'An Honourable estate': A study of marriage in an elite family network, 1660-1753.

Laura Charles

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Nottingham Trent University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In collaboration with the Midlands 4 Cities Doctoral Training Partnership

September 2021

Copyright Statement

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisors Professor Martyn Bennett, Dr John McCallum and Lizbeth Powell for their guidance, encouragement, and unerring support throughout the past four years.

Midlands 4 Cities for funding this project, providing me with the resources to undertake my research and giving me the opportunity to present my findings in conferences around the country and overseas.

To my friends who have been with me every step of this journey, there to lend an ear when needed, helping me through this sometimes rocky path with humour and love.

Finally, to my family for supporting me throughout this experience, especially when life threw up hurdles as it so often does. You have been my source of strength and confidence, always ready to listen and advise. I could not have got this far without you.

Abstract

This project investigates the ideals and experience of elite marriage in early modern Britain through a detailed examination of a select network of individuals connected via the Cavendish family. Whilst certain individuals in the Cavendish family have received a great deal of scholarly attention for their personal accomplishments, the marriage practices of the family remain largely unexplored. This thesis utilises the wealth of primary source material pertaining to the marriages of the family, contending that their matches were also of great importance on a national stage, linking many of the most important families of the period. As such, this study utilises a network approach, allowing for an exploration of the importance and endurance of ties made through elite marriage, as well as identifying themes, challenges, and behaviours particular to the peerage as a group.

Prescriptive literature of the period pertaining to marriage and the family is examined, drawing on theories from the field of the history of emotions to uncover emotional standards in addition to ideals of behaviour. This is examined in conjunction with personal source material of the Cavendish family network to determine how far such ideals were reflective of, or impacted the lives of elite individuals, finding that the contradictions of marital duties as espoused by authors were similarly faced in lived experience. The experience of marriage for the individuals within this network is charted throughout its life-cycle, from the arrangement of matches through to widowhood and potential remarriage, emphasising the importance and endurance of familial involvement throughout all stages. Overall, this thesis contends that the experience of early modern elite marriage was neither entirely governed by practical considerations nor sentiment, instead arguing for an interdependency and interweaving between the two.

Terms and Conventions

Names: As many of the individuals within this study entered into more than one marriage, the women in this study are referred to mostly by their maiden names. However, on occasions where a woman was known by her married name for most of her life, this name is utilised.

Palaeographic conventions: Within this study primary sources have been transcribed verbatim with occasional silent modernisation of spelling where required for improved legibility. Contemporary abbreviations have been employed as they appear in the original text, such as Lo^{p} for Lordship. Superscript text is conveyed through use of ^, and strikethroughs are used for text which is still visible but has been crossed out.

Abbreviations

BL	British Library
NA	Nottinghamshire Archives
NRS	National Records of Scotland
UNMASC	University of Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Timeline of Key Events

n. d	Marriage of William Pierrepont (1) to Elizabeth Harris (1)
1618	Marriage of William Cavendish (1) to Elizbeth Bassett (1)
1620	William Cavendish created Viscount Mansfield
1628	William Cavendish created Earl of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
1641	Marriage of Elizabeth Cavendish (1) to John Egerton, 2nd Earl of Bridgewater (1)
c. 1644- 1660	Exile of William Cavendish
1645	Marriage of William Cavendish (2) to Margaret Lucas (1)
1652	Marriage of Henry Cavendish (1) to Frances Pierrepont (1)
1654	Marriage of Frances Cavendish (1) to Oliver St. John, 2nd Earl of Bolingbroke (1)
1654	Marriage of Jane Cavendish (1) to Charles Cheyne (1)
c. 1654-1659	Marriage of Charles Cavendish (1) to Elizabeth Rogers (1)
1657	Marriage of Earl of Breadalbane and Holland (1) to Mary Rich (1)
1659	Death of Charles Cavendish, eldest son of William, thus leaving Henry as sole heir.
1665	William Cavendish created Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
1669?	Marriage of Elizabeth Cavendish (1) to Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle (1)
1676	Death of William Cavendish, passing of the title of Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne to son Henry
1678	Marriage of Earl of Breadalbane and Holland (2) to Mary Caithness (2)
1679	Marriage of Henry Cavendish (1) to Elizabeth Percy (1)
1680	Death of Henry Cavendish, son to 2nd Duke of Newcastle
1681	Marriage of Elizabeth Percy (2) and Thomas Thynne (1)
1682	Marriage of Elizabeth Percy (3) and Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset (1)

1684 Marriage of Katherine Cavendish (1) to Thomas Tufton, Earl of Thanet (1)

1685 Marriage of Frances Cavendish (1) to John Campbell (1)

1688 Death of Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle

1690 Death of Frances Campbell, nee Cavendish

1690 Marriage of Margaret Cavendish (1) to John Holles (1)

1692 Marriage of Elizabeth Cavendish (2) to Ralph Montagu (2)

1695 Marriage of Arabella Cavendish (1) to Charles Spencer (1)

1695 Marriage of John Campbell (2) to Harriet Villiers (1)

1698 Death of Arabella Cavendish

1700 Marriage of Charles Spencer (2) to Lady Anne Churchill (1)

1709 Death of Ralph Montagu

1709 Lunacy and guardianship of Elizabeth Cavendish

1711 Death of John Holles

1713 Marriage of Henrietta Holles (1) to Edward Harley (1)

1716 Marriage of Charles Spencer (3) to Judith Tichbourne (1)

1725 Marriage of Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset (2) to Charlotte Finch (1)

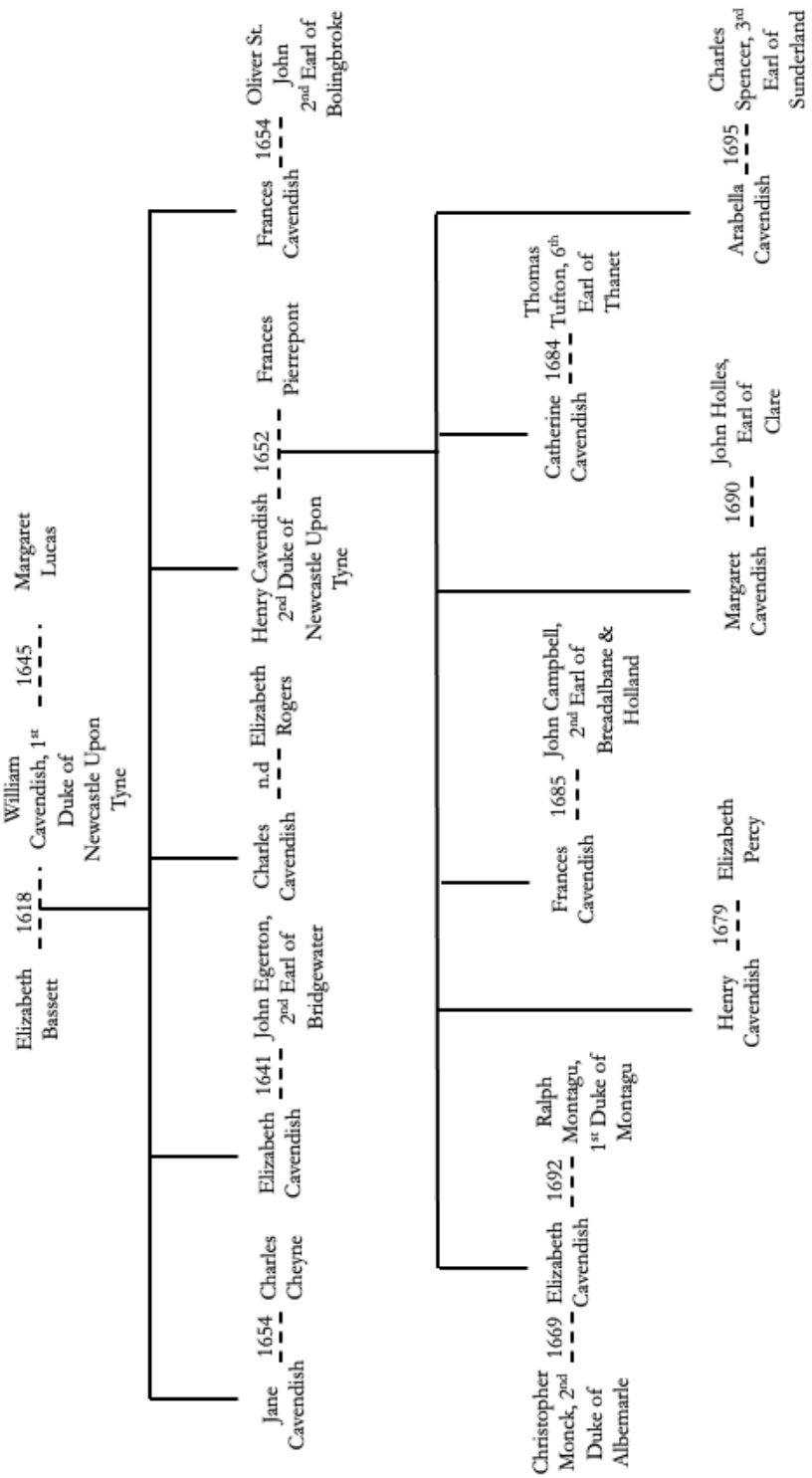
Key

(1) = 1st marriage

(2) = 2nd marriage

(3) = 3rd marriage

Cavendish Family Tree



Contents

Acknowledgements iii

Abstract iv

Terms and Conventions v

Timeline of Key Events vi

Cavendish Family Tree viii

Introduction **1**
Literature Review 4
Elite case studies 20
The Cavendish family 23
An elite network approach 28
Research Parameters 35
Sources 39
Chapter Outline 44

Chapter One
'Love, Honour and Obey': Ideals of Early Modern Marriage **47**
Authorship 50
Readership 54
Gendered ideals 57
Marital duties 61
- Love 62
- Honour 70
- Obey 76

Conclusions 83

Chapter Two
'A Hopeful Prospect': Making matches **85**
Motivations for elite marriage 87
Individual agency and parental authority in marriage arrangements 91
Discord in marriage arrangements 105
Gendered roles in making matches 121
Role of others in arranging matches 127
Conclusions 130

Chapter Three
'A differing scene': Lived Experience of Elite Early Modern Marriage **138**
Forging marital connections 141
Responsibilities of elite marriage 145
Childbirth 151
Maintaining and expressing marital love 160
Causes of marital conflict 168
Managing conflict: Individual and network approaches 174
Extra-Marital Sex 183
Conclusions 188

Chapter Four
'As free as they who were never before married': Death, Grief and Remarriage **193**
Public mourning 196
"Private" grief 202
Widowhood 208
A contested will: the widow's role 212
Remarriage: Contemporary concerns 222
Agency in remarriage 226
Motivations for remarriage 233
Wealthy widows and fortune hunters 240
Those who never remarried 246
Conclusions 248

Conclusion 253

Bibliography 265

Appendices 287

Introduction

'Holy Matrimony, which is an honourable Estate'.[1]

Marriage was a major milestone in the lives of most adults during the early modern period, signifying a new role as husband or wife, bringing with it new responsibilities and expectations. Entering into marriage was also a long-term decision that was difficult to unravel once set in place. Prior to the Divorce Act of 1857, it was relatively rare for couples to formally separate.[2] As such marriage was, as David Cressy has stated, 'a permanent commitment with no turning back'.[3] This thesis will investigate the ideals and experience of elite marriage in early modern Britain through a detailed examination of a select network of individuals connected via the Cavendish family, exploring the social and emotional aspects of the entire life cycle of marriage.

The importance of the identified network links will be emphasised throughout this study, from their role in arranging matches, to navigating conflict and providing support in times of difficulty during marriage. By focusing on a selected network this thesis will examine in detail the various stages throughout the life cycle of marriage, providing a fuller understanding of the ways in which elite individuals and their families navigated and approached each phase. This approach additionally allows for an exploration of the importance and endurance of ties made through elite marriage connections, finding that these links were maintained and utilised by individuals for both practical and emotional support. This network is also viewed through the framework of emotional communities, allowing for an exploration of which emotions were valued and devalued within this

[1] 'The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony' in *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Church of England* (Cambridge: 1662).
[2] Lawrence Stone, *Broken Lives: Separation and Divorce in England, 1660-1857* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993), p. 11.
[3] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death, Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), p. 289.

particular group, and how these were expressed to one another.[4] A focus on a selected number of individuals within the peerage also addresses a gap within the existing literature regarding the use of case studies to examine marriage practices, thus providing a useful contribution to the field.

The role of parents, family members, and friends within marriage is also explored. This involvement is shown to be particularly present during the arrangement of matches, however, it is argued that the relative agency of individuals to make their own choice was dependent on several different factors, such as age and situation. Whilst it will be shown that there was indeed potential for conflict, especially in the face of differing motivations, it is argued that there was largely a wish for accord between the individual and their family in arranging matches. The ways in which the roles of men and women differed within marriage arrangements is also examined, finding that there were gendered ideals regarding the nature of their involvement, leading to censure when these were flouted. The role of family members throughout the life cycle of marriage is similarly explored, building on suggestions by scholars such as Elizabeth Foyster and Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos who have highlighted their continued involvement.[5] The nature of the support provided is shown to have been neither wholly sentimental nor practical in nature, with these motivations instead interweaved closely together.

Through an analysis of both prescriptive literature and personal source material pertaining to the Cavendish family network, this study will examine the ideals of the period in conjunction with lived experience, assessing points of similarity and contention between the two. Whilst it is found that these ideals are not necessarily representative of the experience of most individuals, many of the themes and concerns highlighted within marriage advice are also seen within personal source

---

[4] Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Cornell University Press: New York, 2006).
[5] Elizabeth Foyster, 'Parenting Was for Life, Not just for Childhood: The Roles of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England', *History*, Vol. 86, No. 283, (July 2001), pp. 313-327; Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, 'Reciprocal Bonding: Parents and their offspring in Early Modern England', *Journal of Family History*, (July 2000), pp. 291-312.

material. Furthermore, it will be argued that the contradictions found within much of the advice literature at this time regarding the ideals of marriage, which was described as both patriarchal and companionate in nature, were also present within the experiences of the identified elite network. Occasions on which individuals strayed from the prescribed standards of the period are explored within this study, finding that such behaviour often led to censure and conflict, not only between the couple themselves but also their wider family. In particular, discord is found to have occurred when individuals acted outside of the patriarchal ideals of the period. The lack of long-term repercussions, however, is argued to suggest that adherence to such ideals was not absolute, indicating both the limitations of patriarchal authority as well as the potential for flexibility when other factors were deemed of greater importance.

This study also draws on methodologies and frameworks from the history of emotions to uncover the emotional landscape of early modern marriage. Through close reading of both prescriptive literature and personal source material, the extent to which idealised 'emotional standards' were displayed within lived experience is explored.[6] In particular, the importance attributed to happiness within marriage is examined, finding that this was also heavily represented within both the arrangement of matches as well as during the life-cycle of marriage. Personal correspondence is also utilised to uncover how elite individuals understood and expressed these emotional ideals in order to achieve their own aims throughout the life cycle of marriage, thus drawing on theories of performativity.

Overall, this study contends that the experience of elite marriage during this time had the potential to be more complicated and emotionally involved than previously appreciated, not only for the individuals themselves but also for their wider family. Far from representing opposing binaries, it

[6] See: Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 90, No.4 (Oct., 1985), pp. 813-836.

will be argued that practical and sentimental concerns were often inextricably linked for elite individuals and their families throughout the life cycle of marriage.

Literature Review

Marriage

Early historiography of marriage was largely focused on change, and the supposed upwards trajectory towards the affectionate ideal as seen in the modern era. One of the first influential texts to examine marriage as a topic in its own right was Lawrence Stone's, *Family, Sex and Marriage*.[7] A key argument within this text was the rise of the companionate marriage, which Stone suggested went hand in hand with the rise of the nuclear family. He argued that during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, real affection between husband and wife was rare at all levels of society, and that marriage was 'a structure held together not by affective bonds but by mutual economic interests'.[8] From the late seventeenth century onwards, Stone suggested that there was a trend towards what he termed 'affective individualism', leading to greater freedom of choice and more equal and affectionate relationships between spouses.[9] This transformation, he argued, happened principally among the upper bourgeoisie and the squirarchy, later spreading down to the working class and up towards the aristocracy.[10] A year prior to the publication of Stone's text, Edward Shorter similarly argued for what he termed the 'surge of sentiment' in changing the character of marriage.[11] Examining the 'popular classes' in France, Shorter suggested that this change occurred in the nineteenth century, much later than the timeline proposed by Stone.[12] John Gillis also suggests a

[7] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Penguin Books: England, 1977).
[8] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 88.
[9] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 149.
[10] Stone, *Family Sex and Marriage,* p. 408.
[11] Edward Shorter, *The Making of the modern Family* (Collins: London, 1976), p. 5.
[12] Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family,* pp. 205-255.

later period of change, arguing that the ideal of the companionate marriage did not reach what he terms the upper classes until the Industrial Revolution, and that the conjugal was more an 'illusive dream than an attainable reality'.[13] Randolph Trumbach, whilst similarly charting a move towards affective marriages, provides an earlier timeline of progress, suggesting that the court aristocracy were already exhibiting signs of this change by 1750.[14] Stone's proposed timeline has also been called into question by Keith Wrightson, who argues that the companionate marriage was not a new phenomenon of the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but was already well established.[15]

The overall claim of a lack of affection in early modern marriage has been highly contested by multiple scholars. In particular the proposition that real affection in marriage did not emerge until the eighteenth century has been disputed. Alan Macfarlane, for example, suggested that Stone's committal to this idea may have led to him brushing aside or misinterpreting evidence to the contrary.[16] In his own text Macfarlane placed love at the centre of pre-industrial marriage in England, emphasising individualism and freedom of choice in marriage partner.[17] Amanda Vickery has also cast doubt on Stone's proposed timeline of change, stating that 'the seventeenth century family was not so uniformly cold-blooded' nor was the eighteenth century so 'universally romantic' as he suggested.[18] She instead proposes that evidence from letters and diaries testifies to the 'long-standing expression of love within marriage'.[19] The use of personal correspondence in exploring marital affection has been highlighted by Sara Mendelson, who argues that an examination of letters and biographies reveals that romantic love may have been more common than previously thought

---

[13] John Gillis, *For Better, For Worse: British Marriage, 1600 to the Present* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1985), pp. 4-5.
[14] Randolph Trumbach, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic kinship and domestic relations in Eighteenth Century England* (Academic Press: New York, 1978).
[15] Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (Routledge: Oxon, 2003), p. 112.
[16] Alan Macfarlane, 'Reviewed Work: The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800 by Lawrence Stone', *History and Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (Feb., 1979), p. 113.
[17] Alan MacFarlane, *Marriage and Love in England 1300-1840* (Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, 1986), p. 129.
[18] Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (Yale University Press: London, 1999), p. 40.
[19] Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter,* p. 60.

from merely studying parental attitudes and priorities.[20] Katie Barclay has similarly utilised correspondence in her study of Scottish couples during this period, examining the use of terms of endearment in spousal letters as evidence for intimacy in marriage.[21] Scholars have also turned to other sources as evidence for depth of feeling in marriage, such as Anthony Fletcher, who has examined memorials of the period, suggesting that they are one of the 'most telling representations of loving marriage at this time'.[22] Both personal correspondence and memorials are examined within this thesis in order to explore the presence and performance of love and affection in elite marriage.

However, not all scholars have focused on the affectionate nature of early modern marriage, with many examining what Joanne Bailey terms more 'pessimistic' aspects.[23] Some earlier scholars have emphasised the double standard of marriage during this period, building on Keith Thomas's influential argument that 'unchastity' was deemed a much greater offense for women than men.[24] Miriam Slater, for example, in her examination of the marriage practices of the Verney family, highlights both the opportunities for, and tolerance of, male infidelity with household staff.[25] There has also been much work on marital violence, with many scholars emphasising its commonality and general acceptance within society.[26] Bailey has examined these seemingly conflicting interpretations of marriage at this time, suggesting that both the optimistic and pessimistic views are explicable. She

---

[20] Sara Mendelson, 'Debate: The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper-Gentry Family in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present,* Issue 85, (November 1979), pp. 127-8.
[21] Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2011), p. 105. See also: MacFarlane, *Marriage and Love in England;* J.A Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550-1760* (London, 1993), p. 55.
[22] Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1995), p. 162.
[23] Joanne Bailey, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660-1800* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003), p. 8.
[24] Keith Thomas, 'The Double Standard', *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 20, No. 2 (Apr., 1959), p. 195.
[25] Miriam Slater, 'The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper-Gentry Family in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present,* No.72 (Aug., 1976), pp. 25-54.
[26] Susan Dwyer Amussen, ' "Being stirred to much unquietness": Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England', *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 6, No. 2, (Summer 1994), pp. 70-89; Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998); Elizabeth Foyster, 'Male honour, Social Control and Wife Beating in Late Stuart England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol. 6 (Jan 1996), pp. 215-224.

argues that the opposing viewpoints are reflective of the culture of the time, which on one hand 'promoted an idealised view of harmonious relations between spouses', while also 'simultaneously demanding female subjection'.[27] The conflict between these ideals is also found within much of the conduct literature of the period, as will be discussed further in Chapter One.

Debates regarding the proposed rise of 'affective individualism' are closely linked with questions surrounding the agency of those to be married to make their own choice. Earlier historians such as Stone suggested that marriages were largely arranged by family members, with little to no consultation with the couple themselves.[28] Slater has similarly highlighted the importance of arranged marriages within the Verney family, outlining how gentry families such as theirs were able to utilise these matches in order to further their own prospects.[29] In contrast to this is the work of Macfarlane, who suggests that the choice of partner was not dictated by kin or family, instead arguing for the prevalence of individualism within the marriage system.[30] Further assessments have questioned the value of drawing a dichotomy between individual and family choice, such as Diana O'Hara, who argues that such an approach is an unhelpful and oversimplistic method for examining agency in marriage.[31] Richard Adair's work bridges the gap between these two extremes of scholarly thought, emphasising the importance attributed to the agreement between parent and child within conduct literature of the period.[32] This thesis examines personal correspondence regarding the arrangement of matches in order to examine who was in control of the marriage decision, as well as what happened if parental or familial authority was challenged. It will be shown that agreement between all parties, as set out by Adair, was indeed of great importance within the Cavendish family

---

[27] Bailey, *Unquiet Lives,* p. 9.
[28] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 88.
[29] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', p. 54.
[30] Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love,* p. 129.
[31] Diana O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraints: Rethinking the making of marriage in Tudor England* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2000), p. 237.
[32] Richard Adair, *Courtship, Illegitimacy, and Marriage in Early Modern England* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1996), p. 135.

network matches. Furthermore, it is argued that the agency of those to be married was conditional, shaped by factors such as age, notably whether they were minors, position, gender, previous marital state, and birth order.

Also widely discussed with reference to early modern marriage is the nature and extent of the influence of patriarchal systems on marital relationships. As with affection in marriage, Stone outlined a change across the period, arguing that 'there was a trend towards greater patriarchy in husband-wife relations', which accompanied both the increasing importance attributed to the conjugal family and the decline in kin influence.[33] He suggested that the state and church actively reinforced traditional patriarchy during this time, resulting in increased power of husbands and fathers over their wives and children. More recently Allyson Poska has similarly emphasised the 'univocal' articulation from both secular and religious authorities of the importance of gendered behaviour within marriage.[34] An increased importance attached to patriarchal authority during this period at first glance appears at odds with arguments emphasising the rise of the companionate marriage. This dichotomy has been addressed by Mendelson and Crawford, who argue that 'in society at large, an affectionate but hierarchical relationship was the dominant ideal'.[35] It has also been suggested that contemporaries saw little discrepancy in these two values, with Fletcher highlighting that the ideal as portrayed within conduct literature was that of a patriarchal household tempered with love.[36] The reach of such ideals in lived experience, however, has been questioned. Fletcher, for example, argues that between 1500 and 1800 the patriarchal system was under pressure,

[33] Stone, *Family, Sex and marriage,* p. 137.
[34] Allyson M. Poska 'Upending Patriarchy: Rethinking Marriage and Family in Early modern Europe' in Allyson M. Poska, Jane Couchman and Katherine A. McIver (eds.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Routledge: Oxon, 2016), p. 195.
[35] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 132. Stone also suggested that these ideals worked in conjunction with each other, stating that 'the enhancement of the importance of the conjugal family' was complemented by the authority of the husband and father', See Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 109.
[36] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination,* p. 112.

suggesting that men were facing the issue of how they could secure patriarchy more securely.[37] Other scholars have also questioned the extent to which patriarchal authority was practiced in lived experience. Wrightson contends that whilst there was a 'theoretical adherence' of male authority and female subjection in public, this was softened to a more 'companionate and complementary ethos' in private.[38] Whilst studies such as these have made broad statements regarding the extent of patriarchal rule in early modern marriage, there is a need for a more detailed exploration of specific relationships and networks to enable a fuller understanding of how this softening and compromise worked in lived experience. This thesis interrogates personal correspondence in conjunction with an examination of the advice found within conduct literature to assess such claims, finding that whilst individuals within the Cavendish family network were able to push the limits of patriarchal authority on occasion, this was met with censure from others. Nevertheless, this disapproval did not often result in harsh or long-term consequences, suggesting that patriarchal headship was limited in reach, with other factors, such as public reputation or working together to secure an advantageous match, often deemed of more importance.

Family

This study also examines family and kinship connections in the early modern period, building on suggestions that for property owning families, marriage was a collective decision, involving others than just the couple themselves.[39] This was especially pertinent during marriage arrangements, where family members and extended kin were involved in complex and often emotionally charged

[37] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination*, p. xix.
[38] Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680,* p. 92.
[39] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 70, 65; Diana O'Hara, 'Ruled by my friends': aspects of marriage in the diocese of Canterbury, c. 1540-1570, *Continuity and Change*, Vol.6, No.1, (1999), pp. 9-41; Peter Rushton, 'Property, Power and Family Networks: The Problem of Disputed Marriage in Early Modern England', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 11, No.3, (1986), pp. 205-219.

discussions regarding dowries, settlements, and contracts in order to secure a match. The term 'family' itself is plagued with issues regarding definition and scope, with Rosemary O'Day warning of the dangers of conflating the family with the household, highlighting how for many the household was made up of multiple individuals who were not blood relatives.[40] More recently, methods from the history of emotions have offered an updated framework through which to understand family and household.[41] One of the issues this approach resolves is the question of who to include in a study, shifting the focus to the connections between individuals as opposed to merely where they reside.[42] Such an approach is of utility for this thesis as it allows for an analysis of not only individuals who lived in the same household, but extended family and network links created by marriage.

