Francis Young

The Gages of Hengrave and Suffolk Catholicism, 1640–1767. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer for the Catholic Record Society, 2015. Pp. xxxiv + 241. Hb, £50.

Francis Young is something of a modern polymath, and has published a wide range of works in the past decade, covering topics as varied as the history of exorcisms in Catholic Christianity; an overview of the role of deacons in the Church of England; studies of witches, witchcraft and the supernatural in early modern England; various aspects of East Anglian Catholicism, as well as a host of articles and magazine pieces. His latest offering, exploring the role of the Gages family in Suffolk Catholicism in the early modern period, provides a much needed study illuminating the value of focusing on the Catholic activities and day-to-day minutiae of one particular family in one particular area. The book's greatest strength is that it shows the importance of a family unit at the center of a network of English post-Reformation Catholicism—using the Gages of Hengrave as a case study illustrates the possibilities for expanding our understanding of the practicalities of just *how* post-Reformation Catholicism worked, and the multifaceted nature of everyday life for a Catholic in this period.

Similarly, the work illustrates the importance of a local area as a nucleus, demonstrating that in-depth knowledge of the peers, neighbors and friends of influential Catholics can lead to an understanding of how these seemingly mundane relationships could be used to the advantage of the Catholic community. Although the historiography of the post-Reformation Catholic community in England has moved far from the grip of Protestant triumphalism in recent decades, very few works have appeared that focus exclusively on a Catholic family in a specific location, as a case study for a wider understanding of the many and varied approaches to dealing with the penal laws in early modern England. Questier's seminal study of the Browne family, Viscounts Montague, entitled *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) is one of the few exceptions, suggesting just how valuable this is as a line of enquiry in deepening our understanding of early modern Catholicism.

Young's book takes a strictly chronological approach, covering the period 1640–1767 in five chapters that each take approximately twenty or so years as their focus, often concluding at a significant point in British history more widely: chapter 1 examines the household at Hengrave 1640–60; chapter 2 examines the family in the turbulent period 1660–88; chapter 3 the recovery of assets and status 1688–1727, chapter 4 the development of the Benedictine Mission at Hengrave 1727–41 and the final chapter takes the story from the role

of gentry chaplaincy to the creation of the proto-parish in the period 1741–67, as the country inched closer towards a greater tolerance of Catholicism. The last quarter of the book (163–219) is given to a selection of appendices that have been painstakingly transcribed, and provide a valuable corpus of evidence of East Anglian Catholicism not previously well known to historians of English Catholicism, including letters, property inventories, mission registers, lists of local Catholics and transcriptions of literary works associated with Hengrave.

Although the book is an important and valuable contribution to our understanding of post-Reformation Catholicism, some errors must be corrected. The founder of the Jesuit territorial College of the Holy Apostles is not Francis Petre, 1st Baron Cranham (1605–58), as stated by the author (xxii and 26), but has previously been indisputably identified as his paternal uncle William, second Baron Petre (1575–1637) by the work of Foley (*Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus* 7 vols. in 8 [London: Burns & Oates, 1878]); McCoog (*The Society of Jesus in England, 1623–1688: An Institutional Study* [unpublished PhD diss., University of Warwick, 1984]), and Kelly (*Learning to Survive: The Petre family and the formation of Catholic Communities* [unpublished PhD diss., Kings College London, 2008]). With this correction made, surely the focal point of the east Anglian Jesuit mission is Ingatestone, not Hengrave: even with the marriage to the Gages, the cadet branch at Hengrave did not have the equivalent resources, wealth or influence necessary for such an endowment, and, equally importantly, the means to absorb any repercussions, whether reputational or financial, of such a commitment. This also goes some way to explaining the lack of hides and priest-holes at Hengrave (26)—as a satellite rather than the main base of operations, it would have been occupied less frequently, and thus would have had less need for a complex system of hiding places. Similarly, the author's assertion that the home of the Rookwood family at Coldham Hall was “the *de facto* headquarters of the Jesuit mission in England” from 1589 onwards (62–63) is a little strange, and appears unreferenced. Coldham is described as “another Catholic centre established by John Gerard” (emphasis mine) (*The Autobiography of a Hunted Priest* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012], 223), and Gerard describes at least another two properties in Essex as “Catholic centres” (Sawston and Northend: *ibid.*, 33–34).

A particular strength of the book is the wide-ranging chronological focus—the decision to encompass the turbulent civil war era, as well as the more tolerant late eighteenth century provides something of a bridge from the Catholicism of the “early modern” period into the different Catholicism of the “modern” era, which are often treated as different subjects with little link between the two. Young demonstrates that the gentry-led, inherently clandestine,

Catholicism of the civil war era gradually gave way to the more mission-led, proto-parish Catholicism by the second half of the eighteenth century, under the influence of families such as the Gages of Hengrave.

The Gages volume will appeal to a wide range of readers, particularly social historians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and historians of post-Reformation Catholicism in the British Isles. It is one of three volumes planned by the author to illuminate and celebrate Suffolk Catholicism, the others include a volume of Rookwood family papers 1606–71 (reviewed in this issue of the *Journal of Jesuit Studies*), and a monograph on the Rookwood family to be published by Suffolk Record Society in 2017.

Hannah Thomas

Durham University

hannah.thomas2@durham.ac.uk

DOI 10.1163/22141332-00401005-13