in the winter of 1641–1642 (**document XIII**).

The early modern household, where habitually women exercised considerable influence, has been recognized as pivotal in the survival of Catholicism in England in the wake of the Reformation.[31] Regarding Elizabeth Fitzgerald, several texts give a rare portrait of an Irish noblewoman's role as Catholic protector in the early seventeenth century: providing a refuge in her residence for converts and

[29] Cynthia Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder: Sex, Law and the Second Earl of Castlehaven* (Oxford and New York, 1999); Pádraig Lenihan, *Confederate Catholics at War 1641–49* (Cork, 1999); James Touchet, earl of Castlehaven, *The earl of Castlehaven's review: or his memoirs …* (London, 1684).

[30] Elizabeth Fitzgerald, countess of Kildare (d. 1645), *DIB*.

[31] On women as leaders of Catholic households in post-reformation England, see Ellen Macek, 'Devout recusant women, advice manuals, and the creation of holy households "under siege"', in Alison Weber (ed.), *Devout Laywomen in the Early Modern World* (Abingdon, 2016), 235–252, and Marie Rowlands, 'Recusant women, 1560–1640', in Mary Prior (ed.), *Women in English society, 1500–1800* (London, 1985), 149–180; on the situation in Ireland, see Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, 'Theory in the absence of fact: Irish women and the Catholic Reformation', in Christine Meek and Catherine Lawless (eds), *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women: Pawns or Players?* (Dublin, 2003), 141–154.

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Catholics pressurized for their faith, offering hospitality and patronage for Catholic clergy, together with some detail on her spiritual journey and on Jesuit recruitment and ministry from their base in her castle. Echoes of her own voice are perceptible in the snatches of table conversation reproduced by Maurice Ward (**document XIII**). These more intimate materials complement scholarly consideration of Kildare Hall, the Jesuit complex in central Dublin (erected in the mid 1620s), which she financed.[32] The tortuous route to conversion of Dame Elizabeth Slingsby, and her daughter Ann Cosby in the years 1634–1636 further contributes to the profile of recusant women in Caroline Ireland, and of Jesuit engagement with them, mirrored in the Slingsby documents.[33]

A one-time Scots mercenary turned courtier, Robert Spreul first encountered Slingsby in Dublin in 1634; Spreul was then following his aristocratic employer's business in the Irish capital. The two became friends. Spreul attributed his conversion to Catholicism to his new friend's influence, who also prevailed on him to undertake spiritual exercises with the senior Jesuit William Malone as his guide, an arrangement typical of Slingsby's active involvement in the Irish Jesuits' practice of seeking conversions; this retreat confirmed Spreul in his desire to join the Society of Jesus. Before Francis's departure from Ireland in late 1637, the two had arranged to meet in France and to travel together to Rome with the common aim of entering the Jesuit novitiate there. The Scotsman provides details of their travels in France and on the journey from Avignon via Nice and Genoa to Livorno in the winter of 1638–1639 (**document XIV[i], [iii], [iv]**). There are references to their sea voyage from Nice to Genoa, marked by anxiety arising from rumours of plague in Nice and quarantine regulations in Genoa, the cult of the saintly Caterina Fieschi Adorno of that city, and the passage from Genoa to Livorno (**document XIV[iv]**).[34]

Jesuit-inspired pastoral creativity features in various items, particularly for the period that Slingsby spent in Ireland after his release from Dublin Castle, May 1635, until his departure from Ireland in autumn 1637. From about November 1635, Slingsby was residing in

[32] Rolf Loeber and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, 'Kildare Hall, the Countess of Kildare's patronage of the Jesuits, and the liturgical setting of Catholic worship in early seventeenth-century Dublin', in Elizabeth FitzPatrick and Raymond Gillespie (eds), *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2005), 242–265.

[33] On Jesuit ministry to women in Ireland, see Mary Ann Lyons, 'Women and Jesuit ministry in Ireland, *c.*1600–*c.*1670', in Mary Ann Lyons and Brian Mac Cuarta (eds), *The Jesuit Mission in Early Modern Ireland, 1560–1760* (Dublin, 2022), 101–122.

[34] Caterina Fieschi Adorno (1477–1510), *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*.

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Dublin, in the orbit of the Jesuit residence and chapel in Kildare Hall, close to Christ Church cathedral. Slingsby, at his father's request, was engaged in acquiring a fresh patent for the family's Munster plantation estates (**document 16**). Simultaneously he was one of about twelve young men who were studying philosophy (chiefly logic) with the Jesuits at Kildare Hall, before proceeding to Catholic seminaries on the Continent (**document XIII**).[35] The pastoral approaches he adopted at this time ranged from bringing small illustrated devotional booklets, and pious objects, together with tobacco, while visiting the homes of the rural poor (**document XIII**), to sharing his expertise in mathematics, as when travelling with the young earl of Castlehaven in France in 1638 (**document XIV[iv]**). His example contributed to the emergence of an informal sodality among young Catholic men of the social elite in Dublin (**document XI**).

There are references to the use in Ireland of printed materials for laity, both to elicit conversions to Catholicism and to strengthen the faith of Catholics at lower and elite levels, including specific mention of the spiritual classic by Alonso Rodriguez, *The Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues* in English translation (**document XIII**), a work which Slingsby introduced to his travel companion Castlehaven.[36] John Gerard's penchant for relics may be seen in his concern for the newly converted Slingsby womenfolk; on learning of their conversion, he sent them one relic each (**document 26**). The Catholic formation, under Jesuit aegis, of young adults of the social elite features in many materials. This occurred in a variety of ways, including thorough letters, spiritual retreats, as confessor, sharing journeys, conversations in various settings, offering a course in logic, and leading a household in prayer.

Individual spiritual direction of converts was a significant ministry of early modern Jesuits, and this was especially true of the Stuart realms. John Gerard SJ (1564–1637), veteran of the Elizabethan mission of the Jesuits in England, had a lifetime's experience of guiding young Englishmen in their Catholic faith. From 1627 until his death Gerard served as spiritual father in the English College, Rome; in that capacity he accompanied Francis Slingsby as he moved towards conversion in summer 1633. Another young Englishman, one Mayne, also converted in Rome under English Jesuit auspices at the same time (**documents 2, 13, 38; X**). In addition to Slingsby's subsequent letters to Gerard as his spiritual father (**documents 2–4, 9–12, 15, 16,**

[35] On this programme, see Robert Nugent to Father General Vitelleschi, 15 September 1636, Moynes (ed.), *The Jesuit Irish mission*, 401–402.

[36] Alonso Rodriguez SJ (1538–1616), *Ejercicio de perfección y virtudes cristianas*, first published in Seville in 1609.