As with the topic of marriage, much of the debate regarding the early modern family is focused on the extent to which it could be considered "affective". Earlier suggestions from Shorter and Stone argue that there was little familial affection during this period, citing high infant mortality rates for parental indifference towards their children.[43] Slater, in her examination of the Verney family matches, similarly contends that family solidarity during this period was 'not necessarily based on love and affection, but rather on need'.[44] Further assessments, however, have highlighted the potential for more affective parent-child relationships. Macfarlane, for example, in his analysis of the diary of clergyman Ralph Josselin, found evidence of caring relationships between parent and child, emphasising the close bonds between them, even following marriage.[45] Linda Pollock has also criticised earlier assessments of childhood, suggesting that an overreliance on secondary material

[40] Rosemary O'Day, *The Family and Family Relationships, 1500-1900* (Macmillan Press Ltd, London: 1994), pp. 25-29.
[41] Joanne Begiato, 'Family and Household', in Amanda Flather (ed.) *A Cultural History of the Home in the Renaissance, Volume 3* (Bloomsbury Academic, London: 2021), pp. 35-58.
[42] Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Emotions in the Household 1200-1900* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2008), p.1.
[43] Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family*, p. 172; Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 88.
[44] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', p. 26.
[45] Alan Macfarlane, *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin, A Seventeenth Century Clergyman: An essay in Historical Anthropology* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1970), pp. 105-126.

resulted in an overly pessimistic 'myth'. Through examination of primary sources she has instead emphasised the existence of instances of positive parent- child relationships.[46] Wrightston has similarly outlined the utility of personal source material in the form of diaries, highlighting instances of parental anxiety for the 'physical, material and moral wellbeing of children'.[47] Subsequent scholars have also examined the nature of other family bonds, such as siblings, fathers and daughters, and step relations, emphasising their importance.[48] Such work informs this study, which, through in-depth analysis of personal source material, will explore the significance of these different familial bonds both in arranging matches and during the life cycle of marriage. This thesis also considers occasions when these bonds were tested, such as illness, conflict, or financial troubles, terming these "flash points". It will be argued that it was during these points that familial involvement in marriage was most present, providing both emotional and practical support. This support will be shown to have been deemed necessary not only for the good of the couple themselves, but also to those providing assistance, with the relative success of a match being of importance to the family as a whole.

In contrast to earlier suggestions, which argued for a model of change towards the nuclear family, subsequent assessments have emphasised the endurance of kinship ties during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[49] It has also been highlighted that at this time marriage was often a collective decision going beyond just the immediate family structure. Broadly speaking, kin

---

[46] Linda A. Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1983).
[47] Wrightson, *English Society,* pp. 117-119.
[48] Joanne Bailey, 'Paternal Power: the pleasures and perils of 'indulgent' fathering in Britain in the long eighteenth century', *The History of the Family,* Vol. 17, No. 3, (August 2012), pp. 326-342; Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh (eds.), *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World: Sisters, Brothers and Others* (Routledge: Oxon, 2016); Bernard Capp, *The Ties that Bind: Siblings, Family, and Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018); Lyndan Warner, 'Stepfamilies in Early Modern Europe: Paths of Historical Inquiry', *History Compass,* Vol. 14, Issue 10, (October 2010), pp. 480-492.
[49] See Stone, *Family, Sex and marriage,* pp. 93-105; David Cressy, 'Kinship and interaction in Early Modern England', *Past and Present,* Vol. 113, Issue 1 (Nov, 1986), pp. 38-69; Richard Grassby, 'Love, property and Kinship: The Courtship of Philip Williams, Levant Merchant, 1617-50', *The English Historical Review,* Vol.113, No.451 (Apr. 1998), pp. 335-350.

can be defined as 'persons related by blood or marriage', including individuals who may not be considered close relatives.[50] This definition has also been further broken down within the field of anthropology into sub-groups of kin 'by- blood', kin through law or custom, and kin created through ceremony.[51] More recent assessments have classified these subgroups not simply by their legal or genetic link to the person, but on the relationship formed between the two individuals. Will Coster suggests that those whose kinship links are 'acknowledged and known by an individual', constitute a 'recognised' group of kin. Found within this group is a smaller circle who share a practical relationship with the individual, classified as those who are 'affective'. The final group of 'intimate kin' are those who share interests, resources, and daily life with the individual.[52] Within this study, kin is taken largely to mean those connected by blood or marriage, but who are distinguishable from immediate family such as siblings, parents, and grandparents.

As well as traditional kin, others have also been identified who were involved in the marriages of elite couples, whom can be loosely termed "friends". Often these friends are named as such within personal correspondence, but care must be taken regarding this terminology. Earlier definitions of friends during this period focused on their practical role, with Stone highlighting how it often denoted 'someone who could help you on in life'.[53] More recent definitions, however, suggest that the role of friend was more multi-faceted than previously thought, such as Naomi Tadmor, who argues that the term had a 'plurality of meanings', ranging from practical to sentimental.[54] Within this study, the term is used to denote those individuals who do not neatly fit into the category of either family or kin. The role of both kin members and family friends will be

[50] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 28.
[51] Will Coster, *Family and Kinship in England, 1450-1800* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), p. 40.
[52] Coster, *Family and Kinship in England,* p. 41.
[53] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 78.
[54] Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth- Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2004), p. 167.

examined within this thesis with regards to their involvement throughout the married lives of couples, exploring the nature of the support they offered as well as the motivations behind this.

Emotions

This thesis will draw on and add to the growing conversation regarding the history of emotions, which has developed as a field of dedicated study in recent decades.[55] The study of marriage in particular has, as suggested by Barclay, long recognised the important role played by emotions.[56] However, through interaction with the specific tools and methodologies within the field of the history of emotions there is much to be gained. Rob Boddice, in his recent overview of the field, has highlighted the importance of studying emotions, describing them as both 'the effects of historical circumstances and a cause of their change'.[57] For the study of marriage in particular, the use of emotions as a framework of analysis allows for an examination of the feelings involved and expressed, both by individuals and within prescriptive literature. The following approaches discussed are of importance within the field, and will also inform the way in which the sources examined in this thesis are analysed.

The modern study of emotions is considered to have been launched in 1985 by Peter and Carol Stearns. Arguing that basic emotions across time remained largely unchanged, they recommended an examination of the standards of a society towards those emotions, which they suggested were more subject to variation. They proposed the study of 'emotionology', a term

---

[55] For early historians examining emotions as a category of analysis see: Norbert Elias, *The Civilising Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations,* Eric Dunning, Johan Goudsblom, and Stephen Mennell (eds.), trans. Edward Jephcott, (Blackwell Rev: Oxford, 2000); Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages,* trans. Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch (Chicago University Press: Chicago, 1997); Lucien Febvre, 'La Sensibilitié et l'histoire: Comment reconstiuer la vie affective d'autrefois?', *Annales d'histoire sociale,* Vol. 3, Issue 1-2, (June, 1941), pp. 5-20; Translated copy at: Lucien Febvre, 'Sensibility and History: How to Reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past', in Peter Burke (ed.) K. Folca (trans.) *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre* (Harper & Row: New York, 1973), pp. 12-26.

[56] Katie Barclay, 'Marriage', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), p. 218.

[57] Rob Boddice, *The History of emotions* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2018), p. 27.

referring to a society's attitudes towards the expression of emotions and the standards that were expected to be adhered to. In order to uncover these emotional norms they utilised advice literature, suggesting that these standards were a modern phenomenon.[58] These parameters have been questioned by Barbara Rosenwein, who suggests that this serves to exclude the study of emotions in earlier time periods.[59] Further work by Peter Stearns, however, highlights the longevity of emotional standards in prescriptive literature, pointing to the existence of texts such as 'manners books' dating back to the Renaissance.[60] As such this thesis utilises the framework of emotionology nonetheless, contending that pre-modern conduct literature is similarly illuminating of the emotional standards of a society. Despite a main focus on marriage or the family, the prescriptive texts utilised in this study often refer to emotions, and how these were to be performed. As such, they shed light on the emotional standards and ideals of both those writing them and their intended audience, thus warranting their utility within this thesis.

Another key concept within this field is that of 'emotives', first posited by William Reddy in 1997.[61] Arguing against theories of constructionism, Reddy proposed a different agent of change, placing the emphasis on the emotions themselves. Drawing on speech act theory, Reddy suggests that emotive words or phrases are influenced directly by, and alter, what they "refer" to.[62] He argues that such statements are neither entirely descriptive nor performative, but instead represent an 'effort by the speaker to offer an interpretation of something that is observable to no other actor'.[63] A criticism of Reddy's theory is that it serves to 'privilege words over other forms of emotional

[58] Stearns and Stearns, 'Emotionology', pp. 813-836.
[59] Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No.3 (June 2002), p. 825.
[60] Peter N. Stearns, 'Prescriptive literature', in Katie Barclay, Sharon Crozier-de Rosa and Peter N. Stearns (eds.), *Sources for the History of Emotions: A Guide* (Routledge: Oxon, 2011), p. 54.
[61] William Reddy, 'Against Constructivism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions', *Current Anthropology,* Vol. 38, No.3 (June 1997), pp. 327-351.
[62] William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A framework for the history of emotions* (Cambridge University Press: 2001), p. 104.
[63] Reddy, 'Against Constructivism', p. 331.

behaviour', thereby causing scholars to rely heavily on elite texts for evidence.[64] Nevertheless, the utility of emotives in approaching the history of emotions has been demonstrated by its widespread application among scholars, although it has been noted that this is often in a diminished form simply denoting "emotion words".[65] This thesis suggests that certain aspects of the language utilised within correspondence between couples and from other individuals function as 'emotive' terms. The use of terms of affection, for example, act as utterances, describing the relationship between the couple as well as inducing an expectation of those emotions for both writer and addressee. Throughout this study such terms are used as guideposts within both personal source material and published literature, exploring how individuals displayed emotions, as well as the effect these utterances had or were expected to have on those to whom they were addressed.

A further key framework within this field is that of "emotional communities", a term coined by Rosenwein to denote 'groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions'.[66] Such groups are not subject to the same restrictions as Stearns' emotionology in terms of time period, as they do not require the use of modern advice books but can be garnered from other sources, with Rosenwein herself utilising funerary inscriptions and epitaphs. Emotional communities can inhabit physical spaces, such as a household, town, or country, but also can work outside of these constraints, such as within epistolary networks. Furthermore, Rosenwein posited that individuals could be part of multiple overlapping emotional communities, in which they adhered to differing emotional standards.[67] Whilst originally applied to Rosenwein's own medieval research, the fluid nature of this framework

[64] Rosenwein, 'Reviewed Work: The Navigation of Feeling: A framework for the History of Emotions William M. Reddy', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No.4 (October 2002), pp. 1181-1182; Tania M. Colwell, 'Emotives and Emotional Regimes', in Susan Broomhall (ed.) *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, p. 8.
[65] Colwell, 'Emotives and Emotional Regimes', p. 9; See also: Katie Barclay, *The History of Emotions: A Student Guide to Methods and Sources* (Macmillan Education Limited: UK, 2020), pp. 17-35 for her chapter on 'Emotion Words'.
[66] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities,* p. 2.
[67] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, p. 2.

is also particularly useful for the study of early modern marriage, allowing for an examination of differing emotional standards within the overlapping networks of family, kin, and others who were of importance to married couples. This study considers both the wider group of the peerage as a whole, and the smaller identified familial networks, as types of emotional communities, suggesting that they had their own ideals and prescriptions for emotional expression.

Often discussed in conjunction with Rosenwein's "emotional communities" are the "emotional regimes" posited by Reddy, which he defines as 'the set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and emotives that express and inculcate them'.[68] In contrast to emotional communities, Reddy's concept is more focused on the ways in which the emotional styles within a group are subject to control, suggesting that when these styles are enforced through penalties such as 'gossip, exclusion, or demotion', that they can then be considered "emotional regimes".[69] It is demonstrated in this thesis that when individuals acted outside of the accepted emotional styles this did indeed garner criticism, however, it will be shown that such behaviour was rarely met with more than short-term disapproval, with few long-term penalties such as exclusion enforced. As such, the concept of emotional control is found to be less useful for the selected network, with other factors often overshadowing the desire to impose punishments for undesirable behaviour. Unlike Rosenwein's emotional communities, the concept of regimes does not allow for a great deal of overlap between different groups. Whilst the network under examination in this thesis is revealed to be a relatively insular group, it will be shown that there were layers within this, with differing emotional styles of address seen within correspondence depending on which group the recipient occupied. Reddy's approach has also received criticism due to its use of the nation state as the

[68] Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, p. 129.
[69] Jan Plamper, William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein and Peter Stearns, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory,* Vol., 49, No. 2 (May 2010), p. 243.

prototype, despite this being a relatively modern invention.[70] The elite network under examination within this study is not subject to the kind of central sanctions outlined by Reddy, instead being more affected by local and personal practices. As such, whilst both emotional regimes and communities are of use to this study, it aligns itself more closely with Rosenwein's framework which allows for the examination of styles across multiple groups, and is not subject to the same constraints with regards to the significance of the nation state. The search for useful categories and frameworks has continued, and more recently Mark Seymour has proposed the concept of 'emotional arenas', arguing that space as a category of analysis has been underexamined within this field.[71] Providing examples such as churches, courts, the theatre or the home, Seymour's arenas can be private or public.[72] Marriage is also explored as a type of emotional arena, with Seymour highlighting the utility of the correspondence between couples during periods of separation as a way to gauge their 'emotional climate and style'.[73] Despite examining a later time period of the 1870s, Seymour's suggestions are of use more widely within the field, providing another category of analysis.

Another key approach informing this thesis is that of the performativity of emotions. Anthropologist Erving Goffman, an early scholar in this field, suggested that people presented different versions of themselves in differing situations depending on what was deemed most appropriate. For Goffman these performances made emotion a form of work, which may or may not be successful in achieving its desired aims.[74] Judith Butler added to this conversation in her influential text exploring performativity and gender, in which she suggests that even aspects of

[70] Plamper, Reddy, Rosenwein and Stearns, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview', p. 242.
[71] Mark Seymour, *Emotional Arenas: Life, Love, and Death in 1870s Italy* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2020), p. 11.
[72] Seymour, *Emotional Arenas,* pp. 1-20.
[73] Seymour, *Emotional Arenas,* p. 28.
[74] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959).

behaviour which appear innate, such as emotion, are performed practices.[75] More recently Monique Scheer has argued for the utility of thinking of emotions as a 'kind of practice'.[76] Providing the example of courtship, Scheer argues that emotional practices are not just behaviours but also have performative effects on the 'constitution of feelings and the (gendered) self'.[77] Within this study the methodologies and theories outlined regarding performativity will inform the examination of how emotions are described and articulated within personal source material. This thesis contends that for the families and individuals examined, marriage was a public endeavour, building upon suggestions from scholars such as Cressy who argues that 'all life was public in early modern England, or at least had public, social or communal dimensions'.[78] As such, theories of performativity are of great utility when exploring the ways in which emotions relating to marriage are portrayed, and the effect this was intended to have. Broomhall and Vent Gent, for example, in their examination of the Nassau family, have emphasised the importance of the 'performative process of marriage negotiations'.[79] It is also important to note, however, that the performance of an emotion does not automatically call into question its authenticity. For many scholars, the performance of an emotion is not necessarily an inauthentic display, but also a way in which feelings can be embodied within the performer, as well as those around them.[80] Within this thesis the performance of emotions across the life cycle of marriage will be examined, exploring how individuals utilised emotional displays to achieve their aims, and how these displays could act as a means by which emotions could become embedded. In

[75] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999).
[76] Monique Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Takes them have a History)? A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory,* Vol. 51, No.2 (May 2012), pp. 193-220.
[77] Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice', pp. 209-210.
[78] David Cressy, 'Response: Private Lives, Public Performance, and Rites of Passage', in Betty Travitsky and Adele F. Seeff (eds.), *Attending to Women in Early Modern England* (Associated University Presses: London, 1994), p. 187.
[79] Susan Broomhall and Jacqueline Van Gent, 'Courting Nassau Affections: Performing Love in Orange-Nassau Marriage Negotiations', in Philippa Maddern, Joanne McEwan, and Anne M. Scott (eds.), *Performing Emotions in Early Europe* (Brepols Publishers: Belgium, 2018), p. 165.
[80] See A.R. Hochschild, 'Emotion work, feeling rules, and social structure', *American Journal of Sociology*, 85 (1979): 551–75; Katie Barclay, 'Performance and Performativity', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), pp. 14-17; Katie Barclay, *The History of Emotions: A Student Guide to Methods and Sources* (Macmillan Education Limited: UK, 2020), pp. 93-97.

particular, the concept of 'happiness' will be explored with reference to how this was portrayed by both couples and other family members, finding that by emphasising this emotion, individuals also highlighted the success of a marriage.

A consideration of emotions has been present within the study of marriage prior to the modern development of this field. The specific methodologies and concepts within this area of study, however, have helped scholars develop arguments regarding the role of emotion within marriage, as well as how these emotions were portrayed. For example, despite once being regarded as a 'fairly constant emotion in human history', scholars in recent years have determined that marital love varied a great deal in different contexts.[81] However, as suggested by Barclay, love is just one aspect of the emotional fabric of marriage, and this study also draws on work carried out by scholars on other emotions such as happiness, anger and loneliness.[82] More recently, scholars have discussed early modern emotions with regards to other categories such as gender and the household.[83] Such studies will similarly inform the methodologies utilised within this thesis in order to uncover both the prescribed emotional ideals as well as the lived experience of individuals throughout the life cycle of marriage. Through the use of the four approaches detailed, this thesis shows that emotions played an active role within early modern marriage in disseminating and upholding ideals, as well as making and sustaining connections and relationships.

---

[81] Susan J. Matt and Peter N. Stearns, 'Introduction' in Susan J. Matt and Peter N. Stearns (eds.), *Doing Emotions History* (University of Illinois Press, 2014), p. 2.

[82] Katie Barclay, Jeffrey Meek and Andrea Thomson, 'Marriage and Emotion in Historical Context', in Katie Barclay, Jeffrey Meek and Andrea Thomson (eds.), *Courtship, Marriage and Marriage Breakdown: Approaches from the History of Emotion* (Routledge: New York, 2020), p. 1; See Michael J. Braddick & Joanna Innes (eds.), *Suffering and Happiness in England 1500-1850*, (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2017); Linda A. Pollock, 'Anger and the negotiation of relationships in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 47, Issue 3 (2004), pp.567-590; Fay Bound, 'This "Modern Epidemic": Loneliness as an Emotion Cluster and a Neglected Subject in the History of Emotions', *Emotion Review*, Vol. 10, No.3 (July 2018), pp. 242-254.

[83] Bernard Capp, "Jesus Wept' But did the Englishman? Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern England', *Past and Present,* No. 224 (August 2014), pp. 75-108; Broomhall (ed.), *Emotions in the Household 1200-1900*).

Elite case studies

This thesis approaches the topic of elite marriage through the examination of an identified network of connected individuals surrounding the Cavendish family. The utility of a case study approach for the exploration of marriage, particularly with regards to one specific family has been highlighted by previous scholars. An early influential study of this nature is Slater's article on the Verneys, an upper gentry family based in Buckinghamshire. Similarly to Stone, Slater argues against the sentimentalising of what she suggests was a 'relationship characterized by social and economic rather than romantic considerations'.[84] She also emphasises the patriarchal and hierarchal nature of early modern families, highlighting the position afforded to eldest sons within an elite family, suggesting that they were most likely to enjoy advantageous matches.[85] Her work has garnered criticism from other scholars, however, such as Sara Mendelson, who took issue with the argument that matches were solely for financial again, instead suggesting that it was determined by a number of different factors.[86] Vivienne Larminie also published a paper in response to Slater, utilising a selected case study of the Newdigates, a lower gentry family in Warwickshire. Larminie's research uncovered very different attitudes and experiences to those outlined by Slater. Unlike in Slater's study, the eldest sons within the Newdigate family did not appear to 'enjoy special matrimonial advances by virtue of their position', with Larminie instead outlining how they were at risk of being entered into marriages on the basis of raising money in times of financial difficulties.[87] Through an examination of correspondence between couples, Larminie also argued for what she termed an 'unmistakeable yearning to be together', which she suggests goes beyond mere convention.[88] The stark differences

[84] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', pp. 25-26.
[85] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', pp. 25-54.
[86] Mendelson, 'Debate: The Weightiest Business', pp. 127-8.
[87] Vivienne Larminie, 'Marriage and the family: the example of the Seventeenth Century Newdigates', *Midland History,* Vol. 9, No. 1, (1994), pp. 3-4.
[88] Larminie, 'Marriage and the family', p. 10.

in findings between the two studies was noted by Larminie, who argued this implied that 'the personality of the individual should be given much greater importance in the equation than hitherto'.[89] Such disparities in families of similar standing thus reinforces the necessity for a wider range of case studies than are currently available, emphasising their utility in uncovering the variances and intricacies of early modern marriage.

Both Larminie and Slater focus on gentry families, and indeed there are multiple examples of case studies focusing on families within this group in the early modern period. In particular the Verney family have been widely written on, with scholars utilising the wealth of personal source material pertaining to them to explore topics such as their role in rural society and the way in which they experienced, or on some occasions influenced, social and cultural change.[90] More recently O'Day has examined the Temples of Stowe and Burton Dassett in her discussion of the dynamics of elite family life during this period.[91] Whilst the marriages of family members are often included within these studies to provide a framework for the exploration of other topics such as the family and elite society, a specific focus on the nature and experience of marriage is underexplored within the field.[92]

Such studies have moreover been largely focused on elite families of gentry status. The Cavendish family and the individuals connected to them through marriage are not part of this group, with their rank placing them firmly in the peerage or aristocracy of early modern society. Scholars have highlighted similarities between the two groups, such as G.E Mingay who suggests that in

---

[89] Larminie, 'Marriage and the family', p. 3.
[90] John Broad, *Transforming English Rural Society: The Verneys and the Claydons, 1600-1820* (Cambridge, 2004); Susan E. Whyman, *Sociability and Power in Late-Stuart England: The Cultural World of the Verneys 1660-1720* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1999).
[91] Rosemary O'Day, *An Elite Family in Early Modern England: The Temples of Stowe and Burton Dassett, 1570-1656* (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2018).
[92] See: Russell Newton, 'The Social Production of Gentility and Capital in Early Modern England: The Newtons of Lincolnshire' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Durham University, 2017); Elizabeth Norton, 'The Blount Family in the Long Sixteenth Century' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Kings College London, 2019).

matters such as rents, farming, enjoyment of country life, and security of property, the peerage and gentry 'generally thought and spoke in almost identical terms'.[93] Others have additionally emphasised the potential for movement between the two groups, suggesting that there was a path from gentry to peerage which was able to be followed.[94] There was also the possibility of intermarriage between these two groups, as argued by Wrightson who outlined how in spite of most marriages being endogamous, occasionally matches were made for members of the peerage with upper gentry.[95] However, whilst possible, this was not always desired by all parties, with Heal and Holmes highlighting the example of Sir William Holles, a member of the gentry whom was reluctant for his daughter to marry an earl. Holles was concerned by the gulf between their two families and unhappy at the prospect of being outranked by his son-in-law.[96] Such concerns were not unfounded, with many scholars emphasising the marked differences between the two groups in terms of both wealth and influence, with the upper gentry acting as clients of the peerage.[97] Variances have also been identified with regards to marriage practices. The role of parental influence, for example, has been argued to have been felt more greatly among the aristocracy and the uppermost gentry than the rest of the population.[98] It has also been suggested that there was a difference in the geographical scope of the matches of the gentry compared to that of the peerage. Whilst the peerage organised matches on a national scale, it has been argued that the gentry tended to marry either within the borders of their own counties or choose spouses from adjacent counties.[99]

---

[93] G.E. Mingay, *The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class* (Longman Group Limited: London, 1976), p. 188.
[94] John Cannon, *Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth- Century England* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1984), p. 128.
[95] Wrightson, *English Society,* p. 95.
[96] Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Macmillan Press: Hampshire, 1994), p. 16.
[97] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', p. 27; Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford University Press: London, 1967), p. 28.
[98] Wrightson, *English Society,* p. 103.
[99] Wrightson, *English Society,* p. 95; James M. Rosenheim, *The Emergence of a Ruling Order: English Landed Society 1650-1750* (Wesley Longman Limited: Essex, 1998), p. 24.

Due to the differences between the two groups, the peerage network identified in this thesis is thus treated as a distinct category to the gentry. Whilst there are multiple examples of case studies examining gentry families, the peerage has not received the same attention in recent years, tending instead towards studies with wider parameters.[100] Kimberly Schutte's study on the marriage practices of British aristocratic women, for example, has a wide breadth both in terms of geography and time frame, drawing on evidence from more than 750 families over a period of over 500 years.[101] As such, an examination of the network of individuals surrounding the Cavendish family provides a useful contribution to the field, allowing for a detailed examination of the experiences of marriage within the peerage and thus addressing this gap in the literature.

The Cavendish family

The central family examined within this study are the Cavendishes of Nottinghamshire, one of the most influential families during this period in social, political and cultural terms. As will be shown, marriage alliances with the Cavendish family were highly sought after by other elite families who wished to be aligned with them. Multiple individuals within the family held significant roles both in court and in political office. As such, making good matches was important not just to the individual but also to the wider family network, as this could add useful connections.

