

Introduction

Other Voices: Dissenting Women

Mary Franklin (d. 1711) was the wife of the Reverend Robert Franklin (1630–1703), one of some two thousand Nonconformist ministers who were “ejected” from their pulpits and their livings on Black Bartholomew’s Day,¹ August 24, 1662, following the Restoration of Charles II (1630–1685). In May 1660, Charles returned from exile in Europe, beginning the Restoration of the monarchy. He was crowned on April 23, 1661. Though for many English subjects the Restoration was a joyous occasion, for the Dissenters,² and especially for ministers and their relations, these became times that tried their souls. Mary Franklin wrote a narrative of her experience of these times, taking up, late in life, one of her husband’s incomplete sermon notebooks, turning it upside down, and using its blank pages for her purposes.³ She wrote about her life as a minister’s wife and her family’s suffering under a government that exacted religious conformity to the Church of England as a measure of loyalty to the crown. She also recorded the triumph of God’s providences through it all. She did not seek publication of her brief, detailed, and moving testimony but rather seems to have kept the notebook within her family until her death, after

1. The name Black Bartholomew’s Day harkens back to a day of infamy for the Protestant godly, St. Bartholomew’s Day massacre, August 24, 1572, when tens of thousands of French Huguenots (Calvinists) were slaughtered by the Catholic King Charles IX. See N. H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987), 31–32.

2. See J. R. Jones, “Restoration,” *OCBH*, 772–73. “Nonconformist” and “Dissenter” are terms that generally apply to Puritan groups who did not conform to the practices and doctrines of the established Church of England. Sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century Puritans largely became known as “Nonconformists” after 1662, while the term “Dissenters” is the favored term into the eighteenth century and beyond. Keeble clarifies that nonconformity was the reluctant choice of the Puritans who hoped to remain within the national church, while dissent was the positive choice of those who felt the national church had irrevocably changed after 1662. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England*, 41ff. *The Franklin Family Papers* crosses three generations of English Dissent. In my description of the private papers of this family, I have followed G. R. Cragg, who states of his own terminology: “I have used the terms ‘nonconformist’ and ‘dissenter’ indifferently; in this I believe I follow the practice of many of those most intimately concerned.” G. R. Cragg, *Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), viii. See also N. H. Keeble, ed., *“Settling the Peace of the Church”: 1662 Revisited* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); David Appleby, *Black Bartholomew’s Day: Preaching, Polemic, and Restoration Nonconformity* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2007); and Michael Watts, *The Dissenters*, vol. 1, *From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

3. On the practice of “inverting” and repurposing notebooks, see Margaret J. M. Ezell, “Invisible Books,” in *Producing the Eighteenth-Century Book: Writers and Publishers in England, 1650–1800*, eds. Laura L. Runge and Pat Rogers (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009), 53–69.

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which it circulated among her religious community. It appears to have been recovered upon her death and read by the distinguished Puritan divine, Benjamin Grosvenor (1676–1758), who wrote her funeral sermon.⁴ It is reputed to have been Grosvenor who appended to the end of her narrative the scripturally derived proclamation: “She being dead yet speaketh.”⁵ This biblical passage honors the faith of Abel: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.”⁶ The passage had been heralded by the Dissenting clergy as a means of honoring those of their numbers who had suffered, sacrificed, and in many cases died rather than betray their consciences.⁷ The narrative of her *Experience* was powerful enough, apparently, to inspire Grosvenor to promote Mary Franklin into this exalted number of the faithful, as he boldly changed the pronoun from “he” to “she.” His gesture can thus be said to have established a kind of “canonization” of this Dissenting woman, Mary Franklin, whose “other voice” now speaks to us today of her experience and faith.

The plot of the Franklin family story does not end, however, with Mary Franklin’s chronicle of faith. Nearly one hundred years later, her granddaughter Hannah Burton (1723–1786), widow of a London goldsmith and the inheritor of the notebook, took it up to fill its blank pages with her diary—a chronicle of spiritual struggle and searching following her husband’s death. Hannah Burton first gave her grandmother’s narrative a title: “The Experience of my grandmother, Mrs. Mary Franklin.”⁸ And then, right under the last line of Mary Franklin’s narrative, she began writing her diary.⁹ She explained herself in this way:

The above written account was found after the decease of the dear woman who wrote it, amidst her private papers, written thus in her own hand writing and carefully preserved by her children, ’til by the removal of my dear mother, who was the youngest and last surviving one of them. It came into my possession as being the only one of the grand children left alive. But being now very low in pocket and not

4. In his funeral sermon for Mary Franklin, *The Dissolution of the Earthly House of this Tabernacle*, Benjamin Grosvenor describes reading “the papers left by our deceased friend,” appendix 1, 270. See Alan Ruston, “Grosvenor [formerly Gravener], Benjamin (1676–1758),” *ODNB*. A third variant spelling, “Gravener,” occurs in the printed funeral sermon and in Mary Franklin’s will. See figure 23 and Appendix 1, 268–69.

5. T. G. Crippen, ed., “The Experiences of Mary Franklin,” in *TCHS* 2 1905–1906 (London, 1906), 401. See figure 1.

6. Hebrews 11:4.

7. See Appleby, *Black Bartholomew’s Day*, 6.

8. See figure 18.

9. See figure 1.

able to purchase a memorandum book at this time, I am obliged to make use of it for that purpose.¹⁰