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18, 22, 23) there are two lengthy letters from Gerard to the young convert (**documents 26, 27**).[37] Their correspondence focuses on the conflict between settling Slingsby's patrimony, involving relations with his father and brother, and the timing of his departure from Ireland for Rome to enter the Jesuit novitiate there (**documents 9, 10, 26**). In addition, the halting progress towards Catholicism of Francis's sister and mother also emerges (**documents 8, 10, 12, 15, 18, 22, 23, 26**).

There is also some echo of his brother Henry's involvement with a daughter of Elizabeth Cary Lady Falkland (1585–1639), the dramatist, who herself had converted to Catholicism in 1626. This romantic attachment complements what is known of the philosophical and intellectual concerns of the Great Tew circle, which gathered at the home of her son, Lucius Cary, just north of Oxford, in the mid 1630s, when the Cary siblings and Henry Slingsby were also part of the household (**documents 13, 15, 18, 19, 23; XIII**).[38] In 1635–1636, while they were all staying at Great Tew, the Anglican controversialist William Chillingworth (1602–1644) attempted to wean the Cary daughters, and their two younger brothers, together with Henry Slingsby, from their new-found Catholicism. It was this denominational challenge which generated the correspondence included here; Henry was in regular contact with the English Jesuit Edward Knott as he faced this threat (**document 19**). Letters from John Gerard and Father General Vitelleschi in Rome; Edward Knott, Richard Blount, and an unidentified Jesuit in London; and Robert Nugent and Henry FitzSimon in Ireland, illustrate how, in response to various situations affecting the Slingsby family, the fathers in Rome, Dublin, and London collaborated in strengthening and promoting the Catholic life of different family members in Ireland, and of Henry, then living in England. After leaving Great Tew, Henry Slingsby maintained some contact with the Cary siblings; Patrick Cary (the second youngest) moved to Rome in 1638, from where he wrote several letters to Henry in Ireland (**document 36**).[39]

[37] On John Gerard's life as a Jesuit missionary in England in the years 1588–1606, see John Gerard, *The Autobiography of a Hunted Priest*, trans. Philip Caraman (New York, 1952).

[38] For an overview of her life and her circle, see Heather Wolfe (ed.), *Elizabeth Cary Lady Falkland: Life and Letters* (Cambridge and Tempe, AZ, 2001); Lucius Cary 2nd Viscount Falkland (1609/10–1643), *ODNB*.

[39] Patrick Cary (*c.*1624–1657), poet, *ODNB*.

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Francis Slingsby in Rome, 1639–1642

Slingsby's interviews on entry to two Roman educational institutions – the English College (6 February 1639) and the Jesuit novitiate (30 September 1641) (**documents 31, 38**) – contribute to an understanding of the family, educational, and spiritual profile of young Catholic men from the Stuart kingdoms, within an autobiographical context.

While the institutional structure of continental colleges serving the Stuart realms is reasonably well known, the individual student experience is less well attested.[40] Testimonies by English and Italian contemporaries during Slingsby's second Roman sojourn (1639–1642) throw light on student life in the Venerable English College (**documents VIII, IX**), the Roman College (**documents IV, V**), and in the Jesuit novitiate (**documents II, VII**). We get glimpses of friendships and conversations, including a walk by three novices to the churches of San Giovanni Laterano and Santa Croce, and of a novitiate teaching session involving discussion (a conference). Francis's obsessive attention to college rules emerges. A focus on seeking conversions on his return to the mission in England or Ireland characterized his student days in Rome; this was a conversational theme which contemporaries recalled, including his assertion that obstinate heretics were possessed by the devil; it inspired his unusual attention to acquiring familiarity with the New Testament in Greek, so as to engage more fruitfully with Protestants; on entering the Jesuit novitiate he named work among this group as his preferred future mission in the Society (**documents 38; IX**). While he was in the novitiate, one of his relatives came to Rome, and Francis met him several times, and asked the novices to pray for his conversion (**documents VII**). Slingsby's devotional life also emerges, especially his exceptional self-mortification (**documents VII, XII**).

Further significant context emerges on student friendships and on the internal life of Catholic educational institutions in mid seventeenth-century Rome in which men from Britain and Ireland were trained. Slingsby was firstly a seminarian at the English College from February 1639 until September 1641. The testimonies of two student contemporaries (**documents VIII, IX**), together with the observations of the College's spiritual father (**document XII**),

[40] However for memoirs of student life in the Venerable English College, Rome, see an account relating to a stay of some months in 1579, Anthony Munday, *The English Roman Life*, ed. Philip Ayres (Oxford, 1980); and for the experience of an Anglo-Irish layman in the years 1595–1597, see Henry Piers, *Henry Piers's Continental Travels 1595–1598*, ed. Brian Mac Cuarta (Cambridge, 2018).

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provide detail on the broader college experience of the time, while illuminating one man's inner spiritual life. Living at the English College, the men attended courses in philosophy and theology at the Roman College, founded by the Society in 1551; as part of the pedagogy, there were classes led by a senior student (*repetitore*) in which the materials covered in lectures were presented orally by the participating students; two brief testimonies on Francis's participation convey the atmosphere in these sessions (**documents IV, V**).

While an undergraduate at Trinity College, Oxford, Slingsby majored in mathematics (**documents 31; X, XIII**). His exceptional competence in this area was part of what drew the earl of Castlehaven to the young convert. About late 1637 Castlehaven sought Francis's company for the journey through France partly so that Slingsby might instruct him in the subject (**document XII**). Later, when travelling south from Avignon on the way to Rome with Robert Spreul, he was able to complete the proofs of Euclid as they were riding along, and in the evenings too Francis would study using some of the many books he had brought on a pack horse (**document XIV[iv]**); it was probable that these included mathematical books by English authors. On beginning studies while a seminarian at the English College in early 1639, young Slingsby wanted to renounce his passion for the subject, but this was not countenanced by his superiors; on the contrary it was arranged that in addition to his philosophical studies in the Jesuit-run Roman College he would also attend the weekly lecture in mathematics, in which as he asserted he made good progress (**documents 38; VIII**). The teaching of mathematics had been institutionalized at the Roman College thanks to the renowned mathematician Christopher Clavius (1538–1612) who was a professor there. In 1641, while a student, Slingsby corresponded with Giovanni Antonio Rocca, a prominent Italian scientist, drawing on recent English mathematical publications, thereby contributing to the exchange between early seventeenth-century mathematicians in England and in Italy.[41]

A handwritten copy of the reasons William Chillingworth gave for his adherence to the Roman Church was included among Slingsby's papers, and is given here (**document 30**); this brief apologia arising from Chillingworth's conversion points to the influence he may

[41] Slingsby's letters to Rocca are given in *Lettere d'uomini illustri del secolo XVII a Giannantonio Rocca* (Modena, 1785), 218–219; 225–230; 240–250; Giovanni Antonio Rocca (1607–1656), *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-antonio-rocca_(Dizionario-Biografico)/?search=ROCCA%2C%20Giovanni%20Antonio (accessed 24 April 2024).