One factor that made the Cavendishes a desirable asset for other elite families was the value and extent of their landownership; in addition to their London dwellings, the family also held property across multiple counties including Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Middlesex

[100] For earlier examples of peerage case studies on marriage, see: Alice T. Friedman, 'Portrait of a Marriage: The Willoughby Letters of 1585-1586', *Signs,* Vol.11, No.3 (Spring 1986), pp. 542-555; Barbara Harris, 'Marriage Sixteenth-Century Style: Elizabeth Stafford and the Third Duke of Norfolk', *Journal of Social History,* Vol. 15, No.3 (Spring, 1982), pp. 371-382.
[101] Kimberly Schutte, *Women, Rank, and Marriage in the British Aristocracy, 1485-2000 An Open Elite?* (Palgrave Macmillan: UK, 2014), p.7. See also Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power* for Scottish marriage practices.

and Staffordshire.[102] William Cavendish, grandson of the notable Bess of Hardwick and her second husband Sir William Cavendish, inherited vast estates following the death of his father in 1617. Under his management, the estate grew in both wealth and importance, with himself and his first wife Elizabeth Bassett entertaining both James I and Charles I at the family seat of Welbeck. He steadily rose to prominence, being elevated to the peerage in 1620 as Viscount Mansfield and was later appointed to Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire in 1626. Following his growing reputation in the north of England, William was created the Earl of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1628. The deaths of both his cousin the Second Earl of Devonshire, and his mother, led to him assuming the role of Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire and inheriting the Barony of Ogle along with vast estates in Northumberland, increasing the geographical scope of his influence.[103] Newcastle held a key role in the Civil War, acting as Lord General of Royalist forces in the Northeast and East Anglia, and was of great importance until the decimation of his forces at Marston Moor in 1644. The disgrace of his defeat led to ridicule from his enemies, and he subsequently fled to the Netherlands, where he remained in exile.[104] During the war and Interregnum period he suffered losses of both goods and land revenues, estimated to amount to nearly one million pounds.[105] Following the Restoration, however, he was able to return to his estate and soon resumed his position of influence, being created the Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1665, thereby completing his ascension through the ranks of the peerage. Despite his heavy losses Newcastle's position remained strong among the

[102] See UNMASC: Pw1/286, Pw1/287, Pw1/288, Pw1/289 for documentation regarding the will of Henry Cavendish.
[103] Lynn Hulse, 'William Cavendish, first duke of Newcastle upon Tyne', *ODNB,* (Jan 2011).
[104] Martyn Bennett, *The English Civil War: 1640-1649* (Routledge: Oxon, 2013), p. 52.
[105] Margaret Cavendish, *The Life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, to which is Added the True Relation of My Birth, Breeding and Life* (London: 1886), pp. 149-152.

ruling elite in the Midlands, and he continued to hold a role of influence through his writings, patronage of the arts and sciences, and contributions to horsemanship.[106]

On his death in 1676, William's title and lands passed to his second son, Henry, his eldest son Charles having predeceased him in 1659. Henry was also a figure of importance in the North prior to his father's death, having been MP for both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. From 1670 onwards, the new duke held several prominent roles as joint lieutenant and lieutenant of Northumberland, governor of Berwick, and lieutenant of Nottinghamshire.[107] In 1653 he married Frances Pierrepont, granddaughter of royalist commander and William Cavendish's lieutenant general Robert Pierrepont, Earl of Kingston. This was an advantageous match and the settlement enabled Henry to contribute towards the recovery of the family estates following the losses sustained during the civil war and Interregnum period.[108] The couple had six surviving children, one son and five daughters, and were much occupied with the business of finding matches for them all. These marriages, along with that of the duke and duchess themselves, form the focal point for this study, acting as the central node from which other network links have been identified.

Whilst the Cavendishes have been a topic of interest for many scholars, little attention has been paid to the marriage practices of the family, with a greater focus on the accomplishments of certain individuals. In particular, William Cavendish has been examined with regards to his talents for horsemanship as well as his architectural contributions.[109] The 1st duke was also a prolific writer,

---

[106] See: William Cavendish, *Méthode et invention nouvelle de dresser les chevaux* (1658); William Cavendish, *A New Method and Extraordinary Invention to Dress Horses and Work them according to Nature* (London: 1667). For more on his patronage of the sciences nicknamed the "Cavendish circle" see: Stephen Clucas, 'The Atomisation of the Cavendish Circle: A Reappraisal', *The Seventeenth Century,* Vol. 9, Issue 2, (1994), pp. 247-273; For further information on his influence in music see: L. Hulse, "'Apollo's Whirligig": William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle, and his music collection', *Seventeenth Century*, 9/2 (1994), pp. 213–46.

[107] P.R Seddon, 'Henry Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Newcastle', *ODNB, (*Sept. 2004).

[108] Seddon, 'Henry Cavendish'.

[109] Lucy Worsley and Tom Addyman, 'Riding Houses and Horses: William Cavendish's Architecture for the Art of Horsemanship', *Architectural History,* Vol. 45, (2002) pp. 194-229; Lucy Worsley, 'Building a Family: William Cavendish, First Duke of Newcastle, and the Construction of Bolsover and Nottingham Castles', *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 19, Issue 2 (2004), pp. 233-259.

penning comedies, verses, and treatises on horsemanship which have garnered scholarly attention.[110] The literary talents of the women in the Cavendish family have similarly been widely discussed, particularly with regards to William's second wife, Margaret Lucas, whose works such as *Blazing World* and *Sociable letters* have been much explored, as well as her contributions to natural philosophy and feminist thought.[111] The writings of William's daughters Jane and Elizabeth have likewise been a topic of discussion for scholars, highlighting the importance of their work.[112] Despite evidently being deemed of significance in literary circles, however, the marriages of these individuals have not been studied in their own right, instead appearing mostly as context for the exploration of other topics. There is also very little written on the next generation of the Cavendishes under the headship of Henry, despite the continued prominence of the family at this time. This study contends that, due to both their position and influence, the lives and marriages of the 2nd duke and his children were of great significance, creating important network links and ties between many of the most important families of the period, thus warranting their further study. Indeed, the importance of the matches of the 2nd duke's daughters continued to be discussed into the eighteenth century, with *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle* declaring in 1755 of Henry's children that 'the female issue married into some of the noblest families in England'.[113]

---

[110] Lynn Hulse, "The King's Entertainment' by the Duke of Newcastle', *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Vol.26, (1995), pp. 355-405; Hero Chalmers, "But not laughing': horsemanship and the idea of the cavalier in the writings of William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle', *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 32, Issue 4, (Oct. 2017), pp. 327-349.
[111] Sylvia Bowerbank and Sara Mendelson (eds.), *Paper Bodies: A Margaret Cavendish Reader* (Broadview literary texts: 2000); Lisa T. Sarasohn, *The Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish: Reason and Fancy during the Scientific Revolution* (Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland: 2010); Lisa Walters, *Margaret Cavendish: Gender, Science and Politics* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2014).
[112] Betty S. Travitsky (ed.), *Subordination and authorship in early modern England: the case of Elizabeth Cavendish Egerton and her "loose papers"* (Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Arizona, 1999); Betty S. Travitsky, 'Reconstructing the still, small voice: The Occasional journal of Elizabeth Egerton', *Women's Studies,* Vol. 19, Issue 2 (1991), pp. 193-200; Margaret J.M. Ezell, "'To be your daughter in your pen": The Social Functions of Literature in the Writings of Lady Elizabeth Brackley and Lady Jane Cavendish', *The Huntington Library Quarterly,* Vol. 51, No.4 (Autumn 1988), pp. 281-296; Alexandra G. Bennett (ed.), *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish* (Routledge, Oxon: 2018).
[113] Henry David (ed.), *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle* (London: Feb 1755), p. 54.

Whilst writing this thesis a chapter entitled, 'Nothing less than a Duke: Henry 2nd Duke of Newcastle and the Marriages of his Daughters' by Trevor Foulds was published. The short chapter provides a useful overview of the marriage arrangements of the duke's children, utilising personal source material to examine the matches. Foulds focuses in particular on the financial settlements offered for the marriages of the duke and duchess's daughters, pointing to Henry's refusal to provide land as an area of contention in more than one proposed match. Instead, the duke went to great lengths to offer substantial financial inducements to prospective suitors, borrowing money for portions which altogether totalled £99,000.[114] Such large sums of money highlight the importance attached to marriage for aristocratic success, which will be examined in greater detail throughout this study. Foulds also touches upon motivating factors for these matches both for the daughters themselves as well as their parents, highlighting instances of disagreement. These arguments will be explored in further detail within discussion of the arrangement of matches in Chapter Two of this study. There is inevitably some overlap between Foulds' chapter and this thesis in terms of the source material examined, however, there are significant differences in both approach and breadth. Whilst providing a useful introduction, the chapter lacks the space to go into further detail on these matches and the ways in which they were both affected and informed by familial relationships. Despite providing brief overviews of the relative success of each match, the chapter does not explore the experiences of these marriages, focusing mostly on the arrangement of the matches. Whilst utilising similar source material to this thesis with regards to the Cavendish family collections housed at the University of Nottingham archives, the chapter does not have the space to probe extensively into the extracts provided. In contrast, this thesis interacts with methodologies pertaining to both epistolary sources and the field of the history of emotions to inform close reading of this

[114] Trevor Foulds, ' "Nothing less than a Duke": Henry 2nd Duke of Newcastle and the Marriages of his Daughters', in Richard A. Gaunt (ed.), *Church, Land and People: Essays Presented to John Beckett* (Thoroton Society: Nottingham, 2020), p. 47.

material, as well as utilising advice literature to examine supposed ideals in conjunction with real lived experience. This study also considers the matches of the Cavendish family in the context of a wider network of connected elite individuals, examining the importance and endurance of the ties made, thus approaching the topic from a different angle.

An elite network approach

This thesis utilises a network approach to examine the importance and experience of elite marriage during this period. The importance of network links created and maintained by elite families has been highlighted by Michael G. Brennan in his work on the connections between the Sidneys, Dudleys, and Herberts from 1500 to 1700. These close links formed through marriage, Brennan contends, enabled the Sidney family to rise to prominence in both court and county positions.[115] Building on suggestions such as these, this thesis examines the marriage practices of a network of individuals within the peerage connected to the Cavendish family. It will be shown that through advantageous marriages these families were able to consolidate their position in society, both in terms of wealth and rank. These matches formed a key part of the important system of patronage in the lives of elites during this period. Such families at this time were dependent on patronage to form connections, increase influence, gain key positions, and provide favours.[116] Marriage alliances were a core method by which this was achieved, and the network under examination highlights the importance and utilisation of these connections. The ties formed by these matches were cultivated

[115] Michael G. Brennan, 'Family Networks: The Sidneys, Dudleys, and Herberts', in Margaret P. Hannay, Michael G. Brennan, Mary Ellen Lamb (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to The Sidneys, 1500-1700, Volume 1: Lives* (Routledge: Oxon, 2015), p. 3.

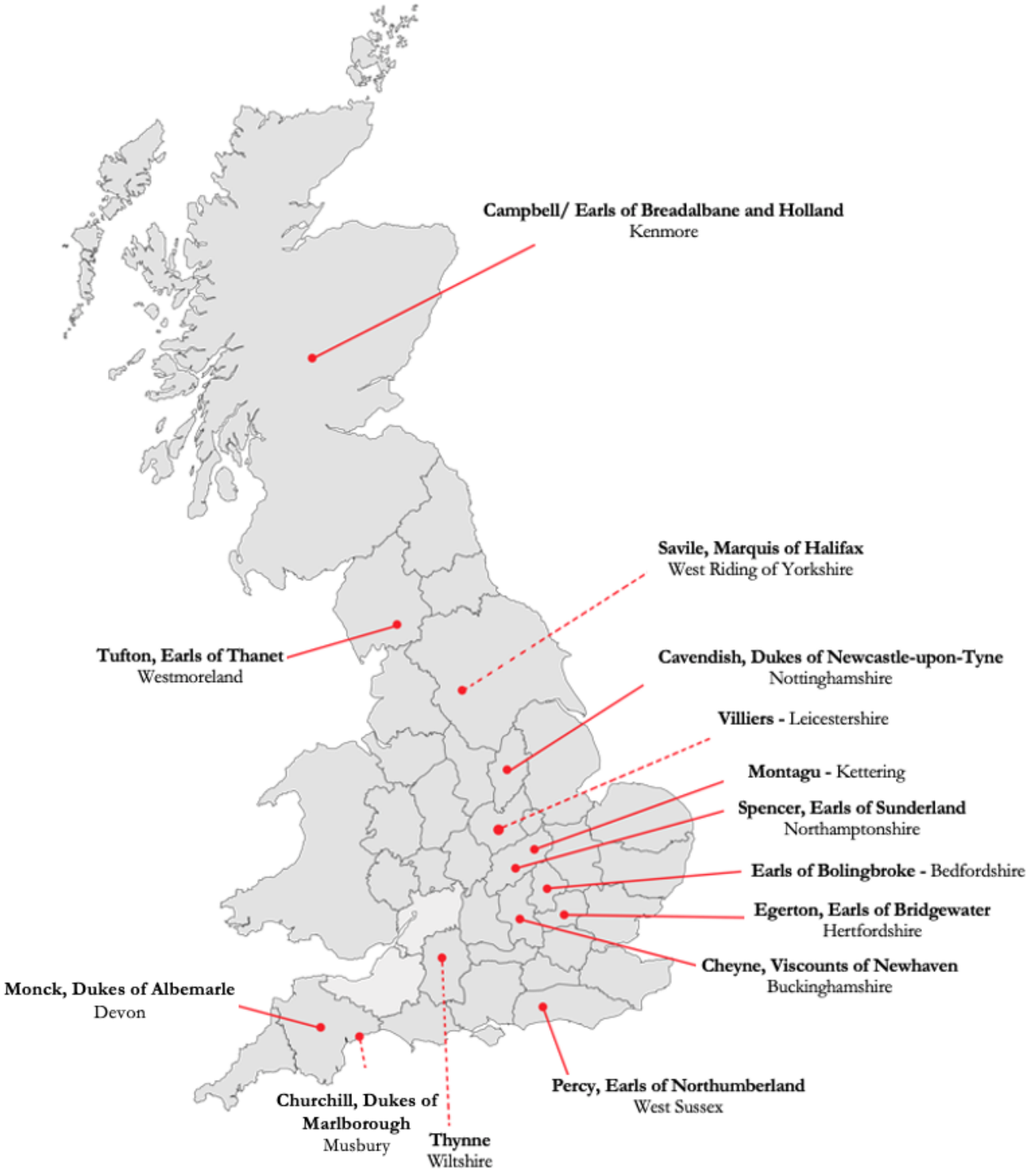
116 For texts discussing the utility and function of early modern patronage networks see: Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke, (eds.), *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, 1450-1650* (London: German Historical Institute London, 1991); Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (Routledge: London, 1993); Cassandra J. Zimmerman, 'Elites and Patronage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England' (unpublished doctoral thesis, West Illinois University, 2013).

and utilised by individuals for both practical concerns and emotional support, often lasting beyond the initial marriage that formed the link.

It has been highlighted by Schutte that from the late fifteenth century up to the late nineteenth century, elite women tended to marry endogamously, that is, within their own rank.[117] This pattern is seen within the Cavendish family, and an examination of the connections formed through various marriages includes several of the most influential elite families at this time. Of the eleven key families identified within this network, all were members of the peerage at the time of their connection to the Cavendish family, with the majority holding the rank of earl or higher.[118] In addition to being endogamous with regards to rank, it is shown that there were also similarities with regards to the emotional standards and ideals of emotional expression within this network. As such, the framework of emotional communities for the identified networks is of great utility, allowing for an examination of shared behaviours and practices within elite families during this period. The identified network of families connected to the Cavendishes also demonstrates the geographical scope of this project, as shown in the following map of matches.

[117] Schutte, *Women, Rank, and Marriage*.
[118] This network of families includes: The Cheyne family (Viscounts of Newhaven), The Egerton family (Earls of Bridgewater), The Earls of Bolingbroke, The Pierrepont family (Earls of Kingston- Upon- Hull), The Earls of Clare, The Earls of Sunderland, The Earls of Thanet, The Earls of Breadalbane and Holland, The Earls of Northumberland, The Montagu family, The Dukes of Albemarle.

Fig. 1: Map of Cavendish network matches. [119]

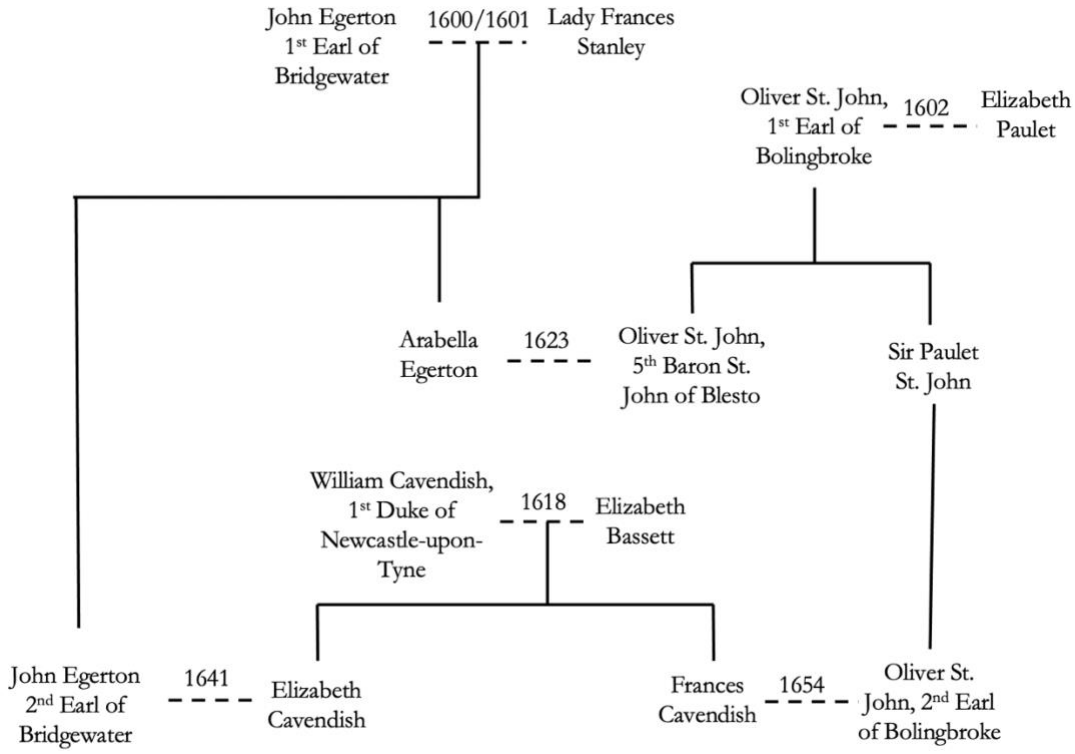


[119] This map has been created utilising information from both primary sources such as correspondence and marriage contracts as well as secondary biographies, see footnotes 115-115. Solid lines represent matches of individuals within the Cavendish family whilst dotted lines represent other matches within the identified network.

It has been suggested that the peerage at this time were more likely to marry outside of their county borders, and the marital links within this study follow that general trend.[120] The geographical scope of these matches is evident, demonstrating that this study is not constrained to one locality, but instead crosses both county and national borders, thus considering wider marriage practices and influences pertinent to the peerage as a group.

Also of particular interest within this study is that many of the families identified within this network were connected to each other independently of the Cavendishes. The following network diagrams outline some of these connections which will be explored in further detail throughout this study.

Fig. 2: Egerton and Bolingbroke connections. [121]

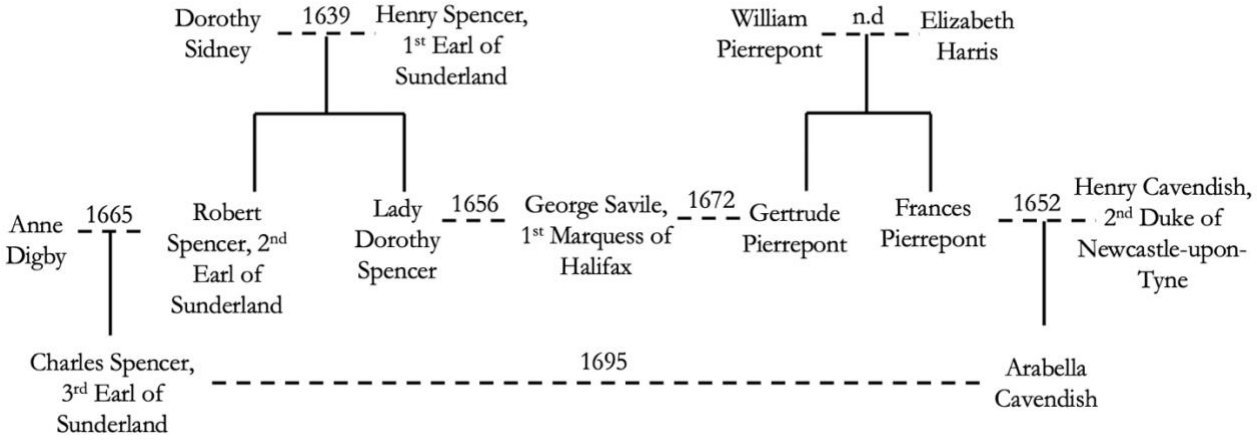


[120] Wrightson, *English Society,* p. 95.

[121] These network diagrams have been constructed by identifying marriage links through primary sources such as marriage contracts, and published biographical information on the selected individuals. For Fig. 1, 'Egerton and Bolingbroke connections' See: Louis A. Knafla, 'John Egerton, first earl of Bridgewater', *ODNB,* (October 2009); Sean

As illustrated, the families of Bridgewater and Bolingbroke were connected to each other via marriage independently of the Cavendish family. Prior to the marriages of Elizabeth and Frances Cavendish to their husbands, the 2nd Earl of Bolingbroke's uncle had wed Arabella Egerton, sister of the 2nd Earl of Bridgewater. Such connections illustrate the importance of these relatively insular networks of a select number of families, further emphasising the utility of this framework. The following diagram similarly demonstrates the links between both the Cavendish and Pierrepont families with the Spencers.

Fig. 3: Pierrepont and Spencer connections. [122]



As shown, prior to his marriage with Gertrude Pierrepont, sister to the Duchess of Newcastle, George Savile was married to Lady Dorothy Spencer until her death in 1670.[123] This link between the Halifax and the Spencer families, independent of the Cavendishes, once again highlights the

Kelsey, 'Oliver, first earl of Bolingbroke', *ODNB,* (January 2008); Sean Kelsey, 'Oliver St. John fifth Baron St John of Blesto', *ODNB,* (May 2008); Francis Espinasse, revised by Louis A. Knafla, 'John Egerton, second earl of Bridgewater', *ODNB,* (May 2007); UNMASC, NeD 456- Jointure and settlement of Frances and the 2nd Earl of Bolingbroke.

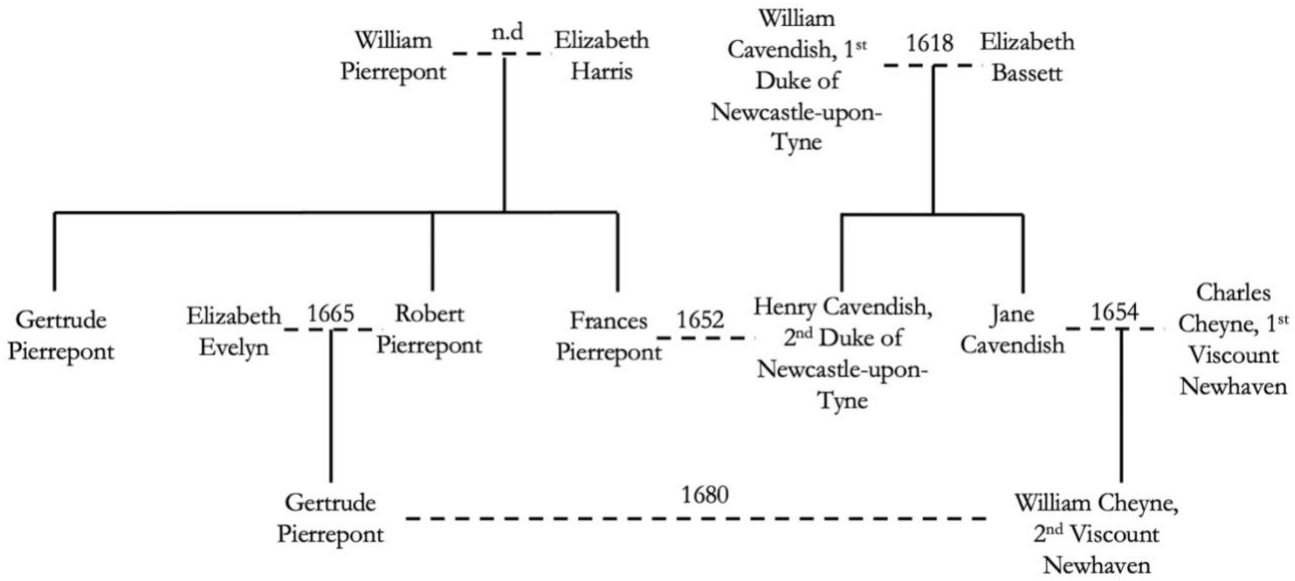
[122] Figure 2: Pierrepont and Spencer connections. See W.A Speck, 'Robert Spencer, second earl of Sunderland', *ODNB,* (Jan 2008); Henry L. Snyder, 'Charles Spencer, third earl of Sunderland', *ODNB,* (May 2006); Mark Brown, 'George Savile, first marquess of Halifax', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004); George Yerby, 'William Pierrepont', *ODNB,* (May 2015).