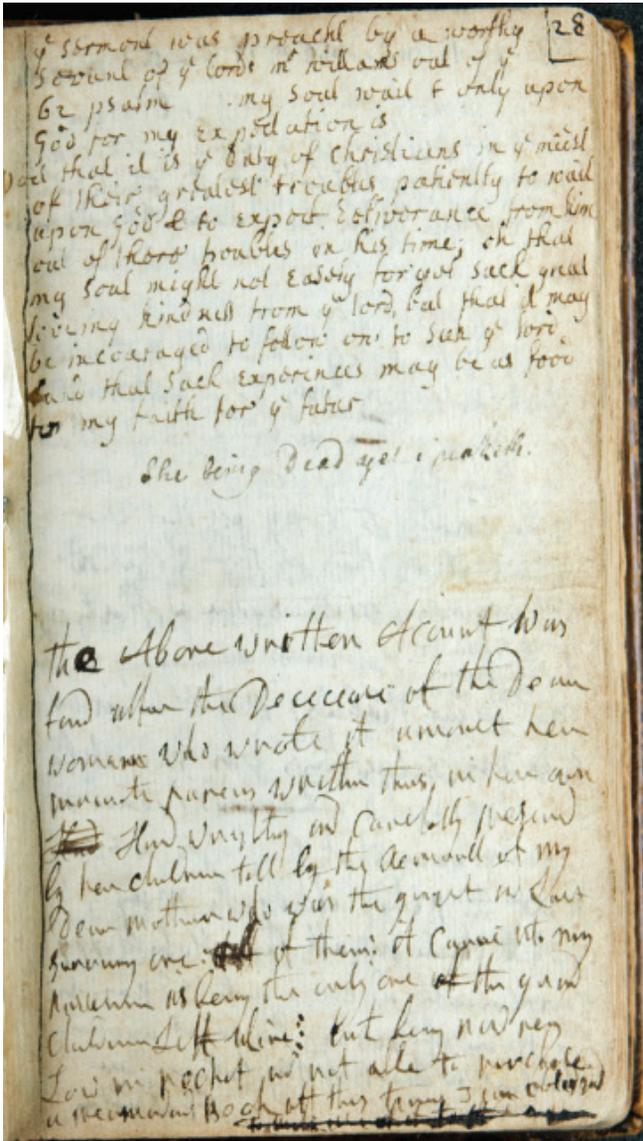


Figure 1. Final page from Mary Franklin, *Experience* and first page from Hannah Burton, *Diary*. CL MS 33. I. h, {28}. © Congregational Library at Dr. Williams's Library, London. Printed with permission.

10. *Diary*, 175.

Hannah Burton linked her written account to that of her predecessor. She added invaluable provenance to the manuscript book itself, explaining how she inherited the notebook following the “removal,” or death, of her mother. Noting the family’s careful preservation of the grandmother’s “private papers,” she revealed the exigency of her repurposing of the notebook. For four months in 1782, then, Hannah Burton recounted her mourning for her recently deceased husband, William Burton (d. 1781), and the poverty she now faced as a London widow. Whereas her grandmother’s narrative described religious and political persecution, Hannah Burton daily recorded her dread of debt collectors and her desire for God’s deliverance.

She Being Dead Yet Speaketh: The Franklin Family Papers thus offers rare, firsthand accounts of the lives and times of two Dissenting London women, and their families, from two different centuries. In order to visualize the highways and hedges of these London women, this volume offers the reader a facsimile “foldout” and selected details of John Rocque’s Map of London, 1746, the formal title of which is “A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, and Borough of Southwark; with the contiguous buildings; from an actual survey, taken by John Rocque, Land-Surveyor, and engraved by John Pine.” This magisterial map of eighteenth-century London is renowned for its level of detail and accuracy; it allows the reader to trace the paths taken by the Franklin family within their Dissenting communities.

Reflecting the dynamics of English Puritanism,¹¹ *The Franklin Family Papers* contributes to our picture of a long span of English religio-political history—from the Restoration to after the Evangelical revival during the eighteenth century. The time is right for such a volume, benefiting as it does from three positive, corrective, and intersecting developments that have intensified in recent years in early modern studies. The first is the recognition that non-elite women did write, do matter, and do interest modern readers.¹² The second is that many such writings of the non-elite “lay-writer”¹³ emerge from previously unexcavated manuscript writings of women such as those represented in *The Franklin Family Papers*. The third is that religious experience is paradigmatic to understanding seventeenth- and eighteenth-century history and culture.

11. On English Puritanism, see Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). See also John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim, “Introduction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, eds. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1–18.

12. See the pioneering anthology, *Her Own Life: Autobiographical Writings by Seventeenth-Century English Women*, eds. Elspeth Graham, Hilary Hinds, Elaine Hobby, and Helen Wilcox (New York: Routledge, 1989).

13. A term coined by Kate Narveson, *Bible Readers and Lay Writers in Early Modern England: Gender and Self-Definition in an Emergent Writing Culture* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012).

The Intersection of Women, Manuscripts, and Religion

“When you write, you illuminate what’s hidden,
and that is a political act.”¹⁴

Grace Paley

“That’s when it dawns on me that autobiogra-
phy is the poor man’s history.”¹⁵

Raymond Carver

More than a decade ago, Alice Kessler-Harris responded to the question, “Do We Still Need Women’s History?” by insisting, “we have not yet fished out that pond . . . of the still hidden history of women.”¹⁶ Indeed, because the critical climate now includes manuscript culture as a part of the pond to be fished for early modern scholars,¹⁷ the records of non-elite women are still coming out of hiding and into the public domain.

The handwritten documents within *The Franklin Family Papers* circulated within their own time in some ways like today’s social media. They moved from hand to hand, among friends and family members within their social and religious groups, and then, because they were preserved by the family, they were passed on to the next generations.¹⁸ Yet the physical circumstances of writing

14. Grace Paley in an interview with Terry Gross, cited by Alexandra Schwartz, “The Art and Activism of Grace Paley,” *New Yorker*, May 8, 2017. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/05/08/the-art-and-activism-of-grace-paley>.

15. Raymond Carver, “Blackbird Pie,” in *Where I’m Calling From: Selected Stories* (New York: Random House, 1989), 511.

16. Alice Kessler-Harris, “Do We Still Need Women’s History?” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 7, 2007, B6–B7. Despite Alison Shell’s recent decision that “the Judith Shakespeares that wrote anything at all are likely to have been recovered and celebrated by now,” it seems to me rather early to stop the search if we remember that manuscripts, and not only printed texts, can amount to “anything” in literary history. Alison Shell, “Sisters and Brothers,” *Times Literary Supplement*, December 8, 2017. <https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/private/women-early-modern-period/>. See also Victoria E. Burke and Elizabeth Clarke, “Julie Palmer’s ‘Centuries’: The Politics of Editing and Anthologizing Early Modern Women’s Manuscript Compilations,” in *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1997–2001*, vol. 3, ed. W. Speed Hill (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in conjunction with Renaissance English Text Society, 2001), 64. See also Ezell, “Invisible Books,” 66.

17. Ezell, “The Laughing Tortoise: Speculations on Manuscript Sources and Women’s Book History,” *English Literary Renaissance* 38, no. 2 (2008): 354.