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have had on the adolescent Slingsby, at a time when both were at Trinity College, Oxford in the later 1620s. This text was copied from the Jesuit Edward Knott's refutation of Chillingworth's subsequent return to the established church; the presence of this extract points to the circulation of controversial literature between England and Rome in the later 1630s.[42] In addition, it indicates the range of arguments used by Catholic activists, such as Francis Slingsby, in seeking to persuade others to convert.

Cardinal Francesco Barberini was protector of the English nation in Rome, and his ongoing engagement on behalf of Slingsby points to his interest in the fate of individual Catholics, which complements the focus on relations between the Holy See and the Stuart court which have received serious historical attention.[43] Barberini met Slingsby in Rome shortly after the young layman's conversion in 1633 (**document X**); on Francis's departure from the city in May 1634, the prelate sent a letter of recommendation for him to Queen Henrietta Maria in London (**document 1**). This attentiveness continued when Francis was detained in Ireland, for Barberini again wrote to Henrietta Maria who in turn communicated with the Irish lord deputy, which prompted the detainee's full release in November 1635 (**documents 15, 24**). On Francis's return to Rome in early 1639, the protector offered him privileges for the time of his studies including accommodation in the Palazzo della Cancellaria, which he politely declined, and a separate room and a servant while in the English College, which he also refused. As Slingsby was proceeding towards priestly ordination, in early summer 1639 the cardinal provided him with an official exemption from the impediment of heretical birth (**document 37**). In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many young men died while students in Rome. The English College rector shared with Barberini his concerns for Francis's health while he was at the College; the young man had earlier suffered a severe bout of gout while in Rome in early 1634 (**document 13; X**). For this reason the collegian spent the summers of 1640 and 1641 in the Jesuit house in the Alban hills east of Rome (**document XII**).

On completion of his studies at the Roman College, Slingsby was ordained in June 1641, and joined the Roman novitiate of the Society

[42] Edward Knott, *Motives maintained. Or a reply unto M. Chillingworthes answer to his own motives of his conversion to Catholike religion* (St Omers, 1638).

[43] Francesco Barberini (1597–1679), *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-barberini_(Dizionario-Biografico)/?search=BARBERINI%2C%20Francesco (accessed 24 April 2024). On the involvement of papal representatives to the Caroline court, see Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*.

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on 30 September of the same year. Testimonies by two men who had been his co-novices illustrate the spiritual climate which prevailed there, and provide snatches of conversations among novices; these testimonies extend our acquaintance with Giovanni Paolo Oliva, the novice director, who subsequently served as the Society's father general, 1664–1681 (**documents II, VII**). A first-hand account of the last week of Francis's life, written just days after his death in the Jesuit college in Naples concludes this series of vignettes of novitiate life (**document I**; for briefer remarks on the impact of his passing on others, see **documents III, VI**); in addition, Robert Spreul's testimony conveys how news of his demise was received by Francis's companions in the Rome novitiate (**document XIV[ii]**). Thus a rich and finely grained appreciation of friendship emerges both among young men in Ireland, united in attraction towards Catholicism and Jesuit life, and subsequently among students (including young Italian Jesuits) in formal educational settings in Rome. These personal reminiscences complement the institutional profile of early modern Catholic formation centres for English, Irish, and Scottish men; the documents offer insights on the experience of individuals, and on some dynamics among them.[44]

References to Slingsby's impact on some contemporaries in the mid 1630s and down to 1642 indicate their belief that he had contributed significantly to their Catholic devotional formation. In Ireland, this frequently happened in a domestic setting. The individuals whose testimonies have survived included several who subsequently had roles in the Catholic Confederation, the Catholic government based in Kilkenny which controlled much of Ireland from 1642 until the Confederation's demise in 1649: the generals James Touchet 3rd earl of Castlehaven, and his brother-in-law Richard Butler; and Francis's brother Henry, who was a long-serving member of the Confederate Assembly. Similarly by his influence on Maurice Ward and Robert Spreul, Francis contributed indirectly to the Jesuit mission in Ireland and in Scotland. After studies in the Irish College, Rome, in 1641–1643, Ward was constrained to return to Ireland because of ill-health; he joined the Society in Kilkenny in 1646 and being fluent in

[44] On the emergence of the continental colleges see Thomas O'Connor, 'Exile movement: Male institutions, 1568–1640', in James E. Kelly and John McCafferty (eds), *The Oxford History of British and Irish Catholicism*, I: *1530–1640* (Oxford, 2023), 203–222; on the academic and spiritual regime of the English College, Rome, see Maurice Whitehead, '"Established and putt in good order": The Venerable English College, Rome, under Jesuit administration, 1579–1685', in James E. Kelly and Hannah Thomas (eds), *Jesuit Intellectual and Physical Exchange between England and Mainland Europe, c.1580–1789* (Leiden, 2018), 315–336.

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Irish he laboured in Galway, where he died in 1663.[45] Following studies and ordination on the Continent, Spreul had returned to work in Edinburgh in his native Scotland by the early 1650s, where he died in 1688.[46]

Sir Francis Slingsby (*c.*1569–1651)

Conflict between father and son arising from Francis's espousal of Catholicism is a dominant theme in these materials. Hence a brief outline of Sir Francis Slingsby's background is pertinent in contextualizing his furious response to the conversion of his two sons, Francis and Henry. Both parents – Sir Francis and his wife, Dame Elizabeth – belonged to the New English colonial elite in Ireland, referring to those colonists who arrived in Ireland after 1540 and made careers in military and administrative service, characterized by a policy of conquest, and imposition of the new Anglican ecclesiastical settlement. Sir Francis Slingsby (*c.*1569–1651), of Scriven, near Knaresborough, in Yorkshire, was of a landed family established there since the mid fourteenth century, who first became MPs in the 1570s. Sir Francis's mother was Mary Percy, sister to the seventh and the eight earls of Northumberland, magnates who were involved in conservative Catholic resistance to the Tudor state.[47] When choosing the required alias on entering the English College, Rome, in 1639, Francis Slingsby chose 'Percy', a personal acknowledgement of this strand of his family's heritage (**document X**).

Slingsby arrived in southern Ireland in 1599 as a junior military officer at the closing stages of the revolt of the Ulster Gaelic lords against the crown, known as the Nine Years War (1594–1603). He came to prominence in defending the Protestant interest in Cork city at the time of the recusant revolt there in 1603, for which he was knighted. Thereafter he rose in the Munster provincial administration, and became a member of the Irish privy council in 1621.[48]

[45] Moynes (ed.), *The Jesuit Irish mission*, 171–172, 442–443, 435, 591.