[123] Brown, 'George Savile'.

relatively insular nature of this network of intermarrying families. Also of significance within this network is the connection between Henry Cavendish and his brother-in-law, George Savile, 1st Marquess of Halifax. The pair shared a lengthy correspondence with the duke, often writing to seek advice, which will be utilised within this thesis. Halifax is also of importance to this study due to his contributions to the field of conduct literature in the form of his printed text providing marital advice to his daughter.[124]

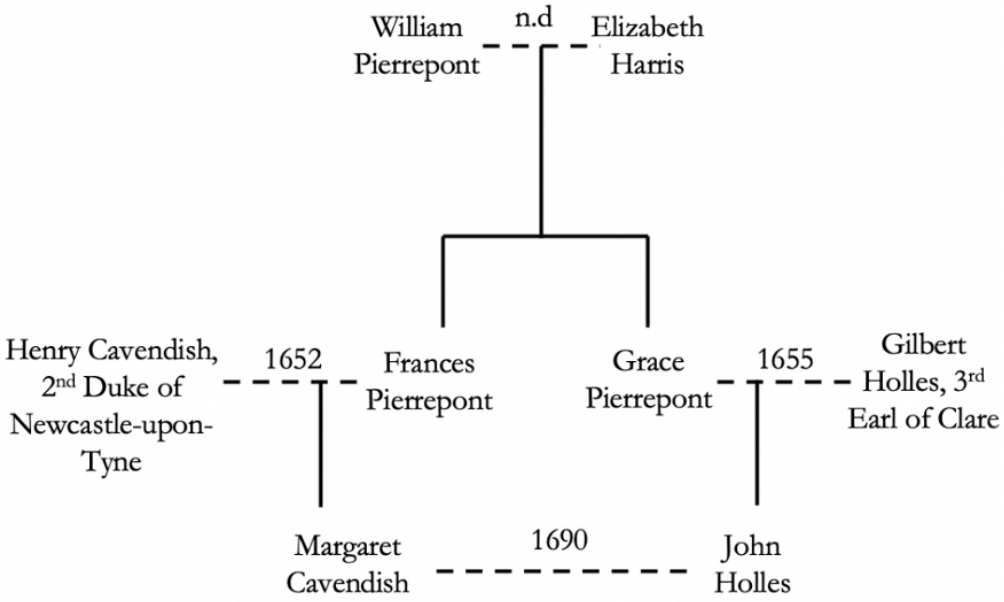
An examination of network connections also highlights the continuing importance of links made through marriage with regards to the arrangement of subsequent matches. This is highlighted in the following network diagrams linking the Pierrepont and Cavendish families.

Fig. 4: Pierrepont and Cavendish connections. [125]



[124] George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, *The Lady's New-Years gift, or Advice to a Daughter,* (London: 1688).
[125] John Broad, 'Charles Cheyne, first Viscount Newhaven', *ODNB,* (Jan 2008); John Broad, 'William Cheyne, second Viscount Newhaven', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004); G.F.R Barker, revised by M.E Clayton, 'Evelyn Pierrepont, first duke of Kingston upon Hull', *ODNB,* (Sept 2005).

Fig. 5: Pierrepont and Cavendish connections. [126]



As shown within these diagrams, the connection made between the Pierreponts and the Cavendishes through the marriage of Henry and Frances evidently endured, with two further matches being made linking the two families. The first of these was between William Cheyne, nephew of the duke, and his distant cousin Gertrude Pierrepont, who married in 1680. An additional match between first cousins Margaret Cavendish and John Holles in 1690 further emphasises the close relationship between the two families and the longevity of the links made through marriage. The connections highlighted between these different families illustrate the insular nature of this network, particularly with regards to marriages. A network approach therefore facilitates an examination of the matches of the Cavendish family within the context of the environment in which they were formed, providing a useful addition to the topic of elite marriage during this period.

[126] UNMASC, NeD 43- Marriage contract of Grace Pierrepont and the Earl of Clare; UNMASC, NeD 78-79- Marriage contract of Margaret Cavendish and John Holles.

Research Parameters

This thesis examines elite marriage from around 1660 to 1753, a period bookended by two Acts concerning marriage. In 1660 the "Act for the Confirmation of Marriages" was passed, which overturned many changes made to the institution during the Interregnum years, the most notable of these being the 1653 "Act touching Marriages and the registering thereof; and also touching Births and Burials" which was passed by the Little Parliament. The Act made many changes to the way in which marriage services were carried out, and the new civil service stripped the ceremony of many of its 'popish' elements including the exchanging of rings and 'the husband's promise to worship his wife with his body'.[127] Changes were also made aiming to control the marriage of young people, with the Act raising the age of consent to sixteen for men and fourteen for women, as well as requiring parental consent for any individual under the age of twenty-one.[128] The changes were perceived by many as a secular assault on marriage and multiple couples married in haste in the weeks preceding the enshrining of the Act into law.[129] These changes did not outlive the Interregnum government, however, with the 1660 Act doing away with many of the changes, including reverting back to the *Book of Common Prayer* as the basis for marriage services, and restoring familiar elements such as the exchanging of rings.[130]

However, whilst overturning many of the unpopular aspects of the 1653 legislation, the 1660 Act did not quell debates regarding marriage during this period. Indeed, several measures aimed at regulating marriage were proposed during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but all

---

[127] Chris Durston, ' "Unhallowed Wedlocks": The regulation of marriage during the English Revolution', *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 31, No. 1, (March 1988), p.47; see 1653 Act at: https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/acts-ordinances-interregnum/pp715-718 [accessed 03/04/2021].
[128] Kevin Laam, 'James Howell, Cavalier nuptial literature, and the Marriage Act of 1653' *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 35, No.2 (2020), p. 217; Dorothy McLaren, "The Marriage Act of 1653': Its influence on the parish Registers', *Population Studies,* Vol.28, Issue.2, (1974), p. 323.
[129] Durston, 'Unhallowed Wedlocks', p. 55; Laam, 'Cavalier nuptial literature', p. 218.
[130] Laam, 'Cavalier nuptial literature', p. 231; Durston, 'Unhallowed Wedlocks', p. 47. See 1660 Act at: https://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/p296 [accessed 03/04/2021].

failed until the passing of the 1753 Clandestine Marriage Act, which serves as the end date for this research. Also known as Lord Hardwicke's Act, it reinstituted some aspects of the overturned 1653 Act such as the need for parental consent for individuals under the age of twenty-one, with aims of reducing the number of clandestine marriages.[131] This Act has also been utilised as an end date by both Adair in his work on illegitimacy, and Stone in his study, *Uncertain Unions.*[132] Before this point, although parental consent and advice was sought after and often insisted upon for younger couples, it was not a legal necessity. As Macfarlane has stated, early modern marriage before this point was a contract that ultimately did not require agreement from any other parties besides the couple themselves.[133] Whilst the legal basis for parental consent provides a useful demarcation between pre and post 1753 matches, this is not to say that younger couples prior to the passing of the Act were entirely left to their own devices. As will be demonstrated throughout this thesis, for elite families there was still a great deal of parental and familial involvement in creating matches, often correlating to the age of the couple and the perceived importance of the match in question.

The period under examination is also concerned with post-Reformation ideals and experiences. Whilst marriage had been a sacrament under Roman Catholicism, it no longer held this position within Protestantism.[134] However, it does not necessarily follow that marriage therefore had less importance attached to it at this point. Jacqueline Eales for example has highlighted how the reformed clergy asserted that they held the institution in greater esteem than their Catholic opponents.[135] Christopher Hill has similarly argued that the recognition of clerical marriage within

---

[131] David Lemmings, 'Marriage and the Law in the Eighteenth Century: Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753', *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 39, No.2, (Jun 1996), p. 341; Rebecca Probert, *Marriage Law and Practice in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009), pp. 106-225.
[132] Adair, *Courtship, illegitimacy and marriage*; Lawrence Stone, *Uncertain Unions: Marriage in England 1660-1753* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1992).
[133] Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love,* p. 126.
[134] Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death,* p. 294.
[135] Jacqueline Eales, *Women in Early Modern England 1500-1700* (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005), p. 10.

the Protestant faith perhaps aided the elevation of 'the prestige of the family' in wider society.[136] Nevertheless, the changes brought about by the Reformation did lead to unease and concerns from contemporaries regarding the condition of marriage. During this period there was a marked increase in published prescriptive literature, and it has been suggested that this reflected growing concerns regarding marriage and sexuality from both the clergy and lay leaders of society.[137] As such, the chosen period of study provides an excellent opportunity to examine the prescribed ideals and standards of marriage within advice texts in conjunction with discussion of real lived experience.

This thesis examines the so called 'elites' of Britain, specifically the peerage or aristocracy. There are multiple reasons for this choice. Firstly, the study of a singular group as opposed to society as a whole allows for the examination of issues and behaviours pertaining to that specific sector. Due to the specific focus within this study on exploring the emotions associated with marriage, the identified elite network is treated as an emotional community with its own emotional practices and standards.[138] There are also marked differences between elite and non-elite marriages which warrant their examination in isolation. Despite the decrease in child marriages prior to the seventeenth century, elite women were far more likely to marry young than working women.[139] They also tended to bear more children than women in other social groups who breastfed their children as opposed to employing wet nurses.[140] The elite family structure additionally presented its own unique challenges, with husbands and wives having responsibilities to not only each other but also to the management of a larger household structure, including servants. Whilst marriage was a key turning point in the lives of most adults, elite marriages were often also closely linked with both individual

[136] Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism* (Verso: London, 2018), pp. 309-310.
[137] Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England 1570-1640* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1987), p. 125.
[138] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*.
[139] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England,* pp. 128-129.
[140] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England,* p. 125.

and familial advancement. An advantageous match could serve to improve both the social and economic standing of a family, and even prevent estates from ruin. Additionally, there are practical reasons for a focus on elites, relating to the availability and survival of source material. There is unsurprisingly a great deal more personal source material pertaining to this societal group in comparison to the middling and other orders. Individuals within this group were more likely to be literate, and their letters also have greater survival rates. Furthermore, this group was more likely to have had access to the conduct literature utilised within this study. Due to the expense of books and literacy levels of the period, it can be assumed that they had a largely elite readership.[141] The unique challenges and motivations at play within elite marriage in conjunction with their relationship to the available source material thus emphasises the utility of focusing on this one specific group.

As with any study that focuses on the experience of a select number of individuals, there are questions regarding typicality. Whilst the Cavendishes were extraordinary in many ways, this thesis will demonstrate that the family and connected network often adhered to the standards of the peerage as a whole. However, the ways in which this network does not represent the 'typical' experience of elite marriage at this time are also of significance. Due to both their position within society and the lack of a male heir following the death of their only son, Henry, the Cavendishes were somewhat removed from both the norm and the ideal with their marriage arrangements.[142] As such, the examination of the matches of their daughters provides a useful example of how motivations and priorities differed when there were questions regarding the lineage of title and estates. Whilst the experience of the Cavendish family and the wider identified network is not intended to represent the overall experience of the peerage as a whole during this period, this study

[141] Ingrid H. Tague, 'Love, Honor, and Obedience: Fashionable Women and Discourse of Marriage in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol.40, No.1 (Jan., 2001), pp. 82-83.
[142] UNMASC, Pw1/543, Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Osbourne Earl of Danby, 14 November 1681.

will add to the depth of knowledge and understanding regarding elite early modern marriage, both in the ways that it is typical and the ways in which it is not.

Sources

For this thesis over 500 letters and other documents such as court depositions have been transcribed pertaining to the Cavendish family and other individuals within the identified network. The sources utilised are located largely in four archives: the University of Nottingham Special Collections (Portland Welbeck Collection), the Nottinghamshire Archives (Cavendish Collection), British Library (The Portland Papers), and the National Records of Scotland (Papers of the Campbell family, Earls of Breadalbane). Further letters have been sourced from published edited collections, biographies, and memoirs.[143] During this period travel was expensive and often inconvenient, and as such letter writing was the primary method of keeping in contact. The use of correspondence as a tool of historical analysis has been highlighted by Mirielle Bossis, who regards the letter as an 'extension of daily life' for both writer and recipient.[144] This thesis also makes use of correspondence to explore the emotions associated with marriage, building upon suggestions from scholars such as Gary Schneider, who describes epistolary writing as a 'pragmatic and expressive communicative medium'.[145] Barclay in her study on early modern Scottish marriage has made use of correspondence

[143] A selection of published primary material: H.C Foxcroft, *The life and letters of Sir George Savile, Bart, First Marquis of Halifax* (Longmans, Green, and Co.: London, 1898); George Agar Ellis, *The Ellis Correspondence: Letters written during the years 1686, 1687, 1688* (London: 1829); Edward Maunde Thompson (ed), *Correspondence of The Family of Hatton: Being chiefly letters addressed to Christopher First Viscount Hatton* (Printed for the Camden Society: 1878); William Coxe, *Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough, Volume 1* (London: 1818), p. 74; John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn: Volume 3,* (ed. Austin Dobson) (Cambridge University Press, 2015); John Reresby, *The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, Bart., M.P For York, &c. 1634-1689 written by himself, edited from the original manuscript By James J. Cartwright* (London, Longmans, Green, and Co. 1875). Letters have also been sourced from printed biographies such as E.F Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle* (London: J Murray, 1915); A. Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, *Volume II* (London: 1839); Francis Bickley, *The Cavendish Family* (London, 1911).

[144] Mirielle Bossis and Karen McPherson, 'Methodological Journeys Through Correspondences', *Yale French Studies,* No.71, (1986), p. 64.

[145] Gary Schneider, 'Affecting Correspondences: Body, Behaviour, and the Textualization of Emotion in Early Modern English Letters', *Prose Studies,* 23:1, (2000), p. 32.

in this way, suggesting that it provides insight into how couples expressed 'love and intimacy'.[146] Fay Bound has further emphasised the affective nature of letters, arguing that they not only reflected emotional experience but also shaped it.[147] Building upon suggestions such as these, this thesis engages with theories and methodologies from the field of the history of emotions in its use of personal correspondence, exploring the use of devices such as emotives within the context of early modern marriage.

In particular the performative nature of epistolary sources is explored within this study. Meritxell Simon-Martin has highlighted the performative aspect of correspondence, arguing that the identities constructed on the page by the writer are determined by the addressee, and the author's relationship to them.[148] It is also important to consider that even personal correspondence at this time was not wholly private. As suggested by Schneider, correspondence during this period 'must be considered beyond the dyadic model of single sender and single recipient'.[149] Letters were often read aloud to other people, copied, or even opened prior to delivery. Broomhall and Van Gent in their examination of the correspondence of the Nassau siblings have similarly argued that whilst letters 'created emotional intimacy', for elite individuals writing was also 'often a very public affair'.[150] Far from reducing the utility of correspondence, its performative aspects are of great value as they can reveal much about the nature of the relationship between writer and recipient, as well as how the author wished to portray their emotions to others. Scholars have also highlighted how the prevalence of epistolary guides during this period led to the use of formulaic structures within

---

146 Katie Barclay, 'Intimacy and the Life Cycle in the Marital Relationships of the Scottish Elite during the Long Eighteenth Century', *Women's History Review,* 20:2, (2011), p. 193.
147 Fay Bound, 'Writing the Self? Love and the Letter in England, c.1160-c. 1760', *Literature and History*, Vol.11 Issue 1, (May 2002), p. 5.
148 Meritxell Simon-Martin, ' "Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon's Travel Letters" Performative identity-formation in epistolary narratives', *Women's History Review,* 22:2, (2013), p. 226.
149 Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996), p. 23.
150 Susan Broomhall and Jacqueline Van Gent, 'Corresponding Affections: Emotional Exchange Among Siblings in the Nassau Family', *Journal of Family History,* Vol. 34, Issue. 2, (April 2009), p. 147.

correspondence. These guides provided advice on how to construct letters pertaining to the specific relationship between the writer and recipient, with many texts also including sections on love letters.[151] However, despite providing a framework for more 'affective' correspondence, Bound has contended that their structure and content were no less crafted than depositions given in court during the same period.[152] Indeed, Rosenwein argues that scholars should not dismiss epistolary conventions as meaningless, suggesting that they are useful for understanding the emotional lexis of a given community, so providing scholars with information on what individuals felt, or should have felt.[153] As such, although conventions within letter writing are taken into account in this thesis, particularly with regards to modes of address, they do not undermine the utility of correspondence, instead serving as indications for how past individuals from a specific shared network were expected to interact with one another and display their emotions.

When utilising correspondence between couples it is important to note that this is not likely to be a consistent stream over the duration of a marriage. Letters only account for times in which couples were not in each other's presence and therefore needed to write in order to facilitate contact. Macfarlane has suggested that it is these periods of separation which allow the historian glimpses into a private relationship which would otherwise remain unknown.[154] Barclay has similarly emphasised the scattered nature of correspondence as a source for the study of marriage, stating that for many couples it 'tends to cluster over periods that may last years', and that the entire length of a marriage may not be reflected.[155] Additionally, the 'return action' of a letter may not always be available but, as Bossis has argued, nevertheless did exist at some point and should be taken into

---

[151] See: Samuel Sheppard, *The Secretaries Studie* (London: 1652); Henry Care, *The Female Secretarie* (London: 1671).
[152] Fay Bound, 'Writing the Self? Love and the Letter in England, c.1160-c. 1760', *Literature and History*, Vol.11, Issue 1, (May 2002), p. 5.
[153] Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600-1700* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2016), p. 9.
[154] Macfarlane, *The family life of Ralph Josselin,* p. 106.
[155] Barclay, 'Intimacy and the life cycle in the Marital Relationships of the Scottish Elite', p. 192.

account.[156] This is especially pertinent for female authored letters, as these are far less likely to survive in archives than their male counterparts.[157] Whilst the case studies utilised in this thesis have been chosen in part due to their representation of women as well as men, many of the collections examined suffer from the issue of gendered survival rates. For example, the Portland collection housed at the University of Nottingham has over 70 letters from John Holles to his wife Margaret, but her replies to these are unfortunately absent.[158] However, even when correspondence is lost, replies can to some extent be deduced through context provided by third party material. Within this study, correspondence provides an excellent window into the thoughts and feelings of individuals, allowing for an exploration of emotional displays and standards throughout the life cycle of marriage.

This project also utilises legal documents such as marriage contracts, wills, and court depositions. Elite marriage settlements were highly detailed documents, providing information on the financial intricacies of matches as well as terms regarding dowries and estates. The particulars of these agreements can be utilised to shed light on the motivations behind marriage, and when compared with other personal source material demonstrate to what extent expectations made in the negotiation stages were met. These documents have been widely utilised by scholars for information regarding the settlements made, however, very little attention is paid to the signatories.[159] In addition to the parties to be married, witnesses and guarantors also attached their names to marriage settlements. These signatories are examined within this thesis, providing useful information on which individuals were considered of importance during marriage arrangements, as well as shedding light on the significance and endurance of family and kin networks. Wills are also utilised in a similar

[156] Bossis and McPherson, 'Methodological Journeys through correspondence', p. 67.
[157] James Daybell, *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700* (Palgrave: Hampshire, 2001), p. 3.
[158] See UNMASC Pw2/441-509, letters from John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, January 1698/9-July 1709.
[159] For examples of use of marriage contracts see: O'Day, *An Elite Family in Early Modern England,* p. 85; Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth- Century England,* p. 27; *Barclay*, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* pp. 75-95.

manner, with the beneficiaries, as well as what they have been left, providing information regarding the relationships between certain individuals.

This study also examines court depositions, specifically those regarding the contested will of the 2nd Duke of Newcastle.[160] Stone in particular makes a case for the utility of these sources, claiming that they offer 'intimate insight' into both the behaviour and the psychology of past actors.[161] He does, however, acknowledge that these records do have their flaws, a sentiment echoed by Bailey who suggests that the so called "truths" contained within these court records are often 'diverse, contradictory and dependent upon the teller'.[162] When viewed through the lens of performativity of emotions, such sources provide information on not only how individuals may have felt about certain situations, but also how they portrayed these emotions in order to achieve their aims. Within this study the emphasis is not on legal proceedings raised specifically for instances of marital conflict, such as divorce or separation hearings. Instead, narratives of disagreement between couples and other family members are drawn from testimonies concerning other legal disputes, such as the contestation of the duke's will, providing insight into marital conflict which did not reach the courts in its own right.

The period under consideration also saw a marked increase in the production and publication of advice literature. These texts provide useful information regarding what contemporaries deemed as the model behaviour within marriage for both husbands and wives. Scholars such as Vickery have argued that the ideals contained within advice literature were often conflicting, with texts calling for wifely obedience whilst also extolling the virtues of love and companionship.[163] Chapter One of this

[160] See NA, DD/4P/35/49-200, documents relating to the probate of the 2nd Duke's will, c. 1687-1693.
[161] Stone, *Uncertain Unions,* pp. 4-5.
[162] Stone, *Broken Lives,* p. 7; Bailey, *Unquiet* Lives, p. 1.
[163] Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter,* p. 9.

thesis explores these debates, arguing that conduct writers did not see these ideals as oppositional, instead viewing them as linked.

As well as being used to determine the supposed ideals of behaviour for the period, this advice literature is additionally utilised to examine the emotional standards of the time, drawing on and building upon the work of Stearns regarding emotionology.[164] This study also assesses whether these ideals and emotional norms can be detected within personal experiences of marriage, thus developing and testing the work of David Turner, who utilised prescriptive literature in his assessment of adultery in early modern England.[165] This is achieved through the close interrogation of personal source material such as correspondence across the life cycle of early modern marriage.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One of this thesis explores the ideals of marriage and the family in early modern England as found within prescriptive literature. Focusing on the vows of love, honour and obedience, the link between the proposed duties for husbands and wives and contemporary theories regarding gender roles is explored. In particular the use of religious and humoural arguments to justify ideals of wifely submission and male authority is examined. It is argued that such prescriptions concerning patriarchal authority were also reflective of contemporary anxieties regarding its limitations within marriage, with conduct writers aiming to instruct both men and women on how to reach this ideal.

Chapter Two examines the 'creation' of elite marriages during this period through in-depth analysis of personal correspondence. The ways in which these matches were arranged is explored, with a particular focus on who was involved in these proceedings. It is argued that the agency of individuals in the decisions regarding their marriage arrangements was heavily dependent on other

[164] Stearns and Stearns, 'Emotionology', pp. 813-836.
[165] David Turner, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2002).

factors, such as age or position, illuminated most clearly with the examples of heirs and heiresses. The role of parents and close family is emphasised; however, it is also found that extended kin and friends were similarly of importance, from providing useful connections to aiding with negotiations. This chapter also explores the differing roles of men and women within marriage arrangements, finding that there were gendered expectations regarding the nature of their involvement. Drawing on theories from the field of emotions, the emotional landscape of elite marriage arrangements is examined, emphasising the potential for conflict and emotional upheaval within the Cavendish family matches. The use of emotions and emotive language is similarly explored with reference to the ideals of the period, finding that individuals utilised certain emotive terminology and conventions in order to achieve their goals within marriage arrangements.

Chapter Three examines the lived experience of elite couples following marriage, exploring how individuals navigated this new stage in their life. In particular, "flash points" in marriage such as childbirth, periods of distance between couples, and conflict are discussed, with an emphasis on the emotional displays of individuals at these times. The portrayal of love is explored, utilising personal source material to uncover the use of terms of endearment and emotives, both to one's spouse and to third parties. Drawing on theories of performativity it is additionally argued that the portrayal of feelings such as anxiety, affection, and joy could also be utilised to emphasise the success of a match. Adherence to the ideals of marriage as set out within prescriptive literature is also discussed within this chapter. It is argued that when individuals acted outside of these prescribed standards they faced censure from others, with the potential for conflict both within marriage and the wider family. In particular the duties of wifely submission and obedience are examined, finding that whilst women did indeed garner criticism for acting outside of these ideals, there were few long-term repercussions, suggestive of limitations to patriarchal authority. The flexible nature of patriarchal headship is also examined through discussion of the responsibilities women could hold as 'deputy

husbands'. This chapter also explores the importance of correspondence within marriage, finding that it was capable of both causing conflict, as well as remedying it. Additionally, the support of family members and friends through marriage is examined, both through epistolary networks and aid provided in person. It is argued that this support was both practical and sentimental in nature, with parents and other family members keen that their relatives enjoyed a successful match.

Chapter Four explores life after marriage, focusing on the death of one's spouse, remarriage, and the changing role of widows and widowers. Portrayals of grief are examined in conjunction with contemporary ideals and standards, finding that despite suggestions that public displays of emotion in mourning were, to a certain extent, discouraged (particularly for men), grief within the Cavendish family network was not only accepted but also expected. It will be argued that displays of grief were somewhat performative in nature, suggesting that a focus on emotions such as happiness in marriage served to emphasise the overall success of a match. The status of widows and widowers is additionally explored, especially with regards to the effect this change had on the standing and authority of women within their families. It is argued that whilst there were changes to the powers of women upon the death of their husbands, an increase in influence was not absolute but instead dependent on individual circumstances. The topic of remarriage is also explored, both in terms of how it is approached within advice literature and in real lived experience, with a particular emphasis on the ways in which this differed to first marriages. The importance of agency within remarriage is discussed, finding that whilst there was less emphasis on the role of parents within much of the contemporary advice literature, that in practice the role of individual choice was often still limited and dependent on a variety of different factors.

Chapter One

'Love, Honour and Obey': Ideals of Early Modern Marriage

On Christmas Day of 1665 Samuel Pepys wrote the following diary entry:

> To church in the morning, and there saw a wedding in the church, which I have not seen many a day; and the young people so merry with another, and strange to see what delight we married people have to see these poor fools decoyed into our condition, every man and woman gazing and smiling at them.[1]

The 'condition' of marriage as described by Pepys was one which was much discussed during the early modern period, going through a great deal of changes both legally and socially. This chapter examines how the preoccupation with the condition of marriage was reflected and discussed within prescriptive literature of the time, with a specific focus on how this related to elite marriages.

During this period the genre of advice literature saw a marked increase in both popularity and volume. Whilst Frances Dolan views this as merely a reflection of the growth of popular print, others contend that this increase is attributable to a manifestation of significant unease from both political elites and the clergy.[2] The purpose of such texts, as suggested by Macfarlane, was to disseminate their thoughts and advice regarding marriage and the family more widely, as well as serving as a warning for the potential dangers of perceived undesirable behaviours.[3] One of the first and only scholars to provide a detailed analysis of conduct literature as a distinct genre was Chilton Powell. Describing such texts as 'utilitarian rather than literary' he suggested that they were

---

[1] Samuel Pepys, *Diary of Samuel Pepys,* https://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1665/12/25/ [accessed 03/04/2021].
[2] Frances E. Dolan, *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth Century England* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 2013), p. 6; Joanne Bailey, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660-1800* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003), p. 4; Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England 1570-1640* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1987), p. 125.
[3] Alan MacFarlane, *Marriage and Love in England 1300-1840* (Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, 1986), p. 169.

reminiscent of the Puritan households they aimed to advise, 'flat, pedantic and heavy'.[4] Whilst Powell provides a useful overview of the content of these texts, subsequent scholars have made use of conduct literature to examine other aspects of early modern society.