18. The “sociology” of such manuscripts—that is, the circumstances and substance of their material production as textual objects that circulated within social networks—is known as “social authorship.” Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

for early modern women like Mary Franklin and Hannah Burton defy any such comparisons to the modern world. Like all early modern writers, they wrote by daylight or candlelight, with quill pens sharpened by penknives and with home-made inks. As non-elite women, they would struggle to afford the paper books they wrote upon. Neither was schooled in the formal, precise handwriting of the educated scribe. Yet for the modern reader, the old forms of handwriting that one encounters on such manuscript pages from another era and another world bring a special intimacy with the past. As Wolfgang Schmieder writes,

Handwritings of the departed are like illuminated windows in the night of the past. It is in these manuscripts, if anywhere, that something tangible of the corporeal-spiritual being of their authors confronts us. We look over their shoulders, so to speak, and take part in their revelations, their troubles, their joys. And while we become absorbed in such a page, our book knowledge of the particular man's life, as well as the times, which surrounded him, and often heavily oppressed him, becomes a living experience.¹⁹

Such features make manuscript books open: "still fluid and living, as it were."²⁰ Even the blank pages without handwriting that are often strewn about manuscript books, interrupting the sequence of an author's writing and lying fallow, may seem enigmatic to a modern editor accustomed to economy and order until she recognizes that these blank pages provide an invitation to other hands to join in the copying or composition within the manuscript! These blank pages also invite the primary writer to return for later reflections or additions.²¹ It is this fluid, living quality that scholars of early modern manuscripts warn may be lost or forgotten in edited, print versions, if such versions fail to preserve the "woven" state of the documents.²² Not only handwriting but also page size, structure and layout, the use of blank space, folding, doodles, marginal marks, children's drawings and insertions anchored in bindings by straight pins, and many other material components of early modern manuscripts convey personal and social meaning. Modern editors thus strive to capture these features through representative

19. Wolfgang Schmieder quoted in Werner Gundersheimer, "Foreword," in *The Pen's Excellencie: Treasures from the Manuscript Collection of the Folger Shakespeare Library*, ed. Heather Wolfe (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2002), 7.

20. Peter Beal, *In Praise of Scribes: Manuscripts and Their Makers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 25.

21. See Jonathan Gibson, "Casting Off Blanks: Hidden Structures in Early Modern Paper Books," in *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture: Texts and Social Practices, 1580–1730*, eds. James Daybell and Peter Hinds (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

22. D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 13.

illustrations and descriptions of the material manuscript as a physical object while transcribing text to be read.

Diverse manuscript collections such as *The Franklin Family Papers* fall into the category of early modern social texts described by Margaret Ezell as “messy” manuscripts that have been hidden from or invisible to early modern scholars. Since such manuscript books are more likely to be constructed within domestic spaces, they do not partake of the aesthetic appeal of the formal scribal productions of illuminated manuscripts praised by previous generations of scholars. They tend to show the variety as well as the wear and tear of everyday, domestic life. According to Ezell, they live in a space that

demands collaboration and tolerance of its occupant, whether master and servant, husband and wife, or reader and writer. Once viewed not as a failed print exercise, but instead as a thing in and of itself, we can see what such volumes actually do perform, and, in my sense, the ways in which they behave beautifully in a handwritten culture, with its emphasis on collaboration, elaboration, and preservation. We can see that they transmit what was viewed as important in the sphere delineated by the household, which as we know, was no small world.²³

Such messy manuscripts deserve to be read more than the “nine-hundredth abridger of the History of England” that Jane Austen’s narrator in *Northanger Abbey* disparages.²⁴ Virginia Woolf’s echo of Austen in *A Room of One’s Own* nearly a century later still feels fresh today: “And there is the girl behind the counter too—I would as soon have her true history as the hundred and fiftieth life of Napoleon.”²⁵ For as Austen and Woolf well knew, these abridgers and biographers derive their guiding principles from the misguided view of history, which insists “that all the historical action that truly matters takes place in the arenas beyond the household.”²⁶ While it is the case that the voices of non-elite women (and men) are increasingly heard through legal records, official letters recovered from the archives, judicial and court proceedings, and other such mediated forms, it is

23. Ezell, “Invisible Books,” 66. See also Kate Pahl, “The Aesthetics of Everyday Literacies: Home Writing Practices in a British Asian Household,” *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (2014): 293–311.

24. Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 37.

25. Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own and Three Guineas*, ed. Morag Shiach (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 68.

26. Mary Hartman, *The Household and the Making of History: A Subversive View of the Western Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4.

also the case that the autograph narratives, diaries, and other life writings of early modern women (and men) who are not noble, aristocratic, or of the gentry must perhaps be sought out to be heard since they are not as readily accessible. The unmediated voices of Dissenting women from the late seventeenth century are rather faint in the majority of modern history books. As Melinda Zook declares: “In great part the political narratives of the Restoration and the [Glorious] Revolution read as if women—other than a handful at court, the queens and mistresses—did not exist, never mind play any political roles.”²⁷ Such laments over the scarcity of documentation are echoed by historian Hannah Barker, who notes that the relatively mundane lives of “ordinary men and women” in eighteenth-century history as well fail to excite the imaginations of scholars who seek grand narratives of social change at the cusp of the modern era.²⁸ Such gaps across the centuries not only in our records but also in our conception of what matters in history make the preservation of *The Franklin Family Papers* all the more remarkable.²⁹ This volume brings into wider circulation an accessible edition of manuscript records of non-elite women that spans three generations of their family’s history.

Beyond attending to the voices of Dissenting women in English historiography, *The Franklin Family Papers* further reinforces the importance of the intersecting category of religion in early modern historiography. Zook, here too, reminds early modern scholars that religion is indivisible from politics in early modern life; she asks historians to “expand their vision of all that counts for political culture” and to “recognize that religion, a domain in which female agency had always been far more readily acceptable, was also a highly politicized space

27. Melinda S. Zook, *Protestantism, Politics, and Women in Britain, 1660–1714* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 7.

28. Hannah Barker, *Family and Business During the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 13, 227.

29. Recent scholarship corrects these gaps in considering the non-elite women in history, notably Margaret Ezell’s *The Oxford English Literary History*, vol. 5, *1645–1714: The Later Seventeenth-Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), which paradigmatically revises the literary landscape of the later seventeenth century. See also Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women’s Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640–1680* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Ann Hughes, “Puritanism and Gender,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, eds. Coffey and Lim, 294–308; Laura Lunger Knoppers, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Literature and the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Johanna Harris and Elizabeth Scott-Baumann, eds., *The Intellectual Culture of Puritan Women, 1558–1680* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Additionally, two new volumes from The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe series brings primary writing of Puritan women into wider circulation. See Margaret Fell, *Women’s Speaking Justified and Other Pamphlets*, eds. Jane Donawerth and Rebecca M. Lush (Toronto: Iter Press and Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2018), and Teresa Feroli and Margaret Olofson Thickstun, eds., *Witness, Warning, and Prophecy: Quaker Women’s Writing, 1655–1700* (Toronto: Iter Press and Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2018).

in Early Modern culture.”³⁰ Such recognition must be “intersectional”:³¹ documentary evidence of religious and political transformations of the Early Modern period repeatedly reveals that for the women and men who were members of Dissenting congregations, religion was as essential as the air they breathed. In the same way that grand narratives of historical transformation often derive from political theories that overlook the common woman or man, so, too, have literary histories tended to privilege the writings of the elite and, until recently, overlooked the records of non-elite or “middling” voices from unconventional, non-belles lettristic sources, such as Dissenting women’s life writings.³² While Puritan studies recognizes the indivisibility of religion, politics, and social and psychological identity in the Early Modern period, such a recognition has not always been represented broadly in literary history.³³ Early modern scholars’ tendency to diminish the centrality of religious belief in favor of social and political theories of cultural production has rendered certain voices invisible. With the decided shift toward placing religion at the center of literary historical discussions and the “turn” to religion in the study of early modern literature and lives, we recognize that the household manuscripts produced by non-elite women such as the members of the Franklin family provide a particularly revealing inlet into the richness of religious experience and expression.