[46] Robert Spreul (1609–1688) joined the Society in Rome in 1639; after ordination he returned to Scotland, and died in Edinburgh, ARSI, *Germania* 15, fos 402, 407, and *Historia Societatis* 49, fo. 229r.

[47] On the Slingsby family by the late sixteenth century, see Daniel Parsons (ed.), *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby, of Scriven, bart …* (London, 1836), 402–408; Thomas Percy, 7th earl of Northumberland (1528–1572), *ODNB*; Henry Percy, 8th earl of Northumberland (*c.*1532–1585), *ODNB*.

[48] On Sir Francis Slingsby's Irish career, see Brid McGrath, 'A biographical dictionary of the membership of the Irish house of commons 1640–1641', PhD thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1998, 269–270, A48, A180 http://www.tara.tcd.ie/handle/2262/77206 (accessed 26 April 2024).

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Dame Elizabeth Slingsby, wife of Sir Francis, and mother of the subject of this edition, was daughter and co-heiress (with her sister Dorothea) of the Englishman Hugh Cuffe, who had been granted a seignory in Kilmore, north County Cork, under the Munster plantation (1586–1587). Dorothea Cuffe was married to Sir Charles Coote (d. 1642), of a similar military and landed profile to Sir Francis Slingsby, his brother-in-law.[49] By the 1630s, Sir Francis, although based in Ireland, may be located within a family network prominent in north Yorkshire, with strong links to the navy, and well-connected with the pre-eminent political figure of Charles's reign, Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), a fellow Yorkshireman who travelled to Ireland to take up his new post as lord deputy in July 1633.[50]

Provenance: The contemporary materials (to 1641)

A dossier of papers by different hands, all relating to Francis Slingsby (1611–1642), is conserved in KBR, Brussels (MS 3824-5). Composed of letters and documents written in his lifetime, and testimonials gathered after his death, the chronological range is from 1634 to 1644. In this edition, a small number of other items concerning Slingsby, chiefly located in ARSI, have also been included. The materials are presented here in broadly chronological order wherever a date can be assigned. The death of Francis Slingsby on 6 December 1642 represents a major division in the edition: the first section comprises thirty-eight items created while he lived (numbered 1–38), while the second section is a series of fourteen testimonies to Slingsby composed after his death, together with a letter describing his last days (numbered I–XV); it is proposed to offer observations on the provenance of each of these two sections in turn.

An intense epistolary exchange took place between the young convert and Father John Gerard SJ, his spiritual mentor and friend (who was based in the English College, Rome) in the period from Francis's departure from Rome in May 1634 until 16 May 1637, just about two months before Gerard's death on 27 July 1637. Twelve letters are

[49] On this plantation grant, see Michael MacCarthy-Morrogh, *The Munster Plantation: English Migration to Southern Ireland, 1583–1641* (Oxford, 1986), 291; Sir Charles Coote (d. 1642), *ODNB*.

[50] One of Sir Francis's brothers was Sir Henry Slingsby (1560–1634), *History of Parliament Online*, https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/slingsby-sir-henry-1560-1634 (accessed 24 April 2024).

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extant from Slingsby to his spiritual father; in addition, there is reference to a further three letters which have not survived.[51] Similarly we know of nine missives from the aged Jesuit to Slingsby; however only two are extant.[52] In these years, the young man's life in Ireland was unsettled, with frequent changes of abode, a situation not conducive to conserving correspondence. By contrast the spiritual guide enjoyed a stable lifestyle in the English College, living probably in the same room until his death; he carefully kept Slingsby's letters, often noting brief details of sender and date. At Father Gerard's demise this correspondence was conserved within the institutional context of the English College, perhaps because of ongoing interest in Slingsby's eventual entrance into the Roman novitiate of the Society. Later, after Francis's death (6 December 1642), in response to the call for evidence of his exceptional virtue, these letters were incorporated in the file which eventually became KBR MS 3824-5.

In this exchange, Francis also shared copies of two letters, one from his father Sir Francis, and one from his mother Dame Elizabeth, both written to their son shortly after he had informed them of his conversion to Catholicism (**documents 5, 6**). There are also several items reflecting John Gerard's involvement in Slingsby's path towards joining the Society, which eventually occurred when he entered the novitiate at Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Rome, on 30 September 1641: a communication from Edward Knott SJ (1635 before November) in reply to a letter from Gerard, and two letters from Robert Nugent, the Irish Jesuit mission superior, to Gerard (**documents 14, 17, 25**). The letter of the veteran Irish controversialist, Henry FitzSimon SJ, to Gerard (29 August 1634) arose from the latter's continued interest in Slingsby, then in Ireland, but also from FitzSimon's acquaintance with Gerard when both were serving as Jesuits in the Spanish Netherlands earlier in the century (**document 8**). The two surviving letters from Gerard to Slingsby (**documents 26, 27**) are in a neat italic hand; however the ink has interacted with the paper to such an extent that in parts these letters are extremely difficult to read, a fact already noted by the recipient in December 1635: 'I received yours of the 17 and 25 of August, this last weeke: but the inward writing soe blotted (which allsoe happened in most of your former letters) that I could but guess at the sense, and that in very few places.'[53]

[51] For letters by FS to John Gerard noted, but not extant, see **documents 11, 18, 27**.

[52] For letters by John Gerard to FS noted, but not extant, see **documents 13, 16, 18, 22**.

[53] See **document 16**.

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We know of five letters from Muzio Vitelleschi SJ, father general of the Society of Jesus, to Slingsby, in the years 1635–1637.[54] Three letters are extant (the letter of 17 May 1636 is located in ARSI, Rome) and are included in this edition (**documents 20, 28, 29**); these communications testify to the general's personal interest in this candidate for the Society, whom Vitelleschi had met during Slingsby's first visit to Rome in 1633–1634. Themes include solicitude for him in prison, and, later, Francis's readiness to respond to Vitelleschi's call to travel to Rome in order to enter the novitiate. When Slingsby was leaving Rome in May 1634 for England en route to Ireland, Cardinal Francesco Barberini wrote a letter of introduction for him to Queen Henrietta Maria, conserved in the English state papers series in TNA, London (**document 1**). In his turn the young man sent a brief letter to the cardinal, now among the Barberini papers in the Vatican Library, thanking him for the intervention which culminated in his definitive release from detention in Ireland in November 1635 (**document 24**).