Most notably for the purposes of this thesis is the work of Peter and Carol Stearns, who argued that didactic sources can illuminate the emotional conventions of the past, suggesting that the recommendations within prescriptive guides on how to manage emotions such as love, anger, or sadness 'lay bare' the prevailing ideals of the era in which they were produced.[5] This approach has been challenged by subsequent scholars, particularly with regards to its focus on modern texts.[6] This study contends that the Stearns' methods can also be applied to earlier texts, building on the work of scholars such as Bernard Capp, Linda Pollock and Andrea Brady who have utilised early modern prescriptive literature to examine the ideals surrounding emotions and emotional responses such as anger, sorrow or tears.[7] Building upon the utility of such methods, this thesis considers conduct literature both in terms of the practical ideals of marriage at the time, as well as the emotional standards prescribed.

Conduct literature has also been utilised by scholars to uncover the ideals of gender roles in early modern society, with Alexandra Shepard suggesting that their domestic prescriptions have 'provided the cornerstone for much of the gender analysis' of this period.[8] Susan Dwyer Amussen, for example, has highlighted the use of didactic literature to explore the 'ideological construction of

---

[4] Chilton Latham Powell, *English Domestic Relations 1487-1653* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1917), p. 142.
[5] Susan J. Matt, 'Recovering the Invisible Methods for the historical study of the emotions' in Susan J. Matt and Peter N. Stearns (eds.), *Doing Emotions History* (University of Illinois Press, 2014), p. 48.
[6] Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No.3 (June 2002), p. 825.
[7] Bernard Capp, "Jesus Wept' But did the Englishman? Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, No. 224 (August 2014), pp. 75-108; Andrea Brady, "A Share of Sorrows': Death in the Early Modern English Household', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Emotions in the Household 1200-1900,* pp. 185-202.
[8] Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006), p. 72.

hierarchy' in her exploration of class and gender.[9] Jessica Murphy has also examined conduct manuals written between 1529 and 1650 to uncover behavioural expectations for women, with a particular focus on chastity and obedience.[10] This chapter will explore these texts with regards to the ideals they set forth for marriage in terms of the duties for husbands and wives, examining how this advice differed for both parties. In particular the duties of love, honour and obedience will be discussed, highlighting the importance attributed to these by conduct writers. It will be argued that, whilst sometimes appearing contradictory in nature, the vows were viewed as interconnected by many authors, each facilitating the other. It will also be demonstrated in this chapter that the advice of conduct writers regarding how to feel and perform emotions was often gendered, relating closely to contemporary theories regarding men and women, thus adding to the understanding of gender norms and patriarchal ideas during this period.

This chapter will also explore to what extent prescriptive literature at this time was indicative of real lived experience of elite individuals. Kathleen Davies has suggested that these texts were descriptive rather than prescriptive, arguing that rather than advocating for new ideals, authors were 'describing the best form of bourgeois marriage as they knew it'.[11] David Turner similarly suggests that whilst there were areas of debate among society regarding marriage, the ability of writers to provide this advice 'rested on the broad acceptance of a set of universal principles'.[12] Conversely, other scholars have highlighted the discrepancies between prescribed advice and the lived experience of many couples, such as Ingrid Tague, who contends that 'nowhere were potential conflicts

[9] Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 7.
[10] Jessica C. Murphy, *Virtuous Necessity: Conduct Literature and the Making of the Virtuous Woman in Early Modern England* (University of Michigan Press: USA, 2015), p. 7.
[11] Kathleen M. Davies, 'The Sacred Condition of Equality: How Original Were Puritan Doctrines of Marriage?', *Social History*, Vol. 2, No. 5 (May, 1977), p. 577.
[12] David Turner, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2002), pp. 53-54.

between ideal and reality in early modern England more vivid than in marriage'.[13] Such suggestions will be explored within this chapter through examination of the conduct literature itself, and further tested in later chapters with reference to the lived experience of elite couples as found within personal source material. This will be explored with regards to how authors outlined the purpose of their books, their concerns, and how these were utilised to achieve adherence to the prescribed ideals. It will be shown that such anxieties often differed for men and women, further emphasising the gendered nature of much of the advice and ideals surrounding marriage during this period.

Authorship

Most writers of this genre were churchmen, belonging largely to the Puritan wing of the church.[14] As previously highlighted, there is some debate among scholars as to what extent the Reformation brought new perspectives on marriage, with some scholars arguing that texts written at this time reflected the 'peculiar character' of Puritan marriage ideals.[15] However, this view has been subsequently disputed, with Davies calling into question the originality of many of the ideals put forward in post-reformation conduct literature. Citing similarities in their views on male dominance, the role of women both as wives and mothers, marital violence, and adultery, she argues that Puritan authors had more in common with their Roman Catholic counterparts than previously suggested, despite considerable theological changes regarding the status of marriage.[16] Gowing has similarly highlighted that advice expounded within printed sermons and manuals was 'hardly original to

[13] Ingrid H. Tague, 'Love, Honor, and Obedience: Fashionable Women and Discourse of Marriage in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 40, No. 1 (Jan., 2001), p. 105.
[14] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), p. 126-128; Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Palgrave Macmillan: 1988), pp. 68.
[15] James T. Johnson, 'The Covenant Idea and the Puritan View of Marriage', *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 32, No. 1 (Mar 1971), p. 118. See also Edmund Leites, 'The Duty to Desire: Love, Friendship, and Sexuality in Some Puritan Theories of Marriage', *Journal of Social History,* Vol. 15, No.3 (Spring 1982), pp. 383-408.
[16] Davies, 'The Sacred Condition of Equality', pp. 563-580.

Puritan teaching and doctrine'. However, there are elements of Protestant and Puritan teachings and practices which can be seen to have had a significant impact on the ideals espoused for marriage. One of the most substantial of these was the newly permitted marriage of the clergy.[17] In contrast to pre-reformation religious leaders who represented the ideals of chastity, the new clergy instead portrayed an 'ideal of conjugal affection'.[18] Many conduct authors during the period under consideration were married themselves, and thus unlike their past counterparts were able to draw upon their own experience when providing marital advice. Patrick Collinson has highlighted how in contrast to pre-reformation advice on marriage, which was provided by celibate priests, churchmen at this time were supposed to represent the values of 'model families'.[19] As such, Christine Peters argues, their guidance was of significance to many of their contemporaries.[20] Many of the prescriptive texts at this time started their life as sermons preached in church, most often for marriage services. Examples of these are found throughout the period such as William Whateley's *A Bride Bush* (1617) and John Sprint's *The Bride- Womans Counsellor* (1699), which both reference their beginnings as public sermons within their titles.[21] Many of the writers utilised within this thesis enjoyed high levels of popularity as preachers, such as William Gouge, author of *Domesticall Duties* who drew such large crowds at Blackfriars Church that money had to be raised to enlarge the building.[22] The reputation of these men in their role as preachers is also reflected in the popularity of

[17] Collinson, *Birthpangs of Protestant England,* p. 67.
[18] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Penguin Books: England, 1977), p. 100.
[19] Collinson, *Birthpangs of Protestant England,* p. 68.
[20] Christine Peters, *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003), p. 314.
[21] William Whately, *A Bride Bush; or a direction for married persons, plainly describing the duties common to both, and peculiar to each of them, etc* (London: 1617); John Sprint, *The Bride-Womans Counsellor: Being a Sermon Preach'd at a Wedding, May the 11th, 1699 at Sherbour, in Dorsetshire* (H. Hills in Blackfriars: London, 1709).
[22] Brett Usher, 'William Gouge', *ODNB,* (Jan, 2008).

their texts, with many going through multiple editions across the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[23]

Another form of instructional text which saw a rise in popularity during this period was the parental advice book. It is suggested that the first work of this kind came from King James with his text *Basilikon Doron,* which was published for general consumption in 1603.[24] Another example is that of Francis Osborne's *Advice to a Son* which was reprinted multiple times throughout the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries.[25] There are also examples of texts written by fathers for their daughters, with the most notable of these during this period being Lord Halifax's *Advice to a Daughter.*[26] First written in 1687 for his twelve year old daughter, and privately distributed in manuscript copies entitled 'Advice to Betty', the text was pirated and published as *The Ladies New-Year's Gift, or, Advice to a Daughter* in 1688, with Halifax's name appearing on the sixth edition published in 1699.[27] The female voice is also represented within this genre with the publication of popular maternal advice books. Often these were written in the expectation that the mother herself would not be present during the various stages of her child's life to provide such advice, such as Elizabeth Jocelin's *The Mother's Legacie to her Unborn Child* (1624), penned in fear of dying in childbirth; a fear which proved founded when she died just nine days after the birth of her first

[23] Richard Baxter's *Christian Directory* for example was still being published well into the 19th century. See Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory* (London: 1825); William Fleetwood's *Relative Duties* similarly went through at least 6 editions between the years of 1705 and 1753; Dod and Cleaver's *Godly Form of Household Government* went through nine editions and Gouge's *Domesticall Duties* went through three editions in its first 12 years of publication (See Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood,* p. 70).
[24] The text was also reprinted in 1616, running to as many as 16,000 copies that year alone. See Catherine Gray, 'Feeding on the Seed of the Woman: Dorothy Leigh and the Figure of Maternal Dissent', *ELH,* Vol. 68, No.3, (Fall 2001), p. 563.
[25] Francis Osborne, *Advice to a son* (Printed by H. Hall: London, 1656). Advice letters from fathers to their sons were also numerous during this period, with notable examples from individuals such as Walter Raleigh, Lord Burghley and James I circulating in manuscript form- See James Daybell, 'Social Negotiations in Correspondence between Mothers and Daughter in Tudor and Early Stuart England', *Women's History Review,* Vol. 24, No.4, (Mar 2015), p. 506.
[26] See also: John Heydon, *Advice to a Daughter. In opposition to the Advice to a Sonne. OR Directions for your better Conduct through the various and most important Encounters of this life* (London: 1658).
[27] Mark N. Brown, 'George Savile, first Marquess of Halifax', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004).

child.[28] A notable example within the genre of mother's advice texts is Dorothy Leigh's *The Mother's Blessing,* which went through at least nineteen editions before 1640.[29] Addressed to her sons, Leigh's text covered topics such as prayer, education of children, and how to select a good wife, thus outlining prescriptions for their adult lives.[30] The genre of parental advice books provides an insight into how parents thought of marriage and the methods by which they passed these values onto their children. Elite authored texts such as Lord Halifax's *Advice to a Daughter* are particularly useful as they provide an insight into the ideals and standards of this specific group, as well as the challenges they faced.

Whilst a variety of examples of advice literature will be examined within this thesis, the main focus will be on texts which are deemed to be either particularly influential or popular during the period under examination. William London's *A Catalogue of the Most Vendible Books in England* (1657) provides a useful framework to gauge the popularity of these texts.[31] A number of the books utilised in this thesis are listed by London under the category of "Divinity Books", ranging from parental advice manuals such as Francis Osborne's *Advice to a Son*, to more specific texts aimed at providing advice for marriage such as Gouge's *Domesticall Duties* and William Gataker's *Marriage Duties.*[32] The inclusion of texts such as Gouge's which was first published in 1622 also emphasises the enduring nature of many of these works. Indeed, the genre continued to be of importance throughout the period with other influential texts such as those by Sprint and Halifax continuing to be read well into

---

[28] Jean LeDrew Metcalfe (ed.), 'Introduction' in Elizabeth Joscelin, *The Mother's Legacy to her Unborn Childe* (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2000), p. 5.
[29] It has been suggested that the text was written in response to *Basilikon Doron*, drawing its name from the popularised version of King James' book entitled *The Father's Blessing*. See Gray, 'Dorothy Leigh and the Figure of Maternal Dissent', pp. 563-564.
[30] See: Marsha Urban, *Seventeenth-Century Mother's Advice Books* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2006), p. 44. For other texts within this genre see also: Elizabeth Grymeston, *Miscelanea, Meditations, Memoratives* (London: 1604); Elizabeth Richardson, *The Ladies Legacy* (1645).
[31] Margaret Schotte, "Books for the Use of the Learned and Studious': William London's 'Catalogue of Most Vendible Books", *Book History,* Vol. 11 (2008), p. 33.
[32] William London, *A Catalogue of the most vendible books in England orderly and alphabetically digested… all to be sold by the author at his shop in New-Castle* (London: 1657).

the eighteenth century.[33] As such, although the initial publication of some of the texts examined within this thesis do not precisely correspond with the selected period of 1660 to 1753, they are deemed to be of utility due to the enduring nature of the genre as well as their continued place on private bookshelves.[34]

Readership

There has been some disagreement among scholars as to the readership of conduct literature during this period. In particular the prevalence of male authored texts within the genre has led to questions regarding the utility of prescriptive material in exploring the female viewpoint of marriage. Suzanne Hull, for example, has suggested that most marriage guides at this time were directed towards men, as marriage was a condition dominated by the husband.[35] Similarly, Fletcher argues that whilst many of these texts were written to instruct women as well as men, they can only illuminate 'how men wanted women to see the gender order, their place in it and themselves'. [36] Aughterson, in her examination of conduct literature aimed specifically at women, also suggests that many of these were 'filtered through the meaning of men'.[37] Nonetheless, women did make up a key demographic of the target audience of such books, with Tague highlighting the 'boom in the production of conduct books for women' in the early eighteenth century.[38] The texts themselves also provide

[33] Chris Roulston, 'Space and the representation of marriage in eighteenth-century advice literature', *The Eighteenth Century,* Vol. 49, No. 1, (Spring 2008), p. 30.
[34] Anne Kugler's examination of the diaries of Lady Sarah Cowper highlight her continued reading of texts such as *Domestical Duties* well into the 18th century demonstrating the longevity of certain texts in private collections. See: Anne Kugler, 'Constructing Wifely Identity: Prescription and Practice in the Life of Lady Sarah Cowper', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 40, No. 3, (July 2001), pp. 291-323.
[35] Suzanne W. Hull, *Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for women 1475-1640* (Huntington Library: San Marino, 1982), p. 48.
[36] Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1995) p. xxi.
[37] Kate Aughterson (ed.), *Renaissance Woman: A Sourcebook: Constructions of Femininity in England* (Routledge: London, 1995), p. 67.
[38] Tague, 'Love, Honor, and Obedience', p. 81.

useful information about their intended audience. With the exception of books specifically aimed at either men or women, most texts indicate an intended audience of both sexes through discussion of duties for both husbands and wives. Peters, for example, has emphasised the deliberate plural in Gouge's title which clearly denotes advice for duties of both parties in marriage.[39] As such, an intended audience of both men and women can be assumed for many of the texts examined.

For the purposes of this thesis, which explores the experiences of elite individuals, the social rank of the intended audience of prescriptive literature must also be considered. Earlier scholars such as Stone have questioned whether higher ranks would have interacted with this genre, suggesting that despite their popularity, the readers of conduct literature seem to have been the 'pious bourgeoisie' as opposed to the landed elite.[40] Subsequent assessments, however, have argued that the readers of such literature would have been of higher status, due to the expense of books and literacy levels at the time.[41] Such suggestions are further supported through examination of elite book ownership during the period. For example, Barclay in her study on Scottish elites found that their libraries contained a broad range of cultural products, including conduct and prescriptive literature.[42] The inclusion of sections on how to manage servants also suggests a certain level of wealth among the readers of such texts, yet again pointing to an elite audience.[43] These factors, combined with the prevalence of parental advice literature written by elites for their own children,

[39] Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, p. 314.
[40] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 399.
[41] Tague, 'Love, Honor, and Obedience', pp. 82-83; See David McKittrick, 'Ovid with a Littleton: The cost of English Books in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society,* Vol. 11, No.2 (1997), pp. 184-234 for further information on the relative cost of books during this period; See also Dolan, *True Relations,* p.158 for an overview on the relative cost of texts such as Gouge's *Domestic Duties* to ballads which would have been more readily available.
[42] Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2011), pp.52-53.
[43] See: William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties Eight Treatises,* (London: 1622); William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (London: 1705).

therefore suggest that an elite readership of such texts was likely, justifying its utility within this thesis in order to explore ideals and standards of marriage for this particular group.

There has also been discussion among scholars as to how far elite individuals would have been affected by the advice contained within prescriptive literature. Davies has suggested that aristocratic families would have been impacted very little by these texts. Referring to elite women in particular she argues that they 'seem to have been unaffected by the literary stereotypes even when they were confronted by them'.[44] Gowing has similarly questioned the extent to which concepts regarding gender were determined by advice literature.[45] Other scholars, however, have emphasised the link between such texts and lived experience, such as Amussen who has examined how ideals found within conduct books could shape the popular experience of marriage and family.[46] A useful study which has aimed to bridge the gap between prescriptive ideals and lived experience is Anne Kugler's examination of Lady Sarah Cowper's commonplace books and diaries between 1670 and 1716. Cowper's writings both directly and indirectly referenced many of the popular advice texts of the period by authors such as Halifax, Allestree, and Gouge, as well as books which challenge this genre such as Mary Astell's *Reflections upon Marriage.* In particular Kugler has emphasised how whilst Cowper relied on the ideals contained within these texts as a blueprint for her conduct, she was also able to shape their words in a way that 'vindicated, more than directed, her expectation and behaviour'.[47] The example of Cowper suggests that elite women were not only reading advice literature but also directly interacting with it, further emphasising the utility of exploring the ideals as set out within these texts in comparison with the lived experience of elite individuals.

---

[44] Kathleen M. Davies 'Continuity and Change in Literary Advice on Marriage', in R.B Outhwaite (ed.), *Marriage and Society: studies in the social history of marriage* (St. Martin's Press: New York, 1981), p. 77.
[45] Gowing, *Domestic Dangers,* p. 7.
[46] Amussen, *Ordered Society,* pp. 34-67.
[47] Kugler, 'Constructing Wifely Identity', p. 304.

Gendered Ideals

Conduct literature regarding marriage outlined the duties for both husbands and wives, often with clear divisions between the two in terms of the structure of the texts. These differences are also reflected in the ideals presented to both men and women, and the ways in which both parties are described and addressed. Many of the arguments put forward by authors at this time were underpinned by religious theories. In particular male superiority was widely justified with reference to the creation story, which Wrightson has highlighted as key in aiding male authors validate the perceived inferiority of women.[48] Gataker, for example, defends his statement that 'the Husband is the Superior and the wife the Inferior', with the assertion that woman was 'made for the man' and not 'man for the woman'.[49] This order of superiority, Gataker suggests, was further confirmed by the Fall of Eve and her transgression.[50] Gouge similarly references this in his discussion for the need for wifely obedience stating:

> The first law that ever was given to woman since her fall, laid upon her this duty of *obedience* to her husband, in these words, *Thy desire shall be to thine Husband, and he shall rule over thee.* How can an husband rule over a wife, if shee obey not him?[51]

Such beliefs were widespread during the period, with Fletcher suggesting that they ran so deep that when men heard the homily directing them to honour their wives 'as unto the weaker vessel', they were listening to 'an argument which no man wanted and no woman dared, at least openly, to question'.[52] Suggestions such as these will be further explored within this chapter, finding that despite the clear importance attached to this patriarchal hierarchy there were also concerns from writers regarding non-adherence to this ideal.

---

[48] Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (Routledge: Oxon, 2003), pp. 98-99.
[49] Thomas Gataker, *Marriage Duties Briefely Couched Together* (London: 1620), p. 8.
[50] Gataker, *Marriage Duties,* p. 9.
[51] Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties,* p. 286.
[52] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination,* p. 112.

Arguments based on naturalised views, that is, traits thought to be written into the body, also fed into the perceived character of men and women, and, by extension, their roles and duties within marriage. Whilst instructing young men on what to expect from marriage Richard Baxter in his text *A Christian Directory* provided the following description of female qualities:

> And it is no small patience which the natural imbecility of the female sex requireth you to prepare. Except it be very few that are patient and manlike, women are commonly of potent fantasies, and tender, passionate, impatient spirits, easily cast into anger, or jealousy, or discontent; and of weak understandings, and therefore unable to reform themselves.[53]

The use of the term imbecility here is of particular interest. Whilst women were indeed described using this term, it does not appear to have had the same meaning as it does in modern usage.[54] Within medical texts imbecility was often used to denote weakness or deficiency in a particular body part or bodily function, as opposed to something or someone that was foolish in nature.[55] As such its usage by Baxter, although clearly intended to indicate a deficiency in women, does not necessarily denote stupidity in such a derogatory sense, but rather a general lack of understanding. It is evident that for Baxter the deficiencies of women were closely linked to their emotions and how they expressed these. In contrast to the 'patient' nature of men, women during this period were deemed to be less in control of their emotions and 'particularly susceptible to anger'.[56] Gwynne Kennedy has emphasised the pervasiveness of such theories regarding female anger through an exploration of female authored texts, observing that women were seen as both more quick to anger as well as less able to exercise emotional control.[57] Baxter's description of the few women that are 'patient and manlike' further emphasises that patience was not a trait he usually connected with women. It also

---

[53] Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory: or, A Summ of Practical Theology and cases of conscience* (London: 1673), p. 480.
[54] See Thomas Manton, *A fourth volume containing one hundred and fifty sermons on several texts of Scripture in two parts,* (London: 1693), p. 73 who writes 'Women, because of the imbecility of their sex…'.
[55] Thomas Willis, *Dr Willis's practice of physick* (London: 1684), p. 62 refers to imbecility of 'loins and joynts'; Robert Johnson, *Praxis medicinæ reformata* (London: 1700), p. 97 refers to 'imbecility or feebleness of the heart and courage'.
[56] Gwynne Kennedy, *Just Anger: Representing Women's Anger in Early Modern England* (Southern Illinois University Press: USA, 2000), p. 6.
[57] Kennedy, *Just Anger*, pp. 3-4.

highlights the way in which women during this period were viewed as 'imperfect men'. At this time woman was thought to have been made of man, and it has been argued that this led to a distinction between the sexes not merely in terms of differences but by insufficiency; a woman was 'an inferior or lesser or incomplete man'.[58] Such views were also linked to scientific theories of the sexes during this period, namely the Galenic theory of the humours. The influence of such theories has been highlighted by Gowing, who has emphasised the 'immense rhetorical power' of galenic ideas regarding men and women during this period.[59] All humans were thought to be constructed of four humours which characterized temperament and effected the basic qualities of both sexes. Men's hotter and drier bodies made them energetic, strong, and more prone to anger, whilst the cold and wet humours of women made them passive, gentle and timorous.[60] It is evident that such theories appear in direct contrast to claims that women were actually more susceptible to bouts of uncontrolled anger. Murphy has highlighted this inconsistency within prescriptive literature, pointing to the contradiction between the 'perceived weak nature of women' and the potential for the influence they could have over the experience of men.[61] The reasoning behind such fears regarding female rage during this period has been examined by Linda Pollock, who suggests that it was viewed as 'a challenge to male authority'.[62] Whilst Stearns has suggested that the introduction of standards regarding anger did not appear in earnest until the second half of the eighteenth century, Baxter's text evidently portrays an understanding of contemporary ideals regarding this emotion, emphasising

[58] N.H Keeble (ed.), *The Cultural Identity of Seventeenth Century Woman: A Reader* (Routledge: London, 1994), p. 18.
[59] Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-century England* (Yale University Press: USA, 2003), p. 18.
[60] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England,* pp. 19-20; Gowing, *Common Bodies*, p. 2.
[61] Murphy, *Virtuous necessity,* p. 4.
[62] Linda A. Pollock, 'Anger and the negotiation of relationships in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 47, Issue. 3, (2004), p. 578.

undesirable characteristics as a method by which to outline the emotional ideals necessary in order to maintain patriarchal headship.[63]

In addition to justifying specific duties for husbands and wives, the perceived innate nature of men and women could also influence the structure and tone of the texts themselves, such as Gouge's *Domesticall Duties* in which he states: 'Wives particular duties first laid downe, because they are inferiors'.[64] Davies has highlighted the importance of this belief of natural inferiority in shaping Gouge's arguments, stating that he 'expressed the theory of male dominance in its strongest form'.[65] These views also tied into the importance of hierarchy within marriage and the wider household. The family at this time was seen as a metaphor for the commonwealth, with the man at the head. This hierarchy was deemed vital to the smooth running of a household, with conduct author William Fleetwood in his text *Relative Duties* stating:

> It is impossible for any company of People to subsist any while together, without a Subordination of one to other. Where all will command, none will obey, and then there will be nothing done, but mischief.[66]

Applying such a model to the household, however, was rife with complications, particularly with regards to the relationship and relative duties of husband and wife. As both Gowing and Amussen have highlighted, the relationship between husband and wife was a great deal more complicated than those between parent and child or master and servant, and did not neatly correspond with its literary model.[67] Nevertheless, theories of hierarchy were evidently pervasive throughout much of the conduct literature, feeding into the relative duties and roles for both parties within marriage, as will be examined in the following discussion on the marital vows taken by couples during this period.

---

[63] Carol Zisowitz Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1986), p. 18.
[64] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 11.
[65] Davies, 'Continuity and Change in Literary Advice on Marriage', p. 63.
[66] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 166.
[67] Gowing, *Domestic Dangers,* p.26; Amussen, *Ordered Society,* p. 41.

Marital Duties

Following the Restoration and subsequent reinstitution of the *Book of Common Prayer* for use within marriage services, there were discussions among religious leaders as to how it could be revised. The result of this was an amended version of the book, approved by Parliament in 1662, which formed the basis of the marriage services throughout the period under consideration within this thesis.[68] The vows as set out within the 1662 text for men and women respectively are as follows:

> Husband: 'wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour her, and keep her'
> Wife: 'wilt thou obey him, and serve him, love honour and keep him'.[69]

Through examination of conduct literature, these vows can be condensed into three main duties: love, honour, and obedience. Sprint in his work *The Bride Womans Counsellor* outlined these vows as they pertained to wives:

> *Love, Honour, and Obey:* which are Duties, the performance of which is absolutely necessary to maintain both the Honour and Happiness of a Married State, and is the only proper method that women can take to please their Husbands.[70]

Whilst differing slightly from the vows as set out within the *Book of Common Prayer* it is evident that Sprint considers these the main duties of marriage for women. For men the duty of obedience was not stated within the marriage service, and this is reflected in the prescriptive literature. Nevertheless, other authors similarly placed great emphasis on these three vows when discussing the combined duties of husbands and wives, often citing them as the most important of responsibilities within marriage. Whilst presented as three separate duties, it will be shown that these vows were viewed as being interlinked, each affecting the other in terms of adherence.