For the Dissenting women whose life writings are collected in *The Franklin Family Papers*, then, faith in a providential God undergirds all human experience

30. Zook, *Protestantism, Politics, and Women in Britain, 1660–1714*, 8. See also Susan E. Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers, 1660–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 15–17.

31. Though coined in terms of race and gender, I am applying the term here to the intersectionality of religion and gender. See Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 139 (1989): 139–67.

32. See Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks, *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society, and Politics in England, 1550–1800* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1994).

33. See Ken Jackson and Arthur Marotti, “The Turn to Religion in Early Modern English Studies,” *Criticism* 46, no. 1 (2004): 167–99, on the neglect of religion in early modern literary history. A review of Puritan literary historical studies is beyond the scope of this introduction. However, for an overview and starting point, see Coffey and Lim, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*. See Keeble’s pivotal *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* for the broad contexts of later seventeenth-century Puritan literature. And for current literary and historical trends in literary studies of canonical Puritan writers, see Michael Davies and W. R. Owens, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of John Bunyan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), and Nicholas McDowell and Nigel Smith, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Milton* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). For Puritanism and the world of moderate, Presbyterian Dissenters inhabited by the Franklin family, see Mark Goldie, et al., eds., *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice*, 7 vols. (Suffolk, UK: Boydell in Association with the Parliamentary History Yearbook Trust, 2007). Finally, see John Coffey, ed., *The Oxford History of Protestant Dissenting Traditions: The Beginning to 1689* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020) for an authoritative guide to Dissent in history and in literature.

and all interpretations of human events, both private and public, personal and political. As Patrick Collinson has put it, the people of early modern England were “living, in a sense, in the pages of the Bible.”³⁴ Grasping this one presupposition insofar as one can enter into this strange land as a contemporary reader will enhance one’s sympathy, enjoyment, and understanding of the papers this family carefully preserved over the generations. The longing for a salvific relationship with God unifies the voices that emerge from these papers, from different generations, and from different hands. For Mary Franklin, writing in the late seventeenth century, such longing intertwines the spiritual and the political in the cause of religious freedom and resistance to government oppression that characterizes all her writing. Religion, says David Appleby, “remained central to political affairs after 1660 not least because Puritans, despite their political eclipse, could not be painlessly or easily cut out of the body politic.”³⁵ The Franklin family’s Dissenting thus fosters future generations. For Hannah Burton, whose diary is written a century after her grandmother’s narrative, such longings intertwine God’s providence with her expectation that he will materially provide life’s necessities in the midst of her economic destitution. Riven between petitions and promises, she scours her conscience, the Scriptures, and the events of the day for signs of salvation. Both English Dissenting women share faith in God, yet they experience the world in which they must bear witness to his works and ways with sharply different voices, as they inhabit very different moments in English history. Their autobiographies are *their* English history, and yet we cannot truly follow that history without understanding the broad strokes of the worlds they come from.

The Franklin Family and English Dissent

The seventeenth century has been called “the century of revolution,” with good reason.³⁶ The overthrow of the monarchy by Puritan and Parliamentary forces and the beheading of King Charles I (1600–1649) during what has variously been called the Puritan Revolution, the English Revolution, and the English Civil

34. Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1988), 10.

35. Appleby, *Black Bartholomew’s Day*, 13. Jason McElligott also insists upon the importance of religion to understanding the lives of English citizens during this period: “It would be hard to overestimate the importance of religion to those who lived through the tense years before the [Glorious] Revolution.” Jason McElligott, “Introduction: Stabilizing and Destabilizing Britain in the 1680s,” in *Fear, Exclusion, and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, ed. Jason McElligott (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 3.

36. See Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution, 1603–1714* (New York: Routledge, 1980).

Wars³⁷ brought the new rule of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), during the Interregnum.³⁸ After Cromwell died, the Restoration of the monarchy brought Charles II out of exile, and he would rule from 1660 to 1685. But there was more revolution to come. For when Charles II died in 1685, his Catholic brother and heir, James II (1633–1701), would rule for only three years because James introduced the threat of a return to Catholicism to a monarchy that had been Protestant since the rule of Henry VIII (1491–1547).³⁹ James II alarmed the largely Episcopal Parliament with his Declaration of Indulgence in 1687 that advanced religious toleration for his fellow Catholics as well as for the Puritan Dissenters.⁴⁰ In 1688, *his* crown toppled, when his own Protestant daughter, Mary II, and her Dutch husband, William III, were invited by Parliament to come from Holland to rule as co-regents. William and Mary took over the English monarchy in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Contrary to the century's previous revolutions, this one occurred with relatively little violence or loss of life, so it is often called the Bloodless Revolution.⁴¹

Any attempt to place one ordinary London family within the context of such grand, revolutionary national events must inevitably, painfully, oversimplify the complexities of history to get to the point. Yet the point is that *The Franklin Family Papers* reflects the impact of these epic events on this one Dissenting London family and their community. During the three-decade period between the Restoration of 1660 and the Glorious Revolution of 1688, persecution by the government beset the Franklin family, along with other Dissenters. The Stuart monarchy feared a revival of the Puritan revolutionary spirit that destabilized its power during the English Civil Wars and the rule of Cromwell and relentlessly sought to quell it. Though recent scholarship has brought debate over the place of Puritanism as a revolutionary force in historiography, the fact remains that within the world of Restoration London, the Dissenting congregations who sought to

37. Austin Woolrych, *Britain in Revolution, 1625–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). The “wars of the three kingdoms”—England, Scotland and Ireland—is the current favorite term to describe this revolutionary period in British history. See Trevor Royle, *The British Civil War: The Wars of the Three Kingdoms, 1638–1660* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

38. Meaning “between Kings.”

39. In 1534, Henry VIII broke away from the (Roman) Catholic Church and established the Church of England. William M. Marshall, “Church of England,” *OCBH*, 201–3.