While a student at the English College, Rome in 1639–1641, Slingsby continued his study of mathematics at the Roman College; in 1641 he wrote three letters to the Italian mathematician Giannantonio Rocca (1607–1656). This correspondence testified to Slingsby's familiarity with contemporary English publications in the field and to his place in an epistolary network of leading mathematicians in Italy. Given the detailed scientific issues covered, and the particular expertise required in editing them, these letters are not included in this edition.[55]

A further strand embraces administrative procedures associated with his ecclesiastical progress while in Rome, 1639–41: responses to the questionnaire on entry to the English College, in February 1639 (**document 31**); Francis's renunciation of his patrimony in favour of his brother Henry, 24 April 1639 (**document 34**); a document signed by Barberini as cardinal protector and dated 19 May 1641, exempting Slingsby from the impediment of birth as a heretic, an ecclesiastical procedure prior to ordination as priest (**document 37**); and the

[54] For letters by Vitelleschi to FS noted, but not extant, see **documents 4, 13**.

[55] The letters (in Latin) are published in *Lettere d'uomini illustri del secolo XVII a Giannantonio Rocca* (Modena, 1785): 12 March 1641, 218–19; 20 June 1641, 225–30; s.d. (but probably before 30 September 1641, when Slingsby entered the Jesuit novitiate, Rome), 240–50.

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standard interview at entry to the Jesuit novitiate (30 September 1641) consisting of twenty-two questions with responses (**document 38**).[56]

The hand-written page entitled 'Mr Chillingworth's reasons for becoming a catholic' (**document 30**) is also included in this section. These ten short points were published as part of a pamphlet composed by the English Jesuit, Edward Knott, entitled *Motives maintained. Or a reply unto M. Chillingworthes answere to his own motives of his conversion to Catholike religion* (St Omers, 1638); Knott's text is a response to a work by William Chillingworth (*The religion of protestants a safe way to salvation* [1638]) in which Chillingworth indicated why he was leaving Catholicism, and returning to Anglicanism; in his publication Chillingworth listed these motives for becoming a Catholic, but it is plausible that Slingsby copied these from the shorter pamphlet by Knott.[57] Slingsby had known Chillingworth when both were in Trinity College, Oxford, in the later 1620s, and the younger man remained keenly interested in the theme of conversion to Catholicism. The text is in a small, neat hand, probably that of Slingsby himself. By early February 1639 Francis was a student in the English College, Rome; a copy of Knott's pamphlet may have reached the Jesuits there about that time. Francis may have made the abstract while in the college, perhaps as an aid in conversations with Protestants whom he hoped to win for Catholicism. Hence the page was conserved in Slingsby's papers.

Provenance: The posthumous materials

The second section of this edition features materials created after Slingsby's death. A letter by Giovanni Andrea Serra, a young Jesuit student, to Gian Paolo Oliva,[58] at that time novice master of the Roman novitiate, described Francis's last illness and death in the college in Naples, written about a week after his passing (**document I**); in two brief letters Tomaso Mascambruno, spiritual father at the Naples college, replied to requests from two Jesuits in Rome for

[56] A list (in Italian) of the clothes Slingsby brought with him on entry is preserved in ARSI, *Rom.* 173, Ingressus novitiorum, 1631–1675, fo. 55r; for the Society's admission procedures in the early seventeenth century, see Camilla Russell, *Being a Jesuit in Renaissance Italy: Biographical Writing in the Early Global Age* (Cambridge, MA, 2022), 18–51.

[57] On these controversies in the 1630s, see Edward Knott [formerly Matthew Wilson] (1581–1656); William Chillingworth (1602–1644), both in *ODNB*.

[58] Gian Paolo Oliva SJ (1600–1681), was appointed novice director and rector, Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Rome in 1641, subsequently father general of the Society, 1664–1681. For an outline of his life and literary production, see Franco Mormando, 'Gian Paolo Oliva: The forgotten celebrity of baroque Rome', in Linda Wolk-Simon (ed.), *The Holy Name: Art of the Gesù: Bernini and His Age* (Philadelphia, 2018), 185–221.

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news of his demise (**documents III, VI**). An excerpt from a letter of Henry Slingsby to Father General Vitelleschi (**document XV**) expressed his grief at his brother's passing; it has not been possible to locate the original.

The majority of the posthumous documents, however, derive from an instruction to several Jesuits and to two contemporaries in the English College soliciting written accounts of any outstanding spiritual qualities they had noted in the deceased. This initiative may be located in the concern of Jesuit leaders in seventeenth-century Italy to promote the memory of a small number of confreres, for the purposes of edification; to that end brief lives of individual men were commissioned. After his death, correspondence and other materials relating to Slingsby's ecclesiastical progress were conserved, and statements concerning him were solicited, all within this overarching hagiographical impulse.[59] Testimonies were requested from those (chiefly Jesuits) with whom Francis had lived at various stages from the time of his conversion to Catholicism in September 1633.[60] Most likely this request emanated from the provincial of the Jesuit Roman province, in which Slingsby entered the Society, and in which he died; this organizational origin is confirmed by the fact that at the beginning of most contributions a note identifying the author was added by a secretary. Among those invited were three who knew the young convert while he was living as a layman in Ireland 1634–1637, namely Father William Malone SJ (his confessor in that period), and two of his companions who subsequently joined the Society, Robert Spreul and Maurice Ward; all three were based in Rome in 1643, which facilitated their response; Ward's relation was the only one which was dated (January 1643), thus indicating it was composed within seven weeks of the death of his friend Slingsby.[61]

In these accounts, drawing on their experience of the man in various settings, each depicts aspects of Francis's apostolic zeal on his return to Ireland. Robert Spreul made his acquaintance at the viceregal court, and while visiting him in prison in Dublin. In the winter of 1638–1639 they travelled together from Avignon to Rome and Spreul had occasion to peruse a spiritual notebook kept by his travel companion. The Scotsman's testimony, spread over four separate communications (**document XIV[i–iv]**), reflects deep admiration for his

[59] On this basis the volume of Jesuit lives gathered in ARSI, *Vitae*, 149 emerged.

[60] Request made to communicate 'qualche cosa d'edificatione notata del Padre Perseo' [anything edifying observed in Father Percy], **document IV**.

[61] William Malone was rector of the Irish College; Maurice Ward, a student in the same college; and Robert Spreul, having completed the novitiate at Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, was a student at the Collegio Romano.

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friend, by whose means Spreul became a Catholic. Maurice Ward knew Slingsby principally while both were under Robert Nugent's tutelage in the countess of Kildare's castle at Kilkea in the year 1635. When based in Dublin in the mid 1630s, William Malone had been given the task of accompanying young people of elite families. In this context he came to know Slingsby from the latter's return to Dublin in summer 1634, and was in contact with him up until both departed Ireland for the Continent about mid 1637. Malone was the young man's confessor at that time; both were attached to the Jesuit complex of Kildare Hall, Dublin where Francis was part of the student group who, in 1636–1637, were studying philosophy, in preparation for further studies on the Continent which would lead to ordination. Malone's memoir was written probably in 1643, while he was living in Rome as rector of the Irish College; the account shows a detailed acquaintance with Francis when he was a prisoner in Dublin Castle (**document XI**).