---

[68] Anne Laurence, *Women in England 1500-1760: A Social History* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson: London, 1994), p. 41; See 'An Act for the Uniformity of Publique Prayers and Administracion of Sacraments & other Rites & Ceremonies and for establishing the Form of making ordaining and consecrating Bishops Priests and Deacons in the Church of England' at https://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/pp364-370#h3-0027, [accessed 03/04/2021].
[69] 'The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony' in *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Church of England* (Cambridge: 1662).
[70] Sprint, *Bride Woman's Counsellor,* p. 10.

Love

The first of these vows within both the marriage service and Sprint's outline of marital duties was love. The importance of love in early modern society has been emphasised by Barclay, who describes it as a 'central emotion' with the power to shape social relationships.[71] Referring in particular to *Caritas,* a form of neighbourly love representing the working of God in individuals, she posits that love acted as a kind of 'emotional ethic' which aimed to promote a specific type of community.[72] Marital love in particular was of great importance to conduct writers, seen as key in upholding the hierarchy of marriage, both able to ensure female subjection, whilst simultaneously being a guard against unrestrained tyranny.[73] As seen in the service set out in the *Book of Common Prayer,* the promise to love was a vow taken by both parties, and within the prescriptive literature it is made clear that this was a duty expected of both husbands and wives. Conduct writers often described the duty of marital love with reference to the ill effects that would be felt if it was not present. Richard Allestree in his text *The Ladies Calling,* for example, states: 'Tis Love only that cements the hearts, and where that union is wanting, 'tis but a shadow, a carcass of marriage'.[74] This love was also expected to be maintained throughout the marriage, as highlighted by Baxter who suggested that:

> If love be removed but for an hour between Husband and Wife, they are so long as a bone out of joint: There is no ease, no order, no work well done, till they are restored and set in joint again. Therefore be sure that conjugal love be constantly maintained.[75]

[71] Katie Barclay, *Caritas: Neighbourly Love & the Early Modern Self* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2021), p.1. See also Sally Holloway, *The Game of Love in Georgian England: Courtship, Emotions and Material Culture* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2019) for the importance of love in Georgian courtship.
[72] Barclay, *Caritas,* p.3.
[73] See Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*, p. 102-124 for an overview of the role of love in upholding patriarchy in Scottish marriages.
[74] Richard Allestree, *The Ladies Calling in two parts* (Oxford: 1673), p. 166.
[75] Baxter, *Christian Directory,* p. 520.

As with the discussion of specific traits and roles for men and women, many conduct writers highlighted the need for marital love through use of religious arguments, such as Gouge who wrote of the love a husband ought to have for his wife in the following terms:

> *Love,* is expressly set downe, and alone mentioned in this, and in many other places of Scripture, whereby it is evident that all duties are comprised under it… Whosoever therefore taketh a wife, must, in this respect that she is his wife, love her.[76]

Gouge's reference to all duties being comprised under love further impresses upon his readers the importance attached to this particular vow. Indeed, as will be discussed with reference to other marital duties, love was seen by many conduct writers as the facilitator for other important aspects of marriage. For example, the love of a husband was also considered as a way in which to counter undesirable behaviour in their wives. Gouge highlights this stating:

> Because wives through the weaknesse of their sex (for they are the weaker vessels) are much prone to provoke their husbands So as if there bee not love predominant in the husband, there is like to be but little peace betwixt man and wife.[77]

As with Sprint's considerations regarding anger, it is evident that Gouge deems women less able to control their emotions due to their predisposed weakness. The suggestion that this deficiency in control could be tempered by a husband's love further emphasises the importance attached to this duty by Gouge, suggesting that the behaviour of a wife was directly influenced by a man's adherence to this prescribed ideal.

This focus on the love a husband ought to have for his wife was not uncommon, and much of the conduct literature appears to focus more intently on this duty for men. Dorothy Leigh in her advice to her sons emphasised the importance of their role in creating a loving marriage, highlighting the 'folly' of choosing a wife whom they could not love 'till the end'.[78] In addition to extolling the

[76] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 350.
[77] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 350.
[78] Dorothy Leigh, *The Mother's Blessing* (London: 1616), pp. 54-55.

importance of this duty, conduct writer Thomas Carter in his text *Christian Commonwealth* also highlights the supposed lack of adherence to this vow by husbands, stating: 'I feare that among a hundred wee shall scarece finde one that striveth to performe this duty of love as he ought'.[79] He goes on to conclude that 'we have found that the principall duty of the Husband unto the Wife is love, and doe also finde that this is much neglected, contemned, & even despised of many'.[80] It is evident that Carter considers that this duty is not being adhered to as it ought to be, further highlighting the perceived importance of husbandly love as well as the use of conduct literature to address contemporary fears regarding supposed undesirable behaviours.

Whilst there was evidently a great emphasis on the importance of a husband's duty to love his wife, women were also instructed in this vow. The way in which this duty was communicated to women, however, differed greatly to how men were advised. Many conduct writers suggested that women had an inherent inclination to love their husbands, such as Baxter who encouraged men to 'remember that women are ordinarily affectionate, passionate creatures, and as they love much themselves, so they expect much love from you'.[81] Carter similarly outlined this point stating:

> It is indeed so naturall a thing for a woman to loue a man, that we would think she needed not to be prompted or to bee instructed in this poynt, but to performe it truly & faithfully as it ought to be.[82]

Evidently for Baxter and Carter, it is deemed both natural and expected that a wife should love her husband, and perform this love in a particular way. The love a woman was to have for her husband was also closely linked with how she was to please him, with Sprint stating that 'every married woman, in order to please her Husband, ought to love him'.[83] John Dod and Robert Cleaver in their text, *A Godlie Forme of Household Government* similarly emphasised the importance of a wife's love for

---

[79] Thomas Carter, *Carters Christian Commonwealth; or Domesticall Dutyes dechiphered* (Purfoot: London, 1627), p. 15.
[80] Carter, *Christian Commonwealth,* p. 28.
[81] Baxter, *Christian Directory,* p. 520.
[82] Carter, *Christian Commonwealth,* pp. 66-67.
[83] Sprint, *Bride-Womans Counsellor,* p. 10.

her husband, asserting that 'love and peaceableness in the wife towards the husband, is available for the weale of the familie'.[84] The potential ill effects of not following this particular duty are highlighted by Fleetwood who states: 'And whence proceed those endless and innumerable domestick Miseries, that plague, and utterly confound so many Families, but from want of Love and kindness in the wife of Husband'.[85] As with the discussion of the perceived roles of men and women, this reference to an undesirable state of affairs serves as a warning to readers, further emphasising the importance of marital love for women. Such statements echo Gouge's calls for husbandly love in order to keep the peace between married couples, putting the onus instead on the wife. Viewed together, the advice within all three texts underscores the importance of this vow for both men and women, as well as the perceived effect of its adherence on the relative harmony within a marriage.

It is evident that love from both parties was held up as the ideal of marriage within much of the conduct literature of the time. With regards to the ideals of the period, close reading of the selected prescriptive texts can provide useful evidence on the 'emotional standards' regarding love, and what form these were supposed to take. Fleetwood, for example, makes a clear distinction between 'Kindness and affection' and the love found within a marriage, stating that without the latter 'the very best of all good Qualities will never make a constant Conversation easy and delightful'.[86] He also goes on to describe the 'mutual love of marriage' as a type of love distinct from all others.[87] Whilst evidently seen as a unique type of love by Fleetwood, his description does not seem akin to what would be deemed 'romantic love'. Indeed, within much of the conduct literature a

[84] John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Householde Government: For the Ordering of Private Families, according to the direction of Gods word* (London: 1598), p. 89.
[85] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 43.
[86] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 43.
[87] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* pp. 297-298.

more companionate marriage appears to have been held up as the ideal. Baxter, for example, describes the duties that husband and wife owe each other in the following terms:

> There is a great deal of duty which husband and wife do owe to one another, as to instruct, admonish, pray, watch over one another, and to continual helpers to each other in order to their everlasting happiness; and patiently to bear with the infirmities of each other.[88]

Despite not mentioning love explicitly in this extract, Baxter is evidently outlining a companionate relationship between husband and wife as an ideal to strive towards. Of particular interest is his reference to happiness. As will be shown throughout the examination of matches within the Cavendish family network, happiness was often wished for in marriage arrangements. Despite previously being seen as oppositional to happiness, recent scholars have emphasised the importance of this emotion to Puritan writers. S. Bryn Roberts, for example, has explored the works of devotional writer Ralph Venning, highlighting his assertions that happiness stemmed from piety and godliness, with an emphasis on community and maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships.[89] For Baxter, happiness within marriage was also related to the duties each party owed to each other, in addition to their shared faith. Whilst such companionship based around mutual happiness, help, and prayer was set out as an emotional standard by writers such as Baxter, passionate romantic love was often deemed as detrimental to a marriage. Cressy has highlighted how some moralists of the period deemed 'passionate emotion' between a couple as a 'dangerous foundation'.[90] Instead, as Tague has outlined, writers recommended a 'strong but controlled emotional attachment' between husband and wife.[91] This distrust of passionate love is seen in the following extracts from Gouge wherein he outlines the two uses of the 'puritie of a husbands love'

---

[88] Baxter, *Christian Directory,* p. 17.
[89] S. Bryn Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness: The Ministry and Theology of Ralph Venning, c.1621–1674* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), pp. 79-101.
[90] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death, Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), p. 255.
[91] Tague, 'Love, Honour, and Obedience', p. 90.

for his wife. Firstly he states that this purity of feeling 'restraineth an husbands love to his owne wife'. Whilst a husband 'may and ought to love others', Gouge highlights the 'particular matrimoniall love' which moves a man to prefer his wife above all others. Secondly, Gouge claims that the purity of marital love 'orders and moderates his loue, so as it turneth not into sinfull lust, whereby that estate, (which in it selfe by vertue of Gods ordinance, is holy) is polluted'.[92] The delicate balance regarding how love was to be experienced and performed has been examined by Foyster, who argues that it was thought during this period that men in love were in danger of losing their reason and becoming irrational, thus endangering their position of superiority.[93] Due to the prevailing humoral theories of the time that women were irrational with men more predisposed to reason, such a display thus called into question a man's masculinity and by extension his patriarchal headship. The deficiency of reason in a husband portrayed through uncontrolled love was therefore cause for concern, with Gouge deeming such behaviour as dangerous, having the potential to impact the success of the marriage as a whole. Osborne similarly warns of the dangers of unbridled passion in his *Advice to a Son* suggesting that a man is:

> …so hurried away with the first apparition of an imaginary beauty… that no Reason can for the present be audible, but what pleadeth in favour of this soft Passion; which makes a deeper or lesser impress, proportionable to the temper of the Heart it meets with; causing Madness in some, Folly in all…[94]

In addition to the perceived effects on a man's own mind, Osborne also goes on to equate passion with a threat to the expected gender hierarchy within marriage, stating that such uncontrolled love resulted in 'rendering him subject to Slavery, that was born free; and suffering her to Command who ought in righter Reason to Serve and Obey'.[95] It is evident that for both Gouge and Osborne the

---

[92] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 416.
[93] Elizabeth A. Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (Addison Wesley Longman Limited: Essex,1999), pp. 55-58.
[94] Francis Osborne, *Advice to a Son* (Printed by H. Hall: Oxford, 1656), pp. 48-49.
[95] Osborne, *Advice to a Son,* p. 49.

way in which a husband was supposed to love was closely linked with the relative success of a marriage. Whilst men were encouraged to love their wives, this love was expected to be controlled and expressed in a way which did not diminish his natural superiority, nor lead to a loss in rationality of thought or action. Such prescriptions are thus representative of emotional standards, as they seek to convey the accepted forms of love, whilst also providing examples of how any deviation from this could negatively impact marriage.

The duty to love as described within conduct literature is also closely linked with the submission of wives to their husbands. Barclay has highlighted this with reference to Scottish elite couples, suggesting that for women during this period, 'loving behaviour was synonymous with obedience'.[96] Allestree describes the importance of wifely love in the following terms:

> This is it which facilitate all other duties of marriage; makes the yoke sit so lightly, that it pleases rather than gall. It should therefore be the study of Wives to preserve this flame; that like the vestal fire it may never go out.[97]

As with Gouge, Allestree's description of love as facilitating all other duties further emphasises its importance to writers at the time. The employment of the imagery of the 'yoke' of marriage here is of particular interest. Whilst utilised in this instance to outline wifely duties within marriage, the metaphor was not exclusively applied to women. Osborne, for example, makes several references to the 'yoke' of marriage for both men and women.[98] Henry Smith, in his text *A Preparative to Marriage,* similarly emphasised the importance of couples bearing the weight of this yoke together, else 'all the burden will lie upon one'.[99] As with Allestree, therefore, there is a suggestion that whilst the yoke of marriage was something all individuals were to expect, this was not supposed to be perceived as an incumbrance. Allestree's discussion of the duty of love as a way in which to make wifely submission

[96] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*, p.103.
[97] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling*, p. 166.
[98] Osborne, *Advice to a Son,* p. 64, p. 66.
[99] Henry Smith, *A Preparative to Mariage* (London: 1591), p.34.

more palatable is also present within many of the texts examined. Gouge, for example, indicated how a husband's love for his wife could aid him in maintaining authority without abusing his power, stating:

> Because his place of eminency, and power of authority may soone puffe him up, and make him insult over his wife, and trample her under his feet, if an intire *love* of her bee not planted in his heart. To keepe him from abusing his authority is *love* so much pressed upon him.[100]

Carter similarly suggested that love was the best method to ensure obedience from one's wife, advising husbands that 'her obedience must proceed through love, and a man may draw more from a woman by loving and kind using of her than any way by force'.[101] The balance between love and authority was a delicate one, however, as noted by Baxter:

> The husband must so unite Authority and Love, that neither of them may be omitted or concealed, but both be exercised and maintained. Love must not be exercised so imprudently as to destroy the exercise of authority: And Authority must not be exercised over a wife so magisterially and imperiously, as to destroy the exercise of love.[102]

As with Gouge and Osborne, Baxter is evidently concerned with the ways in which a husband might express his love. By stating that failure to temper this love in a sensible manner may lead to a lack of authority within a marriage, this extract further impresses upon its male readers the significance of controlling their emotions in a way which befitted their sex.

The duty to love was evidently deemed to be of great importance within the conduct literature of the period. In particular, discussions regarding the influence of both the experience and portrayal of love on the success of a marriage emphasises its significance to conduct writers. Whilst held up as an ideal for both men and women, the differences in how this was advised to be felt and performed by both sexes provide useful evidence regarding the gendered ideals of emotion during

---

[100] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 350.
[101] Carter, *Christian Commonwealth,* p. 20.
[102] Baxter, *Christian Directory,* p. 529.

this period. The onus on how love was to be felt and displayed for both men and women is reflective of the humoral theories of the time, with husbands instructed to control their emotions so as to avoid impacting their patriarchal influence, and wives entreated to love according to their natural predisposition. Descriptions and warnings regarding non-adherence to this duty suggest that conduct writers were not just describing marriage as it was generally experienced, but also responding to contemporary societal fears regarding the institution. These fears were vocalised in various forms, from conduct writers such as Carter who explicitly stated his worries over men's non adherence to the duty of love, to pamphlets such as that entitled 'Women love your husbands', which narrated crimes by women who did not submit to the authority of their husband.[103] The importance attached to the duty of love within marriage is also further emphasised with reference to how it was thought to interact with or facilitate other marital duties. The connection between these and the extent to which there was a hierarchy of significance will be further examined within the following discussion on the remaining vows.

Honour

The vow to honour was also taken by both parties, with the state of marriage itself described within the service as 'an honourable estate'.[104] For men in particular, marriage was closely linked with an increase in honour, seen as an achievement of his manhood, bringing with it 'privilege and respect' from his peers, and depending on who he married, an increase in his honourable standing among the elite.[105] When discussing the duty to honour within marriage, many of the prescriptive texts examined refer to concepts such as reverence, respect and regard. Gataker, for example, refers to the

---

[103] See Thomas Carter, *Carters Christian Commonwealth; or Domesticall Dutyes dechiphered* (Purfoot: London, 1627), p. 15; See Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003), p. 124.

[104] 'The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony' in *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662).

[105] Shephard, *Meanings of Manhood,* p.83; Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 46.

first duty of marriage for women as 'Reverence', which he states comprehends of both honour and fear.[106] The importance attached to this duty as being above all others is of particular interest. For many of the other conduct writers examined, it was love not honour that was deemed as the facilitator for all other duties. It must be noted, however, that Gataker is discussing the duty to honour in this instance with reference to how it pertains to wives, as opposed to both parties. Faramerz Dabhoiwala has highlighted how contemporary views on honour differed for men and women, terming them 'highly gendered concepts'.[107] These differences also translated into polarising advice for husbands and wives within the conduct literature of the time. In contrast to the vow to love, advice pertaining to the importance of the duty to honour within a marriage was often directed at women.

For wives, the honour they were to have for their husbands was closely linked to their position of inferiority in the marriage. Baxter, for example, advises women to 'honour your husbands according to their superiority'.[108] Gataker similarly links honour to the concept of hierarchy, stating that it is the 'generall dutie of all inferiours'.[109] This belief in the superiority of men over women in marriage was underpinned by religious arguments, and advice writers also drew on similar evidence to emphasise the importance of a wife's honour for her husband. Gataker, for example, refers to the edict of biblical King Assuerus, who proclaimed that 'all women, high or low, doe give honour to their husbands'.[110] The importance of a wife honouring her husband is likewise outlined by Sprint who states, 'married women in order to please their husbands ought to honour them'.[111] With striking similarity to his justifications for the need for wifely love, it is evident that Sprint deems the

---

[106] Gataker, *Marriage Duties,* p. 12.
[107] Faramerz Dabhoiwala, 'The Construction of Honour, Reputation and Status in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol. 6, (1996), pp. 201-202.
[108] Baxter, *Christian Directory*, p. 530.
[109] Gataker, *Marriage Duties,* p. 12.
[110] Gataker, *Marriage Duties,* p. 12.
[111] Sprint, *Bride-Woman's Counsellor,* p. 1.2

upholding of this vow by women as necessary for the comfort of their husbands.[112] Whilst the duties of love and honour for men are discussed within conduct literature with regards to their benefits for helping to secure patriarchal headship, this extract from Sprint emphasises that for women they were inextricably linked to their position of submission within the hierarchy of the marriage. Such distinctions further emphasise that whilst the duties of love and honour were vows taken by both parties, the ways in which these were expressed in prescriptive literature were closely tied to prevailing theories regarding gender and the patriarchal ideal, which placed men in a position of authority and superiority over their wives.

The honour a wife was to have for her husband was described by Sprint in two forms: internal and external. Internal honour was outlined in the following terms:

> This is when she cherisheth an high Esteem of him in her Mind, when she thinks on him as one whom God hath appointed and ordained to be her Superior and Head.[113]

Gouge similarly discusses this concept in his examination of 'inward reverance', which he describes as 'an awful respect which a wife in her heart hath of her husband, esteeming him worthy of all honour for his place and office sake, because he is her husband'. [114] Evidently for both authors this internal honour was closely linked to the superiority of a husband over his wife, thus warranting her respect. As with the vow to love, it is suggested within these extracts that a woman would have a natural propensity towards thinking well of her husband. Such advice regarding the performance of internal honour is also indicative of proposed emotional standards, as both Sprint and Gouge are describing not just acceptable actions but also expectations about appropriate modes of feeling.

---

[112] 'Every married woman, in order to please her Husband, ought to love him'- Sprint, *Bride-Womans Counsellor,* p. 10.
[113] Sprint, *Bride Woman's Counsellor,* p. 12.
[114] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 274.

Drawing on theories of emotionology, the emphasis placed on internal honour for women thus serves as an ideal for female behaviour during this period.[115]

In contrast, 'external honour' as outlined within conduct literature is more focused on how this esteem was to be performed. Baxter describes this outward honour in the following terms:

> *Honour your husbands according to their superiority.* Behave not your selves towards them with unreverance and contempt, in title, speeches or any behaviour: If the worth of their persons deserve not *Honour*, yet their *place* deserveth it. Speak not of their infirmities to others behind their backs.[116]

Sprint also outlines the importance of this outward show of respect, describing it as 'that high Esteem which the woman hath of her husband… expressed or declared in Words or Actions'.[117] As with the descriptions of internal honour it is evident that such external actions were expected due to the proposed superiority of the husband in a marriage. This external honour clearly extends beyond the confines of the household, with a great deal of emphasis placed on how to demonstrate the required esteem of one's husband to others, through both speech and behaviour. Such displays of honour were also seen as closely linked to inward respect, with Gouge stating that:

> Unlesse this inward reverence and due respect of an husband be first placed in the heart of a wife, either no outward reverence and obedience will be performed at all, or if it be performed, it will be very unsound, onely in shew, hypocriticall and deceitfull: so that *as good never a whit, as never the better.*[118]

Evidently for Gouge, an outward demonstration of honour was insufficient if it was not underpinned by the internal esteem of a wife for her husband. Such suggestions further emphasise the importance of honour and respect as behavioural standards women were expected to adhere to, as well as how these were informed by emotional ideals.

---

[115] See Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 90, No. 4 (Oct., 1985), pp. 813-836.
[116] Baxter, *Christian Directory,* p. 530.
[117] Sprint, *Bride Woman's Counsellor,* p. 13.
[118] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 275.

As with the vow to love, the importance of the duty to honour was also underpinned with reference to the dangers of those who did not follow this particular vow. Gouge drew attention to this stating, 'Contrary to the forenamed subjection, is the opinion of many wives, who thinke themselves every way as good as their husbands, and no way inferior to them'.[119] As with the ways in which authors outlined the love husbands ought to have for their wives, this extract suggests that there was widespread undesirable behaviour which the writer was attempting to supress. An article published in the *Spectator* highlights the extent of this perceived issue, stating: 'Many are the Epistles I every Day receive from Husbands, who complain of Vanity, Pride, but above all Ill-Nature in their wives'.[120] However, the author does not lay the blame for this entirely upon women, suggesting that 'the cause of their uneasiness is in themselves; and indeed I have hardly ever observed the married condition unhappy but from want of Judgment or Temper in the Man'.[121]

Indeed, whilst the duty of honour was mostly laid at the feet of women, it was a vow taken by both parties within the marriage service. Gouge, for example, advises both husbands and wives in the importance of this duty, stating:

> So neerely are husbands and wives joined together, as the good name of the one cannot but tend to the honour and credit of the other; so that herein they seeke their owne honour also.[122]

As well as being outlined within prescriptive literature, the importance of the honour a husband ought to have for his wife also appears within the *Homily on Marriage* published in 1563, which was read in Church every Sunday upon order of the Crown.[123] Within the homily it was stated that:

---

[119] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 271.
[120] *The Spectator*, Issue CCCCLXXIX, (Tuesday September 9, 1712), *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Newspapers Collection* [accessed 03/04/2021].
[121] *The Spectator*, Issue CCCCLXXIX.
[122] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* pp. 247-248.
[123] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 138.

> The woman ought to have a certaine honoure attributed to her, that is to say, she must be spared and borne with, the rather for that she is the weaker vessel, of a fraile heart, inconstant, and with a word soone stirred to wrath. [124]

As with the discussion of contemporary perceptions of women, honour in this extract is similarly linked to the perceived weakness of the female sex and their inability to regulate their emotional responses. Carter made a similar connection within his text *Christian Commonwealth,* referring to the words of Saint Peter stating, 'Ye husbands dwell with your men as men of knowledge giving honour unto the women as the weaker vessell'.[125] Extracts such as these further suggest that the honour both parties were to feel and perform for one another was closely linked to their positions within the hierarchy of marriage, thus confirming the arguments put forward by Shepard and Gowing that much of the advice espoused within prescriptive literature had a core focus on upholding the patriarchal hierarchy of the household.[126]

Whilst a vow taken by both husband and wife within the marriage service, it has been shown that the onus on the upholding of honour within a marriage was mostly directed at women within the prescriptive literature. The duty of honour was evidently closely bound with the ideals of hierarchy within a marriage, with wifely respect and reverence seen as a natural result of a husband's role at the head of the family. However, whilst honour was evidently much discussed with regards to wifely duties, an emphasis on the unwavering authority of men to ensure this behaviour also places the responsibility in the hands of husbands. Such advice is suggestive of an anxious patriarchy, with men needing to be reminded of their duties in order to secure the respect of their wives and by extension their position of superiority and authority.[127] Indeed, the rhetoric used to describe the duty of honour for women is very similar to that of their required submission to their husbands. The link

---

[124] 'The Sermon on the state of Matrimonie' in *The Second Tome of Homilies* (London, 1563), p. 245.
[125] Carter, *Christian Commonwealth*, pp. 12-13.
[126] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood,* pp. 70-90; Gowing, *Domestic Dangers,* p.2.
[127] See: Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood,* pp. 77-78.

between these two vows will be further examined in the following discussion of ideals regarding wifely obedience.