40. Franklin is included in a group of ministers who sent a humble address to the king after the Declaration of Indulgence in 1687. Goldie, ed., *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice, 1677–1685*, vol. 1, *Roger Morrice and the Puritan Whigs* (Suffolk, UK: Boydell in Association with the Parliamentary History Yearbook Trust, 2007), 493. This reference to Robert Franklin is missing from the Index (*Entering Book*, vol. 7). Thanks to Robert W. Daniel for this note.

41. John Miller, *The Glorious Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

worship and to practice their Nonconformist⁴² faith, in whatever denomination they chose, were threatening reminders to the Stuart monarchy of past revolutions and, indeed, harbingers of revolutions to come.⁴³ Their Nonconforming religious practices were perceived as political threats that must be controlled and restricted.

For his part, the Presbyterian minister Robert Franklin was one of a group of influential clergymen who had at first been optimistic about the Restoration of the monarchy. Under the Restoration, with the return of Charles II, the Presbyterian ministers constituted a large group in England who actively courted the new monarch in hopes of enlisting his enlightened support for their sustained agenda for a Reformed Church of England. These Presbyterians clergymen expressed their desire to be recognized as loyal subjects. Their aim was a more inclusive—or comprehensive—national church that would minimize dissent by accommodating a range of Nonconformist opinion. They even are said to have sent a hopeful address of congratulations to Charles II upon his return to the throne, inviting him to join them in reforming the Church.⁴⁴ However, their invitation not only resulted in a disappointing refusal but also was met with repressive repudiation by the government.⁴⁵ For immediately after the Restoration, brutal measures were brought to bear upon the Dissenters, who now represented a defeated yet divisive faction of society. And since the reforming agenda of the Interregnum generally fell out of favor with both the people and the parliament, the Church of England was reconstituted under the Act of Uniformity of 1662. Every clergyman had not only to subscribe his assent and consent to everything in the Book of Common Prayer under this new law but also—and this was a key stumbling block—to

42. See Coffey and Lim, “Introduction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 1–18.

43. See Harris and Scott-Baumann, *The Intellectual Culture of Puritan Women*, 6. See also Michael G. Finlayson, *Historians, Puritanism, and the English Revolution: The Religious Factor in English Politics Before and After the Interregnum* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).

44. In the entry on Franklin in *The Nonconformist's Memorial*, Samuel Palmer writes that Hannah Burton has in her possession a “letter” from Robert Franklin “to Charles II, written soon after the Restoration, congratulating him on that event, and urging him to improve it, by promoting a reformation of religion.” *NM* 3:294. While the address from Robert Franklin to Charles II is untraced, there are multiple examples of such overtures written to Charles congratulating him on his return. See, for example, *To the King's Most Excellent Majesty* (London, 1660), in which ministers congratulate Charles on his return. The printed copy is signed by several named ministers along “with many others.” Perhaps Franklin had signed a manuscript copy of this letter. Franklin also appears to sign the preface to the “Scottish Metrical Psalter.” “A Puritan Preface to the Scottish Metrical Psalter,” *Covenant: Protestant Reformed Church*, accessed October 30, 2017: <http://www.cprf.co.uk/quotes/prefacescottishpsalter.htm#WwWpa1Mvz-b>. On the Restoration settlement, see John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), and R. S. Bosher, *The Making of the Restoration Settlement: The Influence of the Laudians, 1649–1662* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951).

45. “The Act of Uniformity of April 1662 fell most heavily on Presbyterian ministers still hoping for accommodation within the Church.” Zook, *Protestantism, Politics, and Women in Britain, 1660–1714*, 20.

undergo Episcopal ordination, or give up preaching and ministering to his flock. In what came to be called “The Great Ejection,” a host of distinguished Puritan ministers, including Richard Baxter (1615–1691), Richard Alleine (1610–1681), Edmund Calamy (1600–1666), John Owen (1616–1683), and Robert Franklin were ejected from their pulpits and thrown on their own devices to make a living for their families as punishment for not conforming to the new laws of the Church of England. These laws effectively deprived them of their means of livelihood by excluding them from all population centers, leaving the vast majority of these ministers and their families penurious. For a Dissenting family like the Franklins, then, the real trouble started on Black Bartholomew’s Day.

The ejected ministers’ opportunities for survival were made even more dire by the passage, one after another, of subordinate statutes that came to be called the Clarendon Code,⁴⁶ by which, for instance, the ejected ministers were not allowed to perform their clerical duties, even in private houses.⁴⁷ Nor could their sermons, tracts and pamphlets, or books be published without Episcopal sanction. The ejected ministers, and their now dispersed congregations, were spied upon perpetually. The government of Charles II obtained information about the godly that held or attended “unlawful assemblies” from “paid agents and informers, both at home and abroad, whose livelihood depended on their ability to provide data.”⁴⁸ An already bedraggled and destitute population was fined exorbitantly or imprisoned by the “officers of justice” who patrolled their gatherings. Frequently they would, therefore, gather in secluded areas or in the woods, or congregate in the dark of night to avoid detection. In his history of the Congregational Church at Andover, Hampshire, J. S. Pearsall tells the story of Christians meeting in secret:

46. The Clarendon Code comprises “the statutes passed after the Restoration re-establishing the Church of England under government by bishops and compelling the nation to conform.” J. R. Jones, “Clarendon Code,” *OCBH*, 210. Included in the Clarendon Code is the Corporation Act (1661), its first statute, which required that persons holding municipal office were required to take communion within the Church of England. J. A. Cannon, “Corporation Act,” *OCBH*, 242. This was followed by the Uniformity Act (1662), which required clergy to have episcopal ordination and only use the Book of Common Prayer; the Conventicle Act (1664), which penalized all religious meetings outside of the church; and the Five Mile Act (1665), banning Dissenting ministers from corporate towns—the ministers could not live within five miles of a church from which they had been expelled. Jones, “Clarendon Code,” 210.

47. “I never was at a meeting, when disturbance was given by justices, informers, constables and soldiers, more than twice. One time was at Mr. Jenkyn’s, in Jewen-street, and the other at Mr. Franklin’s, in Bunhill-fields; and in both places they were fierce and noisy and made great havoc.” Edmund Calamy, *An Historical Account of My Own Life, with Some Reflections on the Times I Have Lived in (1671–1731)*, ed. John Towill Rutt (London, 1829), 88.

48. Richard L. Greaves, *Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Revolution of 1688–1689* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 338.