From Francis's time as a seminarian in the English College Rome (February 1639–September 1641), testimonies are extant from two contemporaries, Thomas Clifton and David Lewis (**documents VIII, IX**). In addition there are shorter communications on Slingsby's participation in the customary academic exercises at the Roman College from men who had been his Jesuit tutors (*repetitores*), Bernardo Angelici and Giuseppe Ceccaroni (**documents IV, V**); a tutor serving in the college in 1643 was asked to elicit these testimonies from his predecessors. From the period in the novitiate in Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Rome, there are detailed and reflective testimonies from two fellow-novices, Nicola Consalvi and Bartolomeo Conventino (**documents II, VII**).

Document XII is incomplete and anonymous. It is arranged in a series of numbered paragraphs, beginning with '32' and ending with '59', indicating that the text corresponding to paragraphs 1 to 31 inclusive is missing. The first extant paragraph (32) refers to Slingsby's time in prison in Dublin Castle, which lasted for about four months from November 1634. Given the broadly chronological sequence of the memoir, the missing section most likely referred to the convert's life before November 1634. The current text begins with page '7' in the pagination series, which predates the foliation in red pen. Thus the missing part corresponds with pages 1–6 of the original document. These pages became detached from the body of the text inadvertently, perhaps in transit. Because the first page is missing, we lack indications of authorship. However the content ends explicitly with Slingsby's entry to the Roman novitiate on 30 September 1641.

The author displays a detailed knowledge of Francis while a student at the English College: spiritual practices (including his notebook),

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and account of conscience given to his confessor; Cardinal Francesco Barberini's efforts on his behalf; references to him in conversations between the rector and the earls of Westmeath and Castlehaven, on their respective visits to the college, in April 1635 and during Castlehaven's brief visit to Rome in early April 1639. Thus the seminarian's confessor while at the English College (a Jesuit on the staff there) provided this account, just as William Malone, his confessor while in Ireland, was also asked to contribute; Nathaniel Southwell SJ (1598–1676) fulfilled that College role in 1641 and 1642, and so he, most likely, was the author.[62]

An effort was also made to provide a spiritual profile of Slingsby in the form of a short *vita* (**document X**) – a genre in which, in the case of a small number of Jesuits of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an anonymous confrere gave an outline of the life and notable spiritual qualities of the deceased. These obituaries were organized and conserved in the archival series *Vitae* in the Roman Jesuit archives (ARSI). They were composed for edification, principally within the Society. By family and education, Slingsby belonged to the cultural and political elite of Caroline England and Ireland; in Rome, he was known personally to the cardinal secretary of state, Francesco Barberini, and the Jesuit general, Muzio Vitelleschi. His conversion to the Roman Church, the bitter row which ensued with his father, his subsequent imprisonment in Ireland and flight to the Continent brought him some celebrity in Rome. For these reasons, the Society's leaders deemed his memory worthy of preservation through the composition of a *vita*.

Several chapters were envisaged. In the first, after a brief account of his family and earlier life, the narrative proceeds with his arrival in Rome in July 1633 and focuses on his conversion, culminating in his entry into the Church by early September and his decision to join the Society, made about the same time. The second chapter recounts life on his return to Ireland, from July 1634; the row with Sir Francis his father; the conversion of his brother Henry; and the openness of his mother and sister to becoming Catholic. A dramatic narration is given of his encounter with the Anglican primate, Archbishop James Ussher, in the presence of members of the political nation gathered for the parliament in Dublin in summer 1634, in which Francis is portrayed as the Catholic victor. However, the text breaks off, unfinished, at that point.

This anonymous *vita* is unique among the various extant testimonies in its detailed treatment of Slingsby's spiritual quest during

[62] McCoog, *English and Welsh Jesuits*, Pt II, 299.

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his first stay in Rome, from around June 1633 until leaving the city in early May 1634. A few external details are given regarding contacts the young English companions had in that Roman summer, and the inner struggle Francis experienced, prior to conversion and reception into the Catholic Church. The writer also had access to the spiritual notebook in which he recorded some experiences during his Ignatian spiritual exercises, made after his conversion in September 1633. Regarding his 'election' or prayerful choice during the retreat (namely, to commit his life to following Christ in the Society of Jesus), the author quotes the retreatant's reflections, adding 'I have transcribed almost all of his own words.'[63] The author of the unfinished *vita* was a Rome-based Jesuit, having a detailed acquaintance with Francis's path towards the Catholic Church over the summer he spent in the city. The story of his conversion was a standard theme in conversations a novice would have had with his novice director and thus Gianpaolo Oliva SJ, who had that role while Slingsby was at the Roman novitiate in 1641–1642, must have been a significant source for the *vita*, and may even have been the author. This impression is strengthened by the prominence given to spiritual themes in this text, especially the attention given to the convert's choice of the Society as the way of life for him.

These near-contemporary spiritual profiles are examples of the hagiographic genre in which the pious lives and early deaths of young men were related. This literary form was cultivated in the Society in the seventeenth century, and encompassed both schoolboys at Jesuit schools, and young Jesuits – most notably Stanislaus Kostka (1550–1568), Aloysius Gonzaga (1568–1591), and John Berchmans (1599–1621) – whose cults the Society promoted soon after their deaths.[64] The posthumous portrayals of Slingsby may also be considered in the context of the edifying accounts of young people within contemporary English Catholicism.[65]

[63] ARSI, *Vitae*, 149, fo. 254r.

[64] For these Jesuits, see the respective entries in the *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*. Gonzaga and Kostka were both beatified in 1605. For hagiography featuring schoolboys at Jesuit schools who died young, see Orazio Smeraldi SJ, *Memoirs of Seventeen Boarders at the College of Nobles in Parma (1670): Youth and Education in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Miriam Turrini (Rome, 2021).

[65] Alison Shell, '"Furor juvenilis": Post Reformation English Catholicism and exemplary youthful behaviour', in Ethan Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious Politics and Identity in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2005), 185–206; on a boy of an English Catholic family, living in Thurles, Ireland, who was a pupil at St Omers in the 1660s, see J.H. Pollen (ed.), 'Memoir of Edmund Mathew' [*c.*1653–1667], *Catholic Record Society: Miscellanea III* (London, 1906), 59–81; I am grateful to Jan Graffius for this reference.