Obey

The vow of obedience was taken only by women within the marriage service, and was widely discussed by authors of prescriptive literature. Scholars have highlighted the importance of this vow, such as Wrightson who suggests that for many conduct writers of the time, 'the supreme authority of the husband' and the 'principle duty of the wife' to obey him were the most important elements in marriage.[128] Sprint emphasises wifely obedience as the most important of all duties, stating:

> To obey them: and however light women may make of this, yet I know not of any duty belonging to Men or Women, in the whole Book of God, that is urged with more vehemency, or pressed with stronger, or more cogent Reason than this is.[129]

As with the other vows discussed thus far, the duty of obedience was also inextricably linked to a wife's natural position within the gender hierarchy. This connection has been highlighted by Margaret Somerville who argues that 'the major consequence that early modern thinkers drew from woman's inferiority was that she should be in subjection to the male'.[130] Indeed, many conduct writers drew a direct link from biblical explanations of female inferiority to the necessity of wifely obedience. Whately outlined this to his female readers, stating: 'thy husband is by God made the gouernour and ruler, and thou his inferior, to be ruled by him'.[131] Gataker similarly highlights the link between religion and obedience stating that 'the Christian women obeyeth her husband for God'.[132] Arguments such as these which call into question the personal faith of individuals who did

[128] Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680*, p. 98.
[129] Sprint, *Bride-Womans Counsellor,* p. 13.
[130] Margaret R. Somerville, *Sex and Subjection: Attitudes to Women in Early- Modern Society* (Arnold: London, 1995), p. 16.
[131] Whately, *A Bride Bush*, p. 192.
[132] Gataker, *Marriage Duties,* p. 28.

not adhere to the ideal standards of behaviour further emphasise the importance attributed to this particular duty, as well as bringing to light the methods utilised by writers to achieve their goals.

The duty of obedience in marriage during this period was also closely linked with the concept of honour. Foyster has argued that honour was 'vital in the upholding of male power', suggesting that men were only deemed worthy of such respect if they could demonstrate control over those lower in the hierarchy than themselves, i.e their wives.[133] This link between honour and the authority of a husband over his wife is outlined by Gataker, who provides his readers with the following warning regarding the balance of power within a marriage:

> For howsoever women may thinke it an honour to them, yet it is indeed rather a dishonour. A Masterly wife is as much despised and derided for taking rule over her husband, as he for yeelding it to her; and that not onely among those that be godly and religious, but even among those that be but mere naturall men and women.[134]

The 'masterly wife' described here is evidently deemed as contrary to the ideal of the obedient and subservient wife. Descriptions of the dishonour such behaviour would cause, as well as how it would affect the way others would view such a wife, provide a clear warning aimed at discouraging women against such actions. The honour of a husband in this situation is described as similarly tarnished, not just by the actions of his wife but also his own incapability of rectifying the situation, with Gataker suggesting that a man 'yeelding' control was as worthy of derision as a woman attempting to seize it. It is evident that Gataker sees such behaviour as going against both religious ideals and the natural order of things, further emphasising the pervasive nature of the prescribed roles for men and women.

As with the other duties discussed there is a question as to whether authors such as Gataker were writing in response to a lack of adherence to the prescribed ideals. Murphy has highlighted that

---

[133] Elizabeth Foyster, 'Male Honour, Social Control and Wife Beating in late Stuart England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol. 6 (1996), p. 215.
[134] Gataker, *Marriage Duties,* p. 10.

many texts during this period explicitly claim in their prefaces that they were written in response to 'an outbreak of misbehaving women'. [135] Capp has similarly suggested that conduct literature responded to contemporary fears regarding marriage and sexuality, arguing that it was the 'gulf between patriarchal ideas and social practice' that served as a prompt for many writers.[136] Sprint, for example, in response to backlash from female members of his congregation who had heard his sermon and taken offence, prefaced his printed text with the declaration that he had 'not met with one Woman among all my accusers whose Husband is able to give her the Character of a dutiful and obedient Wife.[137] Evidently for authors such as Sprint, the threat of wifely disobedience was considered to be both real and widespread, thus justifying its discussion in order to outline the ideal standards of behaviour and ensure patriarchal authority within marriage.

In addition to highlighting fears regarding adherence to the duty of obedience, the preface to Sprint's text also implies that instruction on this topic was subject to criticism from some women. Indeed, whilst posited by many conduct writers as the most important of duties within marriage, the call to obedience was also the vow which received the most criticism. Allestree outlined this reaction, stating that obedience was a 'word of a very harsh sound in the ears of some wives'.[138] One such critic was Lady Mary Chudleigh, who responded directly to Sprint's sermon in her text *The Ladies Defence*. First circulated in manuscript form in 1701, Chudleigh had the text printed in 1709, with a further edition released in 1722.[139] The poem, which took the form of a dialogue between a parson, a gentleman, and an unmarried woman named Melissa, outlined Chudleigh's objections to

[135] Murphy, *Virtuous Necessity,* p. 1.
[136] Capp, *When Gossips Meet,* p. 26; See also Amussen, *Ordered Society,* p. 7.
[137] Sprint, *Bride-Womans Counsellor,* p. 2.
[138] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 175.
[139] Lady Mary Chudleigh, *The Ladies Defence: OR, The Bride-Woman's Counsellor Answered: A Poem in a Dialogue between Sir John Brute, Sir Wm. Loveall, Melissa, and a Parson* (Printed by D.L for Bernard Lintott at the Middle Temple Gate in Fleet-street: London, 1709); Margaret J.M Ezell, 'Lady Mary Chudleigh', *ODNB,* (September 2004).

Sprint's portrayal of women. In particular she emphasised the subjection of women within marriage, with Melissa addressing Sir William thus:

> How happy, O Sir William, is your Life!
> You have not known the Trouble of a wife….
> Supream in all things; from our Slavery free,
> And tast the Sweets of envy'd Liberty.[140]

This extract emphasises Chudleigh's opinion that the prescribed obedience of women to their husbands was akin to a loss of liberty, comparing it to slavery. It also highlights the differing roles of both men and women within marriage, with only wives deemed as being without freedoms. In comparison with the calls of conduct writers that women be inwardly content with their position within marriage, Chudleigh suggests that this was not the case, adding weight to statements from Sprint regarding the widespread lack of adherence to the vow of obedience.

Despite her protestations, however, Chudleigh also recommended wifely obedience to her readers. Addressing women who had the 'hard Fortune to be marry'd to Men of brutish unsociable Tempers', Chudleigh advised that:

> …tho' 'tis extreamly difficult, yet I wou'd advise 'em to pay 'em as much Respect, and to obey their Commands with as much readiness, as if they were the best and most indearing Husbands in the World; this, will not only put a stop to the invidious Censures of their spightful Enemies, but give 'em the possession of that inward Joy, that unspeakable Satisfaction, which naturally arises from the apprehension of having done good and laudable Actions.[141]

In contrast to writers such as Sprint, Chudleigh's call for wifely obedience comes not from a belief in the natural inferiority of women, but instead an understanding of the criticism that insubordination could bring, thus further emphasising the pervasive nature of these standards during this period. Despite seemingly aware of the necessity for adherence to this duty, Chudleigh

[140] Chudleigh, *The Ladies Defence,* p. 2.
[141] Chudleigh, 'To all the Ingenious Ladies', in *The Ladies Defence.*

continued to draw comparisons between wifely obedience and servitude, as demonstrated in the opening lines to her poem, *To the Ladies* published in 1703:[142]

> Wife and Servant are the same,
> But only differ in the Name.[143]

Mary Astell in her proto-feminist critique of contemporary views, *Reflections on Marriage,* similarly drew parallels with the female condition and servitude, stating: 'if all men are born free, how is it that all Women are born slaves?'.[144] Such comparisons of obedience as being akin to servitude led to some conduct writers directly addressing this topic to refute such accusations. Gouge, for example, strongly contested such claims following objections from female members of his congregation, stating:

> But I hope partly by that which hath beene before delivered concerning those common duties which man and wife doe mutually owe each to other, and partly by the particulars which under this general are comprised, but most especially by the duties which the husband in particular oweth to his wife, it will evidently appeare, that this *subjection* is no servitude.[145]

Evidently for Gouge, the mutual duties of both men and women negated any suggestions that obedience constituted a type of slavery. In particular he references the duties owed by a husband to his wife. It can be assumed here that Gouge is referring to the duty of love, which was thought to temper the authority of a husband, thus preventing it from becoming the type of tyrannical control which could be deemed akin to servitude.

Such suggestions also highlight that whilst the vow to obey was taken only by women, men were similarly viewed as key in the proper upholding of this duty. Gouge directly addressed men on

---

[142] This poem also proved incredibly popular with contemporary copies found 'transcribed on the flyleaf of the Shakespeare First Folio owned by Elizabeth Brockett and also in Elizabeth Dottin's manuscript volume of Bishop Henry King's poems', see Margaret J.M Ezell, 'Introduction' in Margaret J.M Ezell (ed.), *Women Writers in English 1350-1850: Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993), pp. xvii- xviii.
[143] Lady Mary Chudleigh, 'To the Ladies' in Ezell (ed.), *Women Writers in English 1350-1850*, p. 83.
[144] Mary Astell, *Reflections upon Marriage, The Third Edition* (London: 1706), Preface.
[145] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 269.

this point stating that, 'an husband hath superiority and authority over a wife. The acknowledgement hereof is a maine and principall duty and a ground of all other duties'.[146] For husbands, much of the advice regarding authority over their wives was concerned with ensuring that it was of a controlled nature. Peters has emphasised how for many authors the authority of a husband could, if it went unchecked, render him a tyrant.[147] Indeed, in comparison with earlier writers on marriage, many Puritan authors advised against marital violence. Fletcher has highlighted this shift in thinking among conduct writers, suggesting that it was indicative of a 'new attitude'.[148] Such behaviour by husbands was above what was deemed legitimate 'corrective' actions in order to ensure obedience from their wives, and portrayed a lack of self-control.[149] Whilst conduct writers did not argue that a husband had no right to beat his wife, they instead advised men to temper their authority with love, suggesting that refraining from violence was 'more dignified, authoritative, and expedient than resorting to it'.[150] The *Homily on Marriage* outlines the utility of such an approach, suggesting that wives 'will sooner be retained to do their duetie, rather by gentle words, then by stripes'.[151] The dangers of marital violence were discussed by Gouge, who suggests that while physical force may lead to outward to subjection in a wife, it could foster an 'inward hatred of her husband's person'.[152] Whilst marital violence was, according to scholars such as Amussen and Foyster, not uncommon during this period, such statements by contemporaries demonstrate that it was not recommended as a method by which to ensure obedience.[153] Gouge's reference to the inward hatred of a wife is also

---

146 Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 270.
147 Peters, *Patterns of Piety,* p. 325.
148 Anthony Fletcher, 'The protestant idea of marriage', in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (eds.), *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Honour of Patrick Collinson* (Cambridge University Press: 1994), pp. 171-172.
149 Joanne Bailey and Loreen Giese, 'Marital Cruelty: Reconsidering lay attitudes in England, c. 1580-1850', *The History of the Family,* Vol. 18, No. 3, (2013), pp. 290-291.
150 Frances E. Dolan, *Marriage and Violence: The Early Modern Legacy* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Pennsylvania, 2008), p. 84.
151 'The Sermon on the state of Matrimonie' in *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 245.
152 Gouge, *Domestic Duties*, p. 392.
153 Susan Dwyer Amussen, ' "Being stirred to much unquietness": Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England', *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 6, No. 2, (Summer 1994), pp. 70-89; Elizabeth Foyster, 'Male Honour, Social Control and Wife Beating in Late Stuart England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol. 6, (Jan 1996), pp. 215-224.

of interest as it is indicative of his descriptions of wifely honour. Whilst violence may lead to outward adherence to the duty of obedience, Gouge was also concerned that women thought well of their husbands. As with his discussion of wifely honour, mere performance of these duties was not sufficient, with internal emotions also expected to follow the ideals and standards of a patriarchal marriage. Wife beating was also linked with a loss of honour, with Dod and Cleaver stating that: 'he which woundeth her, woundeth his own honour'.[154] Such arguments further emphasise the importance of the role of husbands in upholding the vow of obedience, as well as the interdependency between male honour and their authority within the patriarchal headship of marriage.

The duty of obedience can be argued to demonstrate most clearly the influence of gendered ideals of hierarchy within marriage, as it pertained only to women. It is evident that conduct writers drew on such theories to both explain and justify their advice on this matter. As with the duties of love and honour, the descriptions of behaviour contrary to the prescribed ideals serves to emphasise both the perceived importance of obedience, as well as contemporary fears regarding its observance. Despite being a vow only taken by women within the marriage service, it has been shown that husbands were also deemed key in the upholding of this duty, further stressing the great importance that was attached to it by many of the conduct writers of the period. It has also been shown that the authority of husbands was closely scrutinised, with an emphasis on constraint and commands tempered with love, as opposed to uncontrolled tyrannical rule, thus suggestive of an anxious patriarchy at this time.[155] Such suggestions will be further examined with reference to the lived experience of couples throughout the remaining chapters of this thesis.

[154] Dod and Cleaver, *Godly Forme,* p. 216.
[155] See: Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood,* pp. 77-78.

Conclusions

It is evident that there was a preoccupation during the early modern period with the institution of marriage, reflected within the prescriptive literature. As with their predecessors, post-reformation conduct writers placed a great deal of importance on marriage and the family, extolling the need for certain standards of behaviour as well as providing warnings for individuals who may seek to go against such advice. It has been shown that authors were heavily influenced by both religious and Galenic theories concerning gender roles. These theories fed into the ways in which duties were outlined for both husbands and wives, particularly with regards to the importance of a patriarchal hierarchy within marriage. Through discussion of the innate weakness of women and the superiority of men, conduct writers justified the standards of wifely obedience and submission. In addition to providing gendered advice regarding marital duties, prescriptive texts also emphasised gendered ideals of emotional feeling and expression, drawing on humoral theories of the period. Love, for example, was seen as innate for women, whereas for men this was deemed as something that required a certain amount of effort. Authors thus advised men on not only the importance of adherence to this ideal, but also how best to display and perform this emotion. Such prescriptions have been examined through the lens of emotional history, argued to represent 'emotional standards' which both men and women were expected to uphold. These standards are also closely linked to the behavioural expectations of honour and obedience, with emotions such as fear or love serving to inform adherence to these vows. Throughout the rest of the thesis, these standards will be examined with regards to the personal source material, thereby testing not just ideals of behaviour but also of experience and expression of feeling.

It has been shown that the duties of obedience and love are heavily represented in prescriptive texts. Whilst the former vow was one taken only by women, authors also placed a great emphasis on a husband's part in upholding the patriarchal ideal and hierarchy within marriage. This

authority, however, was not deemed as infallible, with men advised on how best to temper it to ensure obedience through loving commands rather than tyrannical rule. With regards to the relative importance of each of these vows, there was evidently much variety among authors as to the perceived order of significance. This was also dependent on the intended readers of each text, with increased emphasis on the duty deemed of most importance to that particular group. Most of the authors examined, however, appear to have put a great deal of emphasis on the duties of love and obedience in creating and maintaining a harmonious marriage. Although honour was clearly deemed of importance it was often described with reference to one of the other main duties, seen as both a facilitator towards ideal behaviour, and something which could be affected by non-adherence to the prescribed advice. In addition to the three vows as set out within the marriage service there were also other duties set down within prescriptive literature. The vows of love, honour and obedience, however, can be argued to encapsulate most other duties and ideals of behaviour. These other duties will be examined within the following chapters with reference to examples of lived experience of elite individuals within the identified network.

It has also been shown that there was a great deal of overlap between the three core vows, which can sometimes appear as contradictory. This is most apparent in the importance attributed to the duties of both love and obedience by many of the authors examined. Rather than being deemed as oppositional, however, it has been demonstrated that contemporaries saw little inconsistency in these two ideals, arguing that love facilitated obedience to one's husband as well as tempering his authority. This focus on strengthening patriarchal control has been shown to have been a key concern for conduct writers, feeding into many of the duties for both men and women. It has been argued that this was indicative of contemporary anxieties regarding the limitations of patriarchal headship. The extent to which such fears translated into lived experience will be explored within the following chapters.

Chapter Two

'A Hopeful Prospect': Making matches

It has been shown that the condition of marriage was one that was much discussed during the early modern period. The first step in marriage was of course finding and securing a suitable partner. Fleetwood, when advising parents on how to aid their children in securing a good match, suggested that:

> Parents must consider this especially, how they engage their Children to Marry, where, at the least, a hopeful Prospect of this Love doth not appear; lest, whilst they are endeavouring to make their Children happy, they make them irremediably so.[1]

This statement highlights a few facets of marriage arrangements which will be examined within this chapter. Earlier scholars such as Stone suggested that matches at this time were 'arranged by parents and kin for economic and social reasons with minimal consultation of the children'.[2] This is argued to have been much more prevalent within elite families, with Macfarlane suggesting that children in the upper gentry and aristocracy were at 'the extreme end of the continuum of arrangement', with the bulk of the population being far freer in this process.[3] However, until the passing of Lord Hardwicke's Act in 1753 which required parental consent for the marriage of individuals under the age of twenty-one, young couples past the age of consent at this time were legally free to make their own choices in these matters.[4] As such, there was the potential for individuals to have a certain amount of agency over their own marriage arrangements, even within elite families.

---

[1] William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (London: 1705), p. 35.
[2] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Penguin Books: England, 1977), p. 88.
[3] Alan MacFarlane, *Marriage and Love in England 1300-1840* (Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, 1986), p. 140.
[4] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death, Ritual, Religion and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), p. 256.

This chapter will examine the role played by parents in the marriages of the Cavendish family network, both in terms of their influence and the methods utilised to secure advantageous matches. The ways in which this role differed for men and women will also be explored, finding that there was a socially expected gendered division of duties. The limits of this authority will then be discussed with reference to the agency of those to be married and how they were able to express and utilise veto power in undesired matches. The consequences of such actions will be examined with reference to advice literature as well as the reactions of individuals both within and connected to the Cavendish family. It will be argued that despite having a right to their own opinion on such matters, acting on this entitlement could place children in a complicated position and lead to family conflict. In addition to parental involvement, this chapter will then emphasise the importance of others in marriage arrangements. By utilising documents such as marriage contracts and personal correspondence, it will be shown that other individuals such as kin members, or friends of the family played a significant role in the organisation of the matches of the Cavendish family. Additionally, the importance of maintaining good connections with other families and extended kin will be explored, further highlighting the significance of network links as well as the utility of a case study approach for the examination of elite marriage practices.

Fleetwood's advice also highlights the motivations governing the actions of parents in securing matches for their children. Whilst earlier work on this topic emphasised economic and social concerns, subsequent scholars such as Olwen Hufton have argued that other factors such as character were of equal importance.[5] With reference to the prescriptive literature of the period, this chapter will examine the ideals surrounding the factors influencing marriage decisions. These standards will be discussed in conjunction with personal source material from the Cavendish

[5] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 88; Miriam Slater, 'The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper- Gentry Family in Seventeenth- Century England', *Past and Present*, No. 72 (Aug., 1976), pp. 25-54; Olwen H. Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe* (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1996), p. 65.

matches, exploring points on which the cases within this thesis are in agreement with the prescribed ideals, and those in which they deviate. In particular, the more affective factors determining motivations will be examined, building on suggestions such as Fleetwood's that parents should endeavour to make their children happy. It will be asserted that whilst economic and social considerations were of great importance, parents also displayed concerns regarding the relative happiness of their children in marriage, thus emphasising the interweaving of both sentimental and practical motivations in elite matches.

This chapter will then explore the emotional landscape of marriage arrangements through selected marriages of the Cavendish family network. It will be shown that emotional language was often utilised within discussions surrounding marriage arrangements, not only to express an individual's own feelings but also as a method by which to affect outcomes. By viewing the identified network through the framework of emotional communities, this chapter will also examine the ideals of emotional expression in marriage arrangements within this group. The potential for conflict and the emotional upheaval this could cause will also be explored, examining the ways in which individuals reacted in cases of disagreement. This chapter will therefore inform further discussions on the emotional landscape of marriage, facilitating comparisons in later chapters between what was hoped for and what followed.

Motivations for elite marriage

Earlier scholars such as Stone and Harris emphasised the importance of economic factors as motivations for entering into marriage, highlighting the desire to advance the interests of the family.[6] This was particularly significant for elite families, as an advantageous match providing land and

[6] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 37; Barbara Harris, 'Power, Profit, and Passion: Mary Tudor, Charles Brandon and the Arranged Marriage in Early Tudor England, *Feminist Studies,* Vol. 15, No. 1 (1989), p. 60.

money could change the fortunes of a struggling estate, allowing the family to retain their status and influence. However, despite the clear importance of wealth in creating a match, focusing solely on monetary advancement was discouraged during this period, with *The Ladies Dictionary* claiming that, 'to Marry purely for Money, seldom fails of causing an unhappy Life'.[7] This extract suggests that happiness in marriage was a state to be striven for, a concept that will be further examined with regards to the matches explored within this chapter. It is important to note that the suggestion here is not that money need not be considered, but that it should not be the sole factor in creating matches. This is also shown in *Domesticall Duties* in which Gouge condemns those who marry above their own estate merely seeking to advance themselves.[8]

Another key factor to be considered in the advancement of family through marriage was the rank of a prospective spouse. Schutte suggests that the ideal match at this time for elite women was 'endogamous' in nature, also described as an 'in-marriage'.[9] This ideal of parity in rank is reflected in the conduct literature of the period, such as Gouge who advised that there should be 'some equality betwixt the parties that are married' in both estate and condition.[10] Schutte contends that during this period, most elite women did achieve the ideal of a match to a gentlemen of equal status.[11] As previously shown, the marriages examined within this thesis adhere to this ideal with the majority of matches being endogamous in nature.[12] Related to the importance of rank are the benefits of alliances that could be made through marriage. Tadmor has emphasised the significance of making useful connections in this way, stating that alliances made through marriage were extremely

---

[7] N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary; Being a General Entertainment For the Fair-Sex* (Printed for John Dunton; London, 1694), p. 342.
[8] William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties Eight Treatises* (London, 1622), pp. 110-11.
[9] Kimberly F. Schutte, 'Marrying by the Numbers: Marriage Patterns of Aristocratic British Women, 1485-2000', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kansas, 2011), p.6; An in-marriage is defined by Schutte as 'a marriage in which a woman whose father held the title of Baron or above married a man who was either titled himself or the son of a title holder (of the rank of Baron or above)'.
[10] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 109.
[11] Schutte, 'Marrying by the numbers', p. 21.
[12] See Introduction for list of connected families and their ranks.

important in 'consolidating and enlarging' one's circle of friends and kin.[13] Both Slater and Whyman in their studies of the Verney family have also discussed the importance of such alliances, outlining their significance as motivating factors in the creation of matches.[14] Such suggestions will be considered throughout this chapter with regards to the Cavendish network marriages.

In addition to motivations regarding economic or social advancement, it has been suggested that there were other factors at play when choosing a prospective spouse. Hufton has argued that an appropriate union at this time was one in which factors such as religious affiliation, age, temperament and moral qualities were seen to be 'approximately consonant'.[15] As with wealth and rank it appears that the main goal for many of these considerations was that of parity. One factor to be considered was the religion of those to be married. With regards to the general advice of the period as found within conduct literature, marrying outside of one's own religion was strongly advised against. Within *The Ladies Dictionary* readers were told to: 'Beware of Marrying to one of a *different Religion*: For, whatever other good things attend a Marriage, this one thing is enough to ruine all'.[16] Also of importance was the moral quality and temperament of both the individuals to be married, and their families. As will be shown in matches within the Cavendish network, those arranging marriages were keen to outline the virtues of prospective spouses.

Another factor which affected the decision to enter into matches was the age of those to be married. During this period it was possible for individuals to enter into engagements from the age of seven, serving as a promise to marry when the couple had reached the minimum legal age for marriage.[17] However, despite being legally possible, such engagements were not common, and Stone

---

[13] Naomi Tadmor, 'Early modern English kinship in the long run: reflections on continuity and change', *Continuity and Change*, Vol. 25, No. 1, (2010), p. 21.
[14] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', p.27; Susan E. Whyman, *Sociability and Power in Late-Stuart England: The Cultural World of the Verneys 1660-1720* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1999), pp. 110-147.
[15] Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her,* p. 65.
[16] N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary,* p. 326.
[17] Johanna Rickman, 'He would never consent in his heart: child marriages in Early Modern England', *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth,* Vol.6, Issue 2, (Spring 2013), pp. 312-313.

suggests that 'very few of the nobility and gentry were in fact married the moment it became legally possible'.[18] Indeed, marrying too young was heavily discouraged by contemporaries such as Gouge who states:

> Contrarie to the forenamed fitnesse of age is the practise of such parents, or other friends of children, as make matches for them in their child-hood… For children cannot know what appertaineth to mariage, much lesse can they performe that which is required of maried persons: their consent therefore is justly accounted no consent, unlesse they doe ratifie it after they come to yeares.[19]

Gouge evidently does not deem children capable of understanding the requirements of marriage, therefore making them unable to properly consent to any matches. Conduct literature of the time also advised against large age gaps between those to be married, with *The Ladies Dictionary* stating that:

> …to *tye Old Age and Youth together,* is a thing that may be accounted one of the greatest Extravagancies…since nothing is more unnatural than to unite brisk and sprightly Youth with dull and senseless old Age.[20]

The final motivating factor to be discussed with regards to arranging marriages at this time is that of affection or love between the couple. Earlier scholars on the topic of marriage such as Slater in her examination of the Verney family argued that romance was not commonly seen as a high priority in arranged matches during this period.[21] Within the conduct literature, however, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of creating a good match in the first instance, with a focus on attachment between the couple. Richard Baxter's *Christian Directory,* for example, advised couples to 'marry not till you are sure that you can Love entirely'.[22] Similarly, Gouge suggested that:

---

[18] Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford University Press: London, 1967), p. 294.
[19] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties*, p. 181.
[20] N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary,* p. 323.
[21] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', p. 26.
[22] Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory: Or, A summ O Practical theologie and cases of conscience* (London: 1673), p. 520.

> Mutuall love and good liking of each is as glue. Let the parties to be married be herein well setled before they come to meet with trials through cohabitation, and that love will not easily be loosened by any trials.[23]

Rosemary O'Day has argued that even in cases when romantic love was not the underlying factor, men and women 'lived in the hope and expectation that it would be discovered during marriage'.[24] The importance of love as a motivating factor, as well as the other considerations discussed thus far will be examined with relation to the Cavendish network matches throughout the remainder of this chapter.