It was when the eye of human observation was closed by sleep, that they ventured to the room; and having entered it, made fast the door and closed the window-shutter, and even extinguished the light of the candle, lest its glimmering might be discovered through a crevice, by some stray enemy from without. Here they often continued all night in prayer to God, until the ray of morning light, struggling down the chimney, announced the time to disperse. Thus they learnt that the darkness hideth not from God, but the night shineth as the day; and that the Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward us openly.⁴⁹

Regardless of how scholars today may well debate the political and religious forces that fostered revolution during the Civil Wars and then propelled the persecution of the Dissenters during the three decades following the Restoration and before the Revolution of 1688, the fact remains that for those Dissenters who actually experienced this persecution, the battles that kept them up at night and invaded the peace and quiet of their home were over religion.⁵⁰ As Christopher Hill tartly observes, “In what used to be called ‘the Puritan Revolution,’ all politics were expressed in religious terms.”⁵¹ For Dissenters like the Franklin family, the laws that restricted separate worship and freedom of preaching were intolerable. These laws necessitated covert meetings and, eventually, resistance to authorities. When everyday believers came to identify the line of succession of the Stuart monarchy—Charles II himself, and his Catholic brother James II—with unremitting oppression of their “gathered churches,” and the dangerous encroaching powers of Catholicism, they resisted the government with all their might.⁵² So it was that the government’s repressive measures against the Dissenters ended up fueling resistance.⁵³ Though intended to stifle Dissent, unrelenting restrictions unified groups such as the Baptists, the Quakers, and other Protestant denominations. When a devout Presbyterian clergyman like Robert Franklin—who had stayed in London to preach during the Plague when the vast majority of clergy

49. J. S. Pearsall, *Outlines of Congregationalism; With an Historical Sketch of Its Rise and Progress in the New Town of Andover* (London, 1844), 94.

50. See Harris and Scott-Baumann, *Intellectual Culture of Puritan Women*, 6. See also Knoppers, ed., *Puritanism and Its Discontents* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003).

51. Christopher Hill, “Religion and Democracy in the Puritan Revolution,” *Democracy 2* (April 1982): 39.

52. See Cragg, *Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660–1688*, and Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England*.

53. For it was with Charles II as it had been with his father, Charles I: the very act of repression fueled the Dissenters’ cause. As Champlin Burrage writes of Charles I, “By this very work of the repression the victory was temporarily secured for the cause he had sought to injure.” Champlin Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research (1550–1641)*, vol. 1, *History and Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), 40.

fled contagion—was forbidden to preach and to minister to the same London congregations he had shepherded through pestilence, he was compelled to resist. For he must demand religious freedom at any cost.⁵⁴

Robert Franklin's harassment by the authorities for being a Dissenter mirrors the broader movement within Presbyterianism from a denomination that initially sought to reform the practices of the Church of England—but not to separate from it—to a persecuted group of worshippers who end up resisting the laws of the land and the Church of England as an oppressive branch of the existing government. Now emboldened by a punitive penal code, these Presbyterians, along with other Dissenting congregations, became resisters who agitated for new laws and new rulers. *The Franklin Family Papers* thus began in the midst of persecution and resistance.

The Franklin Family in History

The Experience of Mary Franklin begins with the circumstances that led to her meeting and marrying her husband, Robert. She recorded being forced to move, as a young single woman living with her parents, during the Great Fire of London in 1666,⁵⁵ into Islington, a suburb of London. She was distressed to have to make this move on the Sabbath:

The most remarkable time of the work of God's grace discovered to my soul was after that dreadful judgment of the great and dreadful Fire of London; of which I was an eye witness, dwelling so near that we were forced to remove our good[s] on the Lord's Day, and as it was in it self a very dreadful judgment, so it had a very deep impression upon my spirits.⁵⁶

In Islington, she met Robert Franklin, who was preaching in Blue Anchor Alley in Old Street.⁵⁷ As noted above, during the Great Plague of 1665, Franklin was one

54. According to Ann Hughes, "Then, Presbyterians were part of the establishment, but after 1662 the Established Church had persecuted the godly and had manifestly failed to encourage national reformation. In these circumstances, old age and long memories did not make men more moderate," and many Presbyterians came to believe they could only persist "united under the Presbyterian label, outside the Church of England," "Print and Pastoral Identity: Presbyterian Pastors Negotiate the Restoration," in *Church Life: Pastors, Congregations, and the Experience of Dissent in Seventeenth-Century England*, eds. Michael Davies, Anne Duman-Page, and Joel Halcomb (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 171.

55. The Great Fire of London encompassed and destroyed the central parts of London in September 1666. See Neil Hanson, *Great Fire of London: In That Apocalyptic Year, 1666* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2001).

56. *Experience*, 134.

57. See *Experience*, 135.

of only a few ministers who stayed to preach amid “all the fury of the pestilence” in London:

But the main Body of the Publick Ministers retir'd from the Danger, and left their Pulpits vacant. In this case the Ministers that had been silenc'd Three Years before, and had preached only privately and to small Numbers, thought it their Duty to give the best Help they could to the many thousands that remain'd in the City. They stay'd and preach'd to vast Congregations: and the immediate Views of Death before them, made both Preachers and Hearers serious at an uncommon Rate.⁵⁸

Robert Franklin, some twenty years⁵⁹ her senior, impressed Mary Franklin because of his spiritual devotion:

I was by his good providence cast upon Mr. Franklin's ministry in Blue Anchor Alley in Old Street; which time I hope I shall never forget so long as God shall please to continue my memory, for the great enjoyments of God that I had then, which I can better think than express.⁶⁰

They would marry some three years later, in 1669.⁶¹ We know of Robert Franklin's personal as well as religious history through a manuscript memoir titled “Memorable Occurrences of My Life,” which is currently lost but was summarized in Samuel Palmer's (1741–1813) *Nonconformist's Memorial*.⁶² Franklin also authored, along with four other ministers, a popular sermon, which was published

58. Calamy continues, “Those thus employ'd, were, Mr. Chester, Mr. Turner, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Grimes (who came from Ireland, and sometimes went by the Name of Chambers,) and ... Mr. Thomas Vincent”; Edmund Calamy, *A Continuation of the Account of the Ministers, Lecturers, Masters and Fellows of Colleges, and Schoolmasters, Who Were Ejected and Silenced After the Restoration in 1660*, vol. 1 (London, 1727), 31.

59. Mary Franklin's age is unclear, though, it seems she was about eighteen when they met; Robert was thirty-seven.

60. *Experience*, 135.