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Maurice Ward's relation was dated January 1643, and it is reasonable to suggest that most testimonies were also written in that year. Most authors were then resident in Rome; in the case of Slingsby's erstwhile tutors when he was a student at the Roman College in 1639–1641, these were subsequently on assignment in various houses of the Jesuit Roman province.

Within the Jesuit archival corpus, the survival of so many materials illustrating an individual's conversion and entry into the Society is highly unusual. Correspondence and other documents presented here (with the exception of the unfinished *vita*, and interviews on entering the English College and the novitiate) were not customarily filed in the Society's archival series. Thus the papers clearly were of some interest to the English Jesuits in Rome in the mid seventeenth century. In the English College, John Gerard kept letters from Slingsby, and from others concerning him, and on Gerard's death in 1637 these were preserved. Slingsby himself kept two of the letters from Gerard, his spiritual mentor, and possibly some of the letters addressed to him from Father General Vitelleschi, which he may have carried with him when travelling from Dublin to Rome. At his death in 1642, these were added to the items kept by Gerard, and the collection so formed was to contribute to the order's established process of assembling materials for an account of an exceptional individual's life and virtues, for the purpose of edification within the Society. We know that not all letters between Slingsby and Gerard have survived. The Slingsby papers, assembled into a specific collection, were among materials on the English and Welsh martyrs, and on the persecutions experienced by English Catholics, gathered and preserved by Christopher Grene SJ (1627–1697), who lived in Rome from 1663 until his death.[66]

Within the English Jesuit continental system, the collection was taken from Rome to one of their colleges in the Spanish Netherlands. At the various suppressions of the Society (from 1762) in the territories formerly comprising the Spanish Netherlands, Jesuit buildings were confiscated and their contents seized by the civil authorities. It has not been possible to establish the manuscripts' precise location within this network in the later eighteenth century. An indication of the loss of books in these disturbances was the fact that in July 1794, faced with the imminent advance of French revolutionary forces to Liège, the college's most precious books were packed and were to

[66] Christopher Grene (1629–1697), *ODNB*. John Morris, *The Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers*, 3rd ser. (London, 1877), 6–7.

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be sent for safekeeping by water to a neighbouring locality; however when the time of departure came, these books had to be left behind.[67]

The presence of the Slingsby collection in an English Jesuit college at the time of the universal suppression of the Society in 1773 accounts for the eventual arrival of the materials in the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Brussels, known since 2019 as KBR.[68] Both ownership stamps *Bibliothèque Royale* and *Bibliothèque de Bourgogne* appear on various folios of codex KBR MS 3824-5.[69] In 1815, the government divided the Bibliothèque Royale and placed the manuscripts under the *Bibliothèque de Bourgogne*; in 1837 the *Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique* was created.[70] The *Bibliothèque de Bourgogne* imprint confirms that the codex had already been assembled in its present sequence and was in the state collection some time before 1837. An item published in 1847 confirms the presence of the Slingsby materials in the Brussels library by that date. Within a broader piece on Irish-related manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Royale, the author, S.H. Bindon, gave a brief one-page note of the contents of MS 3824-5; he merely indicated the overarching theme of correspondence and memoirs concerning Francis Slingsby, but gave in full the title of Maurice Ward's memoir, a text which was already placed at the end of the volume. In compiling his catalogue of Irish materials, Bindon used the *Inventaire*, or first volume of the Burgundian Library's printed catalogue.[71] Bindon's reference to the Maurice Ward memoir may have inspired the English Jesuit historiographer Henry Foley to undertake the transcription of the Ward text some time before summer 1873. Foley's text is contained in the copybook of his transcriptions of English recusant materials (forty-one texts, mostly referring to the Jesuits) originating in the period *c.*1580–*c.*1680, which is located

[67] Hubert Chadwick, *From St Omers to Stonyhurst* (London, 1962), 383.

[68] KBR Histoire: https://www.kbr.be/fr/histoire-de-kbr/ (accessed 14 November 2023).

[69] The imprint *Bibliothèque Royale* appears on fos 1r, 27r, 33r, 65r, 69r, and 71v; the imprint *Bibliothèque de Bourgogne* appears on fos 1r, 70r, 71r, and 106v (the final folio).

[70] KBR Histoire: https://www.kbr.be/fr/histoire-de-kbr/ accessed 14 November 2023.

[71] S.H. Bindon, 'On the MSS relating to Ireland in the Burgundian Library at Brussels', *Proceedings, Royal Irish Academy*, III (1844–1847), 477–503, at 483–484. Bindon mistakenly identifies Slingsby (alias 'Percy') as Henry Piers, the early seventeenth-century Cavan landowner. Samuel Henry Bindon (1812–1879), cultural nationalist in Ireland in 1840s, before emigrating to Australia in 1855, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bindon-samuel-henry-2994 (accessed 9 November 2023).

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in Stonyhurst Archives (Stonyhurst College, Lancashire), A IV 12, vol. 2.[72]

The first text in KBR MS 3824-5 is anonymous (**document XII**), and the first six pages are missing; the present initial folio (fo. 1r) – with pagination '7' on the top righthand corner – contains the two library stamps (*Bibliothèque Royale* and *Bibliothèque de Bourgogne*) indicating that the first six pages (now lost) had become detached before the Slingsby materials had been incorporated into what in 1837 became the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique.

In the later standard catalogue of the Bibliothèque Royale's manuscripts, compiled by Joseph Van Den Gheyn and published in 1906, materials linked to religious orders are listed in volume VI. There Van Den Gheyn devotes a section to Jesuit documents, 'Histoire des jésuites', comprising 149 entries (pp. 216–453), indicating the extent of materials which arrived in the Bibliothèque Royale in the wake of the Society's suppression.[73] Within the Jesuit subdivision, Van Den Gheyn's catalogue entry (number 4024) for the Slingsby volume comes at the end of a series of manuscripts which have Jesuit lives as their theme. The entry gives a listing of the individual items of KBR MS 3824-5, folio by folio, though with several misreadings of names and dates.

The Slingsby corpus in the Bibliothèque Royale may be included among the small number of English-language codices listed in the Jesuit section of Van Den Gheyn's catalogue. Four other English-language volumes have been identified, three of them being KBR MS 2307 (catalogue no. 4017), 'A catalogue of the martyrs and other persons of the Societie very eminent in vertue'; KBR MS 7051 (catalogue no. 3981), letters of father general to the Society of Jesus, in English; and KBR MS 4177 (catalogue no. 4000), 'Analectes concernant les catholiques anglais aux Pays Bas, 1713–1715', which comprises one Jesuit's correspondence. By their content, it is most probable that these codices originated in an English Jesuit establishment in the former Spanish Netherlands. In addition, one volume belonged to the English Benedictine convent in Brussels: KBR MS 513 (catalogue no. 4100), Pierre Maffei, 'Lettres du Japon. Traduction anglaise' (222 fos), a collection of sixty-three letters from Jesuit missionaries in Japan.