61. In that same year, Robert Franklin was indicted for holding conventicles “in Blew Anchor Alley, Old St,” where there was a meeting of one hundred people, and “Franklyn” was indicted under the category of “Preacher or Teacher.” See “Episcopal Returns 1669,” in *Original Records of Early Non-Conformity Under Persecution and Indulgence*, ed. G. Lyon Turner (Miami, FL: Hard, 2013), 86. For the location of Blue Anchor Alley and Old Street, see figure 9.

62. See Palmer, *NM* 3: 291–94.

in 1668.⁶³ The only other sermon he published is a funeral sermon for Mrs. Mary Parry in 1683, in which he remarks in his preface that he has not “the itching humour of the scribbling age, nor any desire to appear in print.”⁶⁴ He did however compose a manuscript catechism⁶⁵ that is lost, which, along with his manuscript memoir, could have influenced, by example if not explicit mentorship, his wife’s decision to write a narrative of her own experience some years later.⁶⁶ This attitude toward print may have also influenced Mary Franklin to compose her own narrative in manuscript. Indeed, the shared world of this couple and their companionate marriage doubtless fostered Franklin’s young wife’s continued spiritual dedication and intellectual education.⁶⁷ Mary Franklin shared in her husband’s mission and his ministry. Their partnership prepared her for the trials and the triumphs that fill the pages of *The Notebook of Mary Franklin* and *The Experience of Mary Franklin*. Thus, the facts of his life that we have been able to garner from her narrative, as well as archival sources and contemporary accounts, bear reviewing.

63. Robert Franklin, Thomas Doolittle, Thomas Vincent, James Janeway, and Hugh Baker, *A True Relation of the Wicked Life, and Shameful-Happy Death of Thomas Savage, Imprisoned, Justly Condemned, and Twice Executed at Ratcliff, for His Bloody Facet in Killing His Fellow Servant. By Us Who Were Often with Him in the Time of His Imprisonment in Newgate, and at His Execution, to Which Is Annexed a Sermon Preached at His Funeral* (London, 1668).

64. Robert Franklin, *Death in Triumph Over the Most Desirable Ones as Presented in a Funeral Sermon at the Solemn Interment of a Dearly Beloved Wife, Mrs Mary Parry, July 25th, 1682 Whose Loss Was Much Lamented, But the Grief of Dear Relations Was Much Allayed by the Strong Desire and Comfortable Hopes of the Deceased Being with Christ* (London, 1683), “Preface,” n.p. Harold Love notes that when the ejected ministers were denied the pulpit, they often turned to writing tracts and freely distributed them; he further remarks that such writings often were circulated among “inward turned,” and even autonomous, “scribal reading circles.” Harold Love, *The Culture and Commerce of Texts: Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 182, 184.

65. A catechism is “an elementary treatise for instruction in the principles of the Christian religion, in the form of question and answer” (*OED*). Franklin’s catechism, according to Palmer, was titled *Two and Fifty Questions, for the Benefit of Little Children, to Prepare Them for the Use of the Assembly’s Catechism: Composed Principally for the Benefit of His Own Children, or for Others, If Thought Worthy: By a Lover of Truth and Holiness, and Desiring His Children to Be Trained Up in the Way They Should Go, That When They Are Old They May Not Depart from It*. NM 3:294.

66. Private reading and writing create models, pathways, or “excursions from purely domestic concerns” into political and community involvement according to Sylvia Brown, “The Approbation of Elizabeth Jocelin,” in *English Manuscript Studies, 1100–1700*, vol. 9, *Writing by Early Modern Women*, ed. Peter Beal and Margaret J. M. Ezell (London: British Library, 2000), 147.

67. On the Puritan “companionate marriage,” see Ulrike Tancke, “*Bethinke, Thy Selfe*” in *Early Modern England: Writing Women’s Identities* (New York: Rodopi, 2010), 175.

Robert Franklin was born on July 16, 1630, to unknown parents.⁶⁸ According to Palmer, Franklin wrote in his memoir that his mother was asked to be a wet nurse to Charles II. Noting that he might have been granted courtly preferment had his father not refused the offer, Franklin did not lament this loss: “I have been better preferred by the King of kings.”⁶⁹ The refusal of this invitation suggests that in 1630 his father was a Puritan, discontented with the policies and practices of Charles I. Robert Franklin’s declaration that he was better “preferred” by the King of kings reflected his perspective on the dangers of worldly security and suspicions of the promises of kings. There is little known about Franklin’s early years until, at eight years, young Robert was sent to Suffolk to live with his aunt, Mrs. Browning, and shortly after, he began to attend the grammar school at Woodbridge. He was taught writing and accounts in order to take up a London apprenticeship, but the schoolmaster’s belief in his academic ability led the young man to be trained under a different master, one who had “fitted many for University.”⁷⁰ Franklin was admitted to Jesus College as a sizar in March 1647,⁷¹ where his tutor was Samuel Bantoft (d. 1692), “whom in a little time he succeeded.” His career followed many paths, including preaching at Kirton, Suffolk, where he also set up a school for children of poorer congregations. Franklin then became minister for Lady Elizabeth Brooke of Cockfield Hall, Blythburg,⁷² but being uncertain of his future there, he settled his living as vicar at Westhall, Suffolk, on August 4, 1658.⁷³ Summarizing Franklin’s role as vicar, Palmer remarks, “He had the general love and esteem of the people, and was at great expense in repairing the parsonage, etc.

68. The *Surman Index Online* identifies two individuals as potential parents of Robert Franklin. The note reads: “May 10 1663, Mr. Francklyn of Rope Makers Alley a poore man died in the Hospital, Southwark; March 10, 1663/4 Mrs. Francklyn of Rope Makers alley died, a woman very free with her tongue” (*SIO*). There is no clear indication that these are his parents.

69. *NM* 3:291.

70. *NM* 3:291.

71. “Adm sizar at Jesus, Mar. 4, 1646–7... School, Woodbridge, Suffolk. Migrated to Queens.’ Matric 1647.” *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, Part I: *From the Earliest Times to 1751*, vol. 2, compiled by John Venn and J. A. Venn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 175.

72. “Lady Brooke was a zealous royalist... . But while conforming to the established church she approved the efforts of those who sought to include dissenters within the Anglican establishment.” Sara H. Mendelson, “Brooke [*née* Colepeper], Elizabeth, Lady Brooke (1602?–1683),” *ODNB*. For Franklin’s career, see *NM* 3:291–94, *CR*, 212; Alsager Vian, revised by Stephen Wright, “Franklin, Robert (1630–1703),” *ODNB*. Samuel Palmer’s *Nonconformist’s Memorial (NM)* includes biographical entries on the dissenting ministers in England after the Great Ejection. A. G. Matthews’s *Calamy Revised (CR)* revises these entries. Matthews’s entries include less personal history and rely more upon archival material. Palmer’s entry includes much information taken from the personal memoir of Robert Franklin that Matthews does not include. I refer to both because each author’s entry includes different information on Franklin. Calamy, Palmer, and Matthews spell Franklin as “Franklyn.”

73. *CR*, 212; *NM* 3:293.

which were very ruinous, and was settled (as he says) in a very comfortable and thriving condition.”⁷⁴

His considerable efforts at finding a living seemed to be over. But soon after came Black Bartholomew’s Day, of which Franklin writes, “I left my living, rather than defile my conscience by the then Conformity.”⁷⁵ Franklin is referring to the new conditions for conformity established by the Act of Uniformity. He thus moved on to become a private chaplain to the very wealthy Puritan Baronet, Sir Samuel Barnardiston (1620–1707).⁷⁶ But perhaps made anxious by Sir Samuel’s loyalty to the Court of Charles II, Franklin left after six months for London and began unlicensed preaching in Blue Anchor Alley, where, as noted above, he met his future wife. Edmund Calamy refers to Franklin as a “plain serious Preacher, of great Gravity and Integrity: And was never known to baulk any Thing that he thought himself call’d to do or suffer.”⁷⁷ And suffer he did. Robert Franklin was arrested within a year of his marriage to Mary “Smith.”⁷⁸ Mary Franklin plainly states, “The first year after we were married my husband was taken at Colnbrook for preaching, which was fifteen miles from London.”⁷⁹ This event, in essence, began the collection of *The Franklin Family Papers*. With her

74. NM 3:293.

75. NM 3:293.

76. Sir Samuel Barnardiston, Whig politician and deputy governor of the East India Company. “Barnardiston’s wealth eventually allowed him to purchase a large estate at Brightwell near Ipswich in Suffolk and to build an impressive house, Brightwell Hall, which remained a neighborhood fixture until it was pulled down in 1753.” A supporter of Charles II, “he had been rewarded by Charles II for his ‘irreproachable loyalty’ with a knighthood (1660) and subsequently a baronetcy (1663).” James S. Hart Jr., “Barnardiston, Sir Samuel (1620–1707),” *ODNB*. However, that “loyalty” seems to have shifted, since “In 1684, he was found guilty of libel for asserting in a series of private letters that the Whig conspiracy known as the Rye House Plot was a ‘sham plot staged by the government to discredit the exclusionists.’ Barnardiston refused to pay damages and was imprisoned until June 1688.” Zook, *Radical Whigs and Conspiratorial Politics in Late Stuart England* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 19. Robert Franklin’s tenure as Vicar allowed him a place in the volume, *Athenæ Suffolcienses*. See “Robert Franklin,” Add. MS. 19,165, fols. 267r–68v, *Athenæ Suffolcienses: Or, A Catalogue of Suffolk Authors; With Some Account of Their Lives and List of Their Writings*, vol. 1. On patronage for ejected ministers, see Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England*, 144.

77. Edmund Calamy, *A Continuation of the Account of the Ministers, Lecturers, Masters and Fellows of Colleges, and Schoolmasters, Who Were Ejected and Silenced After the Restoration in 1660*, 2:806. This now well-known phrasing appears to have been taken from Benjamin Grosvenor’s *The Dissolution of the Earthly House of this Tabernacle*, appendix 1, 289.

78. Mary Franklin’s maiden name is unknown. She refers to an “Uncle Smith” in both her letters and her narrative. From such evidence, it seems, the CR entry on Franklin refers to her as “Mary Smith.” CR, 212. Mary Franklin also refers to her “grandmother Martin” in her will, but again there is no sure indication what her maiden name was. *Last Will and Testament of Mary Franklin*, 166.

79. *Experience*, 137.

husband's imprisonment, Mary Franklin started writing and collecting the prison letters that were included in her "private papers."⁸⁰

The Franklins wrote letters back and forth from Aylesbury Gaol in Buckinghamshire to London in July and August 1670. Robert Franklin's stint in Aylesbury was just the beginning of nearly two decades (1670–1687) of arrests and imprisonments.⁸¹ Samuel Palmer writes that when he was released, "he was forced to appear at every session and give bail. Thus, he was almost perpetually harassed." Palmer further notes the power of Mary Franklin's account of this experience, giving "a more peculiar and shocking account of the baseness and cruelty of officers in breaking open their house, pulling down their goods, eating their provisions, and putting them in bodily fear."⁸² With the Declaration of Indulgence of 1672, Charles II granted more leniencies to the Nonconformists when he issued licenses that would allow ministers to preach to their flocks. Franklin promptly obtained a license as a Presbyterian minister and enjoyed some freedom.⁸³ But that licensure was short-lived. Not only was the Declaration of Indulgence rescinded, but also new "Test Acts" were instituted that required all subjects who would hold public office, civil or military (the first act) and all MPs (the second act), to take communion in the Church of England and swear allegiance to church and state.⁸⁴

The following decade was filled with fears of political plots; hence, persecution of Dissenters, like the Franklins, intensified. A so-called Popish Plot was discovered in 1678.⁸⁵ And even more dramatically, the Rye House Plot erupted in 1683. This plot by disgruntled opponents of the throne schemed to assassinate Charles II and his brother and heir James, Duke of York (1633–1701), as they returned home from the Newmarket horse races. The plot was discovered and

80. *Diary*, 175.

81. Franklin was "Much harassed till 1687." Alexander Gordon, ed., *Freedom after Ejection: A Review of Presbyterian and Congregational Nonconformity in England and Wales (1690–1692)* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1917), 267. See *The Prison Correspondence of Mary and Robert Franklin*, 153–62.

82. NM 3: 294; recent histories of Dissent also remark upon the exceptional degree of harassment that the Franklins experienced. See Raymond Brown, *Spirituality in Adversity: English Nonconformity in a Period of Repression, 1660–1689* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2012), 37–38, 69.

83. On April 11, 1672, Franklin was granted licensure for a room adjoining to "his house, Blue Anchor Alley, Whitecross St." F. H. Blackburne Daniell, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, December 1671 to May 17th 1672* (London, 1897), 306, 308. For the location of Whitecross Street, see figure 9.

84. "Under pressure from Parliament, Charles ... rescinded the Declaration of Indulgence in March 1673; The Test Act passed by Parliament further required that all office-holders receive Anglican Communion, swear allegiance to the King and affirm the King as the head of the Church of England." Ezell, *The Oxford English Literary History*, 253.

85. In 1678, Titus Oates stirred up panic among Parliament and the public, proclaiming a Catholic conspiracy to assassinate Charles II and to overturn the Protestant establishment. See John Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (Phoenix, NY: Phoenix Press, 2001).