[72] Within this Stonyhurst item, Ward's testimony on Slingsby is to be found on pp. 117–170; Henry Foley (1811–1891), *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, sub nomine.

[73] Joseph Marie Van den Gheyn SJ (ed.), *Catalogue des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique*, VI: *Histoire des ordres religieux et des églises* (Brussels, 1906). Jozef Van Den Gheyn (1854–1913), Bollandist, was conservator of manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Royale from 1896, and director from 1909. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, sub voce.*

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Description of KBR MS 3824-5

The internal ordering of materials within KBR MS 3824-5 does not follow an observable logic: testimonies made after Slingsby's death are mingled with correspondence while he was living. Prior to binding, **document XIII**, the testimony of Maurice Ward (the final item in KBR MS 3824-5, at fos 80r–106v), with its own pagination, was listed as a separate manuscript within the Bibliothèque Royale, as the label '3825' attached to the initial folio of this text indicates. At one stage it was separate from the rest of the Slingsby collection. However, at some time in the early nineteenth century, perhaps after the transfer of manuscripts to the Bibliothèque de Bourgogne in 1815, and before S.H. Bindon consulted the materials in the mid 1840s, this item had been bound with the other Slingsby documents and together they comprise the single volume with reference number '3824-5'.

While the majority of the materials are of a standard size (29 cm x 20 cm), several texts are in a smaller format. These include the testimony of Nicola Consalvi (fos 21v–22r) which measures 12.5 cm x 13.8 cm. Similarly Maurice Ward's lengthy memoir (fos 80r–106v) was originally a separate codex of duodecimo format, in a neat hand, and the date 'in Januario 1643' was added in a different hand once this manuscript was completed; the text may be a fair copy of an earlier draft.

Inserted in the plastic envelope corresponding with fo. 12r is a rectangular label (or card), which was formerly attached on the left margin, on the binding linking the folio to the bound volume; the item measures 6.5 cm x 2.5 cm. The printed text is as follows:

> S. Gertrudis Virg 17. Mar
> Virgo cogitat quae Domini sunt, ut sit sancta & corpore, & spiritu D. Paulus 1. Cor 7[74]
> Castitas
> Ora pro

The text is surrounded by a simple continuous decorative border. The reverse is blank. This small item may have been conveyed to the recipient as a prayer card, or possibly it was attached to the small container in which a relic was sent.[75] Its appearance in this collection may

[74] St Gertrude (626–659), abbess of the convent at Nivelles, Belgium, was the daughter of Pepin the Elder; feast day, 17 March. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, sub nomine.* I Corinthians 7, 34: '[an unmarried woman, like] a young girl, can devote herself to the Lord's affairs; all she need worry about is being holy in body and spirit'.

[75] I am grateful to Bernard Joassart SJ for elucidation of this point.

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be related to John Gerard's practice of sending gifts of small relics; he sent a relic each to Slingsby's mother Dame Elizabeth Slingsby and his sister Ann Cosby (of St Gaudentia and of St Francis Xavier, respectively) when he learned of their conversion to the Catholic Church, as he did also to Francis Slingsby and to Robert Nugent (**document 26**).[76]

The codex bearing reference KBR MS 3824-5 comprises 106 folios. There are several sequences of numeration. The most consistent is the foliation in red ink, located on the top right-hand corner, running from the first folio to the last, 1–106; both ink and hand suggest an intervention in the twentieth century. This foliation is the one used in this edition.

There is also a pagination, in dark ink, on the top right-hand (and occasionally on the top left-hand corner, on alternate pages). This pagination begins with '8' (corresponding with fo. 1v), indicating that the preceding page was '7' (part of the figure '7' is visible on the top right-hand of fo. 1r, though the figure is incomplete because the margin is worn). The content of fo. 1r begins with paragraph number '32', indicating that pages 1–6, containing paragraphs 1–31 of the original text, have been lost. This numeration was inserted in stages. Pagination [7]–51 inclusive (fos 1r–24r) is in black ink, in a hand that predates the nineteenth century. Starting with page 54 (fo. 26r), the pagination continues in a different hand, smaller and more modern, in pencil. The pagination ends with page 147 (fo. 79r). In addition, for Maurice Wards's testimony (fos 80r–106v), there is a separate pagination in pencil on the top right-hand corner, 1–53.

From July to December 2020, conservation work was carried out on the codex. I am grateful to Sara Lammens, director of the KBR, and to Tatiana Gersten, the conservator, for this intervention. The entire codex was dismantled, and the individual items were separated, and given treatment according to their state of conservation. This has significantly improved the present edition, for it has made it possible to read those parts which were inaccessible hitherto, either because of the binding or ink corrosion. The entire volume is now housed in a black box, measuring 32 cm x 34 cm x 6 cm. Inside, a ring folder is attached, to which a series of clear plastic pockets (measuring 26 cm

[76] On Gerard's enthusiasm for relics while a missionary in England, see Anne Meyers, 'Father John Gerard's object lessons: Relics and devotional objects in *Autobiography of a Hunted Priest*', in R. Corthell et al. (eds), *Catholic Culture in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame, IN, 2007), 216–235.

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x 32 cm) are connected, with the opening at the top; in general each pocket contains a single folio or page.

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While Slingsby is a richly documented individual for the period covered by the last nine years of his life, only one previous biographical notice of him has been identified. A selection of Slingsby's correspondence conserved in KBR MS 3824-5, comprising eighteen letters presented in English (including two letters from Muzio Vitelleschi, Jesuit father general, which have been translated from Latin), formed the basis of a brief mid nineteenth-century sketch of his life. This was published by Richard Simpson as an adjunct to his edition of a memoir of the dramatist, and Catholic convert, Elizabeth Cary, Viscountess Falkland (1585–1639). Simpson, an Oxford graduate (member of Oriel College) who embraced the Roman Church in 1846, became a writer and researcher on English recusant history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[77]

[77] Richard Simpson (1820–1876), *ODNB*. The memoir was entitled *The Lady Falkland: Her Life. From a MS in the Imperial Archives at Lille. Also, a memoir of Father Francis Slingsby. From MSS in the Royal Library, Brussels* (London, 1861). The Slingsby memoir occurs on pp. 203–51. These two memoirs also served as the basis of a biography (without references) of Elizabeth Cary, in which the Slingsby brothers Francis and Henry featured. G.C. Fullerton, *The Life of Elizabeth, Lady Falkland, 1585–1639* (London, 1883). For a critical edition of the memoir of Elizabeth Cary see Wolfe (ed.), *Elizabeth Cary Lady Falkland*.

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