Individual agency and parental authority in marriage arrangements

During the period under consideration, all individuals over the age of consent were able to choose their own spouse. Indeed, during the mid-seventeenth century, there were many handbooks which aimed to advise on the 'arts of wooing and complimenting'.[25] Such texts were intended for men aiming to impress a prospective spouse during a period of courtship. However, Cressy has suggested that 'eligible gentle bachelors' would have had little use for these texts as contemporary accounts appear to suggest that 'courtship came looking for them'.[26] Despite this, it can be argued that even within elite circles there was a difference in behaviour and address during a period of courtship. In a letter to her brother, the 2nd Duke of Newcastle, Jane Cheyne refers to the correspondence received from her husband Charles in his absence in the following terms:

> …I expect him the latter end of this weeke, in the meane time I have his letters & did I not know my self married; I should think by what hee writs that hee was still a woer… [27]

---

[23] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 197.
[24] Rosemary O'Day, 'Tudor and Stuart Women: their Lives through their Letters', in James Daybell (ed.), *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700* (Palgrave: Hampshire, 2001), p. 134.
[25] Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death,* p. 236. Examples of such texts include Alexander Nicholles, *A Discourse of Marriage and Wiving* (London: 1615); *Card of Courtship or The Language of Love* (London: 1653); *The New Academy of Complements* (London: 1669).
[26] Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death,* p. 239.
[27] UNMASC, Pw1/88, Jane Cavendish to Charles Cavendish, 29 April 1656.

Jane's description of the way in which Charles writes to her indicates that his letters were romantic in tone, as if he were still attempting to win her over as in the stages of courtship. Her apparent surprise at this implies that this was out of the norm, thus suggesting that there existed an inherent difference in the style of address of a gentleman writing in courtship as opposed to during the course of a marriage. Macfarlane has emphasized the importance of love letters during this period, deeming them 'one of the most acceptable gifts from a lover'.[28] An example of a couple corresponding prior to their marriage can be found between Charles Cavendish, eldest son of William Cavendish, who stood to inherit prior to his death in 1659, and his future wife Elizabeth Rogers. Elizabeth wrote to Charles stating:

> I am much joyed to receve you Lo^{sh} Letters: which next your company is most welcome to me…truly I hope before this coms to your hands thare will be much done in its: and tharfore I shal not rite much to your lo^{sh} now being in hopes to see your lo^{sh} tharfore.[29]

Elizabeth's use of the term joy highlights the effect that Charles' letters have had on her. Considered by Descartes as one of the six basic passions, it has been suggested by Darin McMahon that during this period joy was seen as an ideal state, something to be striven towards.[30] It is evident that for Elizabeth the letters she is receiving from Charles at this time are contributing to her joy, acting in place of seeing him in person.

However, such correspondence is not found in the matches of the next generation of the Cavendish family. Curiously, the 2nd duke and his wife discouraged any kind of written courtship between their daughters and prospective suitors.[31] There are two potential explanations for this behaviour. Firstly, it could be that the duke and duchess were simply attempting to preserve their

---

[28] Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England,* p. 301.
[29] UNMASC, Pw1/228, Elizabeth Rogers to Charles Cavendish, 10 January 1654.
[30] Aleksondra Hultquist, 'The Passions', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), p. 72; Darin McMahon, 'Finding Joy in the History of Emotions' in Susan J. Matt, Peter N. Stearns (eds.), *Doing Emotions History* (University of Illinois Press: 2014), pp. 113-114.
[31] See E.F Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle* (London: J Murray, 1915), p. 72.

daughters' reputations before any marriage arrangements were entirely settled. It has been argued that a woman's honour was inseparable from her sexual reputation, which would have also had a bearing on her future marriage prospects.[32] By barring even a written courtship there would have been little danger of any undesirable behaviour which could serve to derail potential future proposals in the event of that particular match failing. A second explanation for this rule is that the duke and duchess were attempting to prevent any kind of emotional entanglement prior to the family completing their due diligence on the match. Until all matters were completely settled there was always the potential that a match could fall through. As highlighted by Sally Holloway, the love letter was a space which allowed direct emotional intimacy between a couple.[33] As such allowing a written correspondence may have made any future breakdowns in discussions more difficult and emotionally charged than necessary. In contrast to this was the public love letter. Nicola Eustace suggests that the existence of such letters was an indication that although courtship had by this point become romanticized, it was not yet a private affair.[34] Her work illuminates the practice of using third parties to express sentiments in courtship, a method which, due in part to the ruling of the duke and duchess, was utilised by prospective suitors for their daughters.

Nevertheless, such a ruling does not appear to be the norm, with other case studies of elite families not mentioning any such regulations. On the contrary, scholars such as Barclay and Mendelson have explored the importance of correspondence between elite women and their suitors.[35] The letters of Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple in particular provide a useful

---

[32] See: Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1995), pp. 101-5; Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1996), pp. 111-138.
[33] Sally Holloway, *The Game of Love in Georgian England: Courtship, Emotions and Material Culture* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2019), p. 45, pp. 65-67.
[34] Nicole Eustace, ' "The cornerstone of a copius work": Love and power in eighteenth-century courtship', *Journal of Social History,* Spring 2001, Vol. 34, No. 3, (Spring 2001), pp. 517-546.
[35] Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2011), pp. 87-88; Sara Mendelson, 'Debate: The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper-Gentry Family in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present,* Issue 85, (November 1979), p. 135.

example of the potential for intimacy in correspondence prior to marriage.[36] As such, the implementation of such an edict appears to be distinctive to the Cavendish family at this time.

The ruling of the duke and duchess also emphasises the importance of parental involvement within early modern marriage arrangements. Parental authority within the matches of their children is highlighted in much of the conduct literature during this period, with Baxter citing the 'will of the parents' as one of the first reasons for marriage.[37] This view is shared by Thomas Fuller who describes a "good child" as one who in marriage 'first and last consults with his father'.[38] The 'will of the parents' as outlined by conduct writers is seen in many of the matches of the Cavendish family. This influence is particularly evident within the match of Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy, who were aged just sixteen and twelve respectively upon their marriage in 1679.[39] It is likely that the young age of the couple was the principal reasoning behind the significant parental involvement in this case, with both bride and groom being under twenty-one and thus not yet deemed of an age of independence at this time.[40] The first indications of an alliance between the families are seen in the following letter from Elizabeth's grandmother, the Dowager Countess of Northumberland to Henry's grandfather, William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle:

> I have received your Lordship's letter full of obliging expressions to our family which I am very sensible of, and for the offer you are pleased to make of your grandson. I can only say I have no present exceptions to make against so noble an alliance, but that is too early days to think of disposing my grandchild, whose tender years are not yet capable of distinguishing what may most conduce to her future happiness. And when she is of age to judge I must be

[36] See: Genie S. Lerch-Davis, 'Rebellion against Public Prose: The Letters of Dorothy Osborne to William Temple (1652-52)', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language,* Vol. 20, No. 3, (Fall 1978), pp. 386-415; Carrie Hintz, 'All People Seen and Known: Dorothy Osbourne, Privacy, and Seventeenth-Century Courtship', *Dalhousie Review*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (1998), pp. 365-383; Sara Crangle, 'Epistolarity Audience, Selfhood: The Letters of Dorothy Osborne to William Temple', *Women's Writing,* Vol. 12, No 3, (2005), pp. 433-452.
[37] Baxter, *A Christian Directory,* p. 476.
[38] Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State* (Cambridge: 1648), p. 14.
[39] See: UNMASC, Pw1/410, 'The sad and miserable case of Henry Duke of Newcastle', c. 1680; R.O Bucholz, 'Elizabeth Percy' *ODNB,* (Sept, 2004).
[40] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* p. 75.

> so just as to give her the choice of all those who shall then offer themselves, and possibly none may be more acceptable to her than this young Lord.[41]

At this point in time Elizabeth would have been no more than nine years old, and it is evident that her grandmother does not yet deem her of an appropriate age to seriously entertain any discussions regarding marriage.[42] Whilst legally possible, very few individuals married at the minimum legal age. A further letter from Elizabeth's mother to the Duchess of Newcastle also highlights potential concerns regarding her youth in this match, stating:

> I thinke it soe nessesary a thing to the makeing her happy that the chuseing for her selfe that I cannot but wish when she comes to the age of being capable of doeing that…[43]

As with the letter from Elizabeth's grandmother there is once again a wish for her future happiness in marriage. Such hopes appear on multiple occasions within the matches examined in this thesis, from both family members as well as others. The use of the term 'happiness', however, is one which requires careful consideration. In comparison to joy, which was long associated with being an emotion, McMahon has suggested that happiness was, up until the late seventeenth century, viewed more as an 'ethical ideal'.[44] There has been some debate among scholars as to when the modern notion of happiness originated. Phil Withington places this as early as the sixteenth century, however, Peter Stearns suggests that the change came later, taking place after the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century.[45] Other assessments have highlighted how the concept changed over time. R.S White suggests that the term's original derivation from 'hap' meaning luck or chance, may reflect

---

[41] BL Add MS 70500, fol.57, Dowager Countess of Northumberland to the Duke of Newcastle, c.1676.
[42] Taking into account the death of the first duke in 1676, the letter must have been written prior to this point, meaning that Elizabeth was at most only nine years of age at this point.
[43] UNMASC, Pw1/207, E. Countess of Northumberland to the Duchess of Newcastle, 26 December n.d.
[44] McMahon, 'Finding Joy in the History of Emotions', pp. 108-109.
[45] Phil Withington, 'The Invention of Happiness' in Michael J. Braddick and Joanna Innes (eds.), *Suffering and Happiness in England 1550-1850* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2017), p. 24; Peter Stearns, 'The History of Happiness', *Harvard Business Review*, (January 1, 2012), at https://hbr.org/2012/01/the-history-of-happiness, [accessed 02/02/2021]; see also Adam Potkay, *The Passion for Happiness: Samuel Johnson and David Hume* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, 2000), p. 65 and Paul Slack, 'The Politics of Consumption and England's Happiness in the Later Seventeenth Century', *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 122, No. 497 (June 2007), pp. 629–630 who suggests this change took place in the seventeenth century.

an understanding at this time that 'happiness' was more akin to a lucky accident than a goal one could work towards.[46] With regards to the advice as found within prescriptive literature, however, authors often emphasised how a good choice in marital partner could impact one's future happiness, thus suggesting that this was a state that individuals had some level of control over. Fleetwood, for example, stated that: 'marriage is certainly a State and Condition, upon which the Happiness or Misery of Life does very much depend'.[47] Halifax also highlights the importance of one's choice of marital partner, describing marriage as 'the part of your Life upon which your *Happiness* most dependeth'.[48] Although the countess suggests that having her own choice would be key to Elizabeth's happiness, it is made clear that she is not yet deemed of the age at which she would be capable of doing so.

When Elizabeth did marry, however, she was only twelve years of age, the minimum legal age for marriage at this time.[49] It also does not appear that at this point Elizabeth had much involvement in the proceedings, despite her mother's earlier comments. Indeed, the letters that survive regarding the match do not include any penned by the couple themselves, nor does the correspondence between their families suggest that they were involved in discussions regarding the match. Elizabeth was the only surviving child and therefore sole heiress of Joceline Percy, the 11th Earl of Northumberland. Due to inheritance customs which allowed women to inherit property as well as men, heiresses such as Elizabeth were highly sought after in the marriage market and the desire to strike a match with one's son was not an unusual choice for elite families.[50] Henry was similarly the only surviving son and heir of the duke and duchess, making the match an attractive

[46] R.S White, 'Language of emotions' in Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions*, p. 33.
[47] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 34.
[48] George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, *The Lady's New-Years gift, or Advice to a Daughter* (London: 1688), p. 24.
[49] Rickman, 'Child Marriages', p. 294.
[50] Whyman, *Sociability and Power,* p. 123, 145. See also Lawrence Stone and Jeanne C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite?: England 1540-1880* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1986), p. 76.

prospect on both sides. The importance of the alliance, therefore, in conjunction with the young age of the couple to be married, makes it hardly unsurprising that the individuals themselves had little involvement in the proceedings. The status of both heirs and heiresses within early modern marriage arrangements has been discussed by scholars, with a particular emphasis on whether this was an advantage or a burden. In her examination of the Verney family, Slater argues that eldest sons were in the best position when it came to securing an advantageous match, having a distinct advantage over their younger siblings.[51] Larminie, however, in her assessment of the Newdigate family, does not consider that eldest sons enjoyed any particular advantages, suggesting that they could be seen as 'victims rather than beneficiaries of their position' due to being placed into calculated matches with the aim of raising money.[52] Whyman has similarly highlighted the pressure put upon both eldest sons and heiresses in her study of the Verney family, stating that they 'reaped the greatest rewards but they also bore larger burdens'.[53]

It is evident that the match between Henry and Elizabeth was a matter of great importance to both families. Much of the information regarding this match is found within the correspondence from the duchess to Elizabeth's grandmother, the dowager countess, who was her main representative during the arrangements.[54] This hands-on involvement of women in the marriage arrangements of their children was not uncommon during this period, especially amongst the aristocracy where it has been suggested that mothers were just as likely as fathers to have a role of authority in regulating the matrimonial choices of their daughters.[55] The duchess wrote many letters

[51] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', p. 28.
[52] Vivienne Larminie, 'Marriage and the Family: The example of the Seventeenth Century Newdigates', *Midland History*, Vol. 9, No.1 (1984), pp. 3-4.
[53] Whyman, *Sociability and Power*, p. 124.
[54] Within her letter to the Duchess of Newcastle, Elizabeth's mother refers to her daughter as being 'in the dispose' of her grandmother- See UNMASC, Pw1/207, E. Countess of Northumberland to the Duchess of Newcastle, 26 December n.d.
[55] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), p. 112.

to the dowager countess, praising her granddaughter Elizabeth as the 'finest young Lady in the world', and outlining the suitability and improvement of her own son.[56] It has been suggested that the use of deference in this period could be employed as a manipulative strategy. [57] The use of phrases such as 'wee are all your most humble creatures' and 'with all submistion I aply my selfe to your La[sh]' within this correspondence are clear examples of deferential language, acting as a method by which the duchess attempted to garner the favour of the dowager countess in order to achieve her aims.[58] Her letters also contain multiple crossings out and amendments, suggesting that she is constantly redrafting what she wants to say, perhaps signifying an anxiety to portray both herself and her son in the best possible light so as to secure this match.[59] Such physical characteristics to her correspondence may have also intimated her emotional state to the countess, reinforcing suggestions by Diana Barnes that features such as ink blots, torn pages and tremors were 'features of an epistolary vocabulary familiar to early modern writers and readers'.[60]

The duchess also employed further emotional means in her correspondence to the dowager countess in order to hasten proceedings by referring to the impending death of the 1[st] Duke, William Cavendish. She writes:

> My Lord Duke has sent by the same way his humble Dedication of his Grandchild to both your seruices and I humbly beg whether by mesage or letter which you La:[sh] thinks fiting a gratius answer to the comfort of a man of his extreme age whoe says hee should die contented had hee that assureance hee wish that his grand child should ataine such a happynes.[61]

---

[56] UNMASC, Pw1/201, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, n.y; UNMASC, Pw1/204, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, c. 1676.
[57] Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1998), p. 168.
[58] UNMASC, Pw1/204, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, c. 1676; UNMASC, Pw1/203, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, c. 1676.
[59] See: A. Baggerman and R. Dekker, 'The Social World of a Dutch Boy. The Diary of Otto van Eck 1791–1796' in S. Broomhall (ed.), *Emotions in the Household 1200–1900* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2008), p. 267.
[60] Diana Barnes, 'Emotional Debris in Early Modern Letters' in Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway, and Sarah Randles (eds.), *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions through History* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018), p. 115.
[61] UNMASC, Pw1/204, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, c. 1676.

It is evident that the duchess is attempting to utilise the occasion of the duke's death to push for an expedient match.[62] Scholars examining wills during this period have emphasised the importance of fulfilling a testator's dying wishes.[63] Indeed, suggestions that an individual's final will was not representative of their requests could serve as a rationale by which others could contest it.[64] As such, it can similarly be argued that marriage arrangements could also benefit from the authority of a dying wish.

Such a tactic is also seen in the match of the 2nd Duke's eldest daughter Elizabeth to Christopher Monck, son to the Duke of Albemarle who was reported as having:

> …but one mortal care upon him, which was the marriage of his only son, whom he was likely to leave young, being then about sixteenth or seventeen Years of Age…And finding by his daily and encreasing Weakness, the Approach of his Death, he made the more Haste to consummate the Marriage.[65]

As the match was for his only son, Monck would have been anxious to secure a marriage which would serve to secure his legacy and political interests. Thomas Skinner in his book on the life of the 1st duke states that his primary concern towards his son was to 'provide a match for him in some ancient and loyal family, which were the principal qualifications he aimed at'.[66] As the second son of a gentleman, George Monck did not have the advantage of a hereditary title, instead gaining recognition through his military abilities and being gifted the honour of a dukedom for his service in bringing about the Restoration in 1660.[67] As such, an alliance with the Cavendish family would serve to cement his position among the aristocracy. The duke got his wish, and the marriage took place in

---

[62] Peter Rushton has similarly highlighted the pressure of dying requests in attempting to secure a match in his article. See Peter Rushton, 'Property, Power and Family Networks: The Problem of Disputed Marriage in Early Modern England', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 11, No.3, (1986), p. 209.
[63] Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000), pp. 81-109.
[64] Lloyd Bonfield, *Devising, Dying and Dispute: Probate Litigation in Early Modern England,* pp. 81-109; John Addy, *Death, Money, and the Vultures: Inheritance and Avarice 1660-1750* (Routledge: London, 2013), pp. 113-119.
[65] Thomas Skinner, *The Life of General Monk: Duke of Albemarle* (London: 1724), p. 372.
[66] Skinner, *The Life of General Monk*, p. 372.
[67] Ronald Hutton, 'George Monck, first duke of Albemarle', *ODNB,* (Oct 2012).

his own chamber on the 30th of December 1669. Following the ceremony, he was reported to be 'much pleas'd that he had lived to see the Accomplishment of it, being the last of his human Cares'.[68] This emotional tactic employed by both Monck and the duchess serves to further emphasise the importance attached to these particular alliances. The apparent need for expedience suggests an anxiety that until completely secured, the discussions had the potential to break down.

Whilst there are unfortunately no surviving replies from the dowager countess to the duchess, there is an example of her corresponding with the duke regarding the match of Henry and Elizabeth. In January of 1678 she wrote to him regarding the particulars of the treaty, requesting that he kept details out of public knowledge until all was concluded.[69] This letter is of particular interest as the content and style greatly differs from the correspondence she received from the duchess, suggestive of differing roles for men and women within elite marriage arrangements. Within her letter to the duke, the countess is engaging in discussion regarding the legalities of the match, a topic that does not appear in the letters from the duchess, but is seen in correspondence from the duke to others involved in the proceedings.[70] The dissimilarities in their correspondence with the countess highlight the different roles taken by the duke and duchess within this match. Whilst the duke was involved with the legal aspects, the duchess was key in the maintenance of their connection with Elizabeth's family, utilising their correspondence to highlight her son's qualities and by extension the merits of the match. In one letter to the dowager countess she outlines her son's improvements, stating that:

> …every day to improve himselfe as fit as posbile to apeare in your sight being hugely cencible non can ever be worthy of your favour.[71]

[68] Skinner, *The Life of General Monk,* p. 373.
[69] UNMASC, Pw1/199, Dowager Countess of Northumberland to Duke of Newcastle, 1 January 1679.
[70] See UNMASC, Pw1/136- letter from Orlando Gee to the duke discussing the particulars of the proposed match, 2 January 1679.
[71] UNMASC, Pw1/201, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, n.y.

Frances evidently deemed the improvement of her son as a matter of great importance in securing this particular alliance. During these marriage arrangements the duchess also showed an awareness of the significance of how her family as a whole was perceived, sending her daughter to pay a visit to the dowager countess. She wrote to the dowager following this visit stating:

> …you La^{s} is pleased to take too much notice of the Duty my Daughter paid you if shee were in towne I am sure it would bee greate trouble to her if shee thought you did not beeleice that where wee are all soe bound as wee are to you La^{p} she ought to waite upon you as the greatest honor sheee can have.[72]

The duchess is clearly aware that not only will the character of herself and her son be taken into account, but also that of her wider family. As such, sending her daughter to pay a visit is a shrewd move on the part of the duchess, serving to highlight the suitability of the entire family, and by extension her son. The efforts of both the duke and the duchess seemingly paid off, with the marriage taking place in 1679. Unfortunately, the much wished for alliance was short lived, with Henry passing away only a year later.[73] This left the duke and duchess without a male heir, a state of affairs which had enormous consequences and affected many of their decisions afterwards, including the marriage arrangements of their remaining daughters.

Despite the efforts of those involved to facilitate this match, it was not viewed favourably by all parties. Following his son's death, the duke wrote to friend Thomas Osbourne, the Earl of Danby expressing that:

> …ye memory of my sonn who was ruened by his marriage wch I was ever against, noe doubt my Lady Ogle is a most Vertues excellent but she is most unfortunate haveing people who advised her yt loves money above all things.[74]

[72] UNMASC, Pw1/202, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, n.y.
[73] UNMASC, Pw1/543, Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Osbourne Earl of Danby, 14 November 1681.
[74] UNMASC, Pw1/543, Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Osbourne, 14 November 1681; Lady Ogle is most likely referring to Elizabeth Percy who held the title during her marriage to Henry.

Evidently the duke did not consider the match a success, despite his own involvement during the discussion stages. His reaction runs contrary to earlier suggestions that the sole consideration of parents regarding the marriages of their children during this period was economic and social advancement. Whilst his opinion at this time is likely being influenced by his grief over the loss of his only son and heir, the duke's statement does suggest that although economic concerns were clearly of importance, they also had the potential to be detrimental to future happiness.

The specific challenges facing heirs and heiresses are also highlighted in the marriage arrangements of Henrietta Cavendish, the only child of the duke and duchess's daughter Margaret and her husband John Holles. Following the death of the 2nd duke in 1691, Margaret was named as the sole heir to her father's estate. Along with Holles's own estates and those inherited from the third Baron Holles, the pair had property and influence in multiple counties in Southern and Eastern England.[75] Due to both the wealth of her family as well as Holles's growing influence in politics, Henrietta would have been deemed a very attractive prospect. This is shown in the multitude of offers she received over a period of ten years. The first known proposal occurred in 1703 when Henrietta was aged just nine. Her father received a letter from an individual named D'Erbemont, proposing a match with his master, a Count in the Holy Roman Empire, referred to only as Count de N.[76] A further proposal was made three years later by a Mr Jacob Bonnell suggesting a match with the son of the Elector of Hanover, who would later become King George II.[77] Despite the clear benefits of both matches in terms of wealth and influence, there are no further mentions of either within the correspondence, suggesting that the proposals did not lead to any serious discussions. It is likely that this was due to the young age of Henrietta at the time of the proposals.

---

[75] P.R Seddon, 'John Holles, Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004).
[76] D'Erbemont to the Duke of Newcastle, December 1703, found in *Historical Manuscripts Commission: The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland preserved at Welbeck Abbey, Volume 2* (London: 1893), p. 184.
[77] Jacob Bonnell to John Holles, June 5 1706, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2,* p. 193.

Although engagements at a young age were possible, they were relatively rare and discouraged by contemporaries. A further bid for Henrietta's hand was made in 1707 by Charles Seymour, 6th Duke of Somerset, who wrote to Holles proposing a match with his son, the Earl of Hertford, stating that an alliance between their two families was one which 'I have long had in my thoughts, and what I shall bee very proud off'.[78] This suggestion was also rebuffed, reportedly due to the age of Henrietta who was still only thirteen years old at the time.[79] In 1709 another match was proposed with the 24 year old Count Nassau, described as a person of 'as illustrious blood as any in Europe'.[80] No further correspondence can be found regarding this proposal, nor any hints about potential further discussions. The reasons for this are unknown, but two likely explanations are either Henrietta's youth or the foreign nature of the match. Marriages with individuals outside of England at this time were rare, even within elite circles, with Schutte estimating a marriage rate of English aristocratic brides to foreign grooms of only 0.43 percent in the seventeenth century and 0.78 percent in the eighteenth century.[81] The Cavendish family matches are reflective of this general pattern with no examples of foreign matches being made during the period under consideration. Two years later in 1711, Somerset made another attempt for Henrietta's hand, expressing a hope that at this point she would now be considered 'woman enough' to enter into a treaty with his son.[82] There are two further letters from Somerset at this time, referencing the 'obliging encouragement' received from Henrietta's mother, Margaret, and the demands outlined within her letters on behalf of her husband,

[78] Duke of Somerset to John Holles, 28 March 1707, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2*, p. 199. The 6th Duke of Somerset was also the third husband of Elizabeth Percy, further emphasising the insular nature of elite marriage links at this time.
[79] See letter from Duke of Somerset to John Holles, 5 February 1711, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2*, pp. 224-225 in which he states that Holles made 'no other objection than to tell me your daughter was not woman enough'.
[80] UNMASC, Pw2/38, Henry D'Avenant to John Holles, 30 April 1709. It is possible that this is the same Count de N who was proposed as a match in 1703.
[81] This figure does not include matches between English brides to Scottish, Irish or Welsh husbands as these are recorded separately by Schutte. See Kimberly F. Schutte, *Women, Rank, and Marriage in the British Aristocracy, 1485-2000: An Open Elite* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2014), p. 60.
[82] Duke of Somerset to John Holles, 5 February 1711, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2*, pp. 224-225.

indicating that this match was at least contemplated by the duke and duchess.[83] There are no further references to the match, however, suggesting that the demands expressed within their correspondence were not met.

The victor in the competition for Henrietta's hand was Edward Harley, the only son and heir to the Earl of Oxford and Mortimer. The earl was a leading political figure, holding various positions in Parliament including the Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1710-1711 and Lord High Treasurer from 1711-1714.[84] Despite their attributes, however, the fortune and rank of the Harleys was clearly outmatched by previous bids for Henrietta's hands, in particular the proposed match with the future king, George II. Nevertheless, it was Harley who was successful, and this is likely due to the relationship his father had cultivated with the new duke and duchess from as early as 1704.[85] The earl had kept a steady correspondence with the duke, referring mostly to matters of politics, however, it is his letters to Margaret that are of particular interest. These appear largely after the death of the duke in 1711 and contain advice from Harley on a number of matters including whether Henrietta was required to take the name Cavendish in order to inherit her father's estate.[86] He also served as a source of news for the duchess, recounting on one occasion a plot he had heard of to 'seize and carry away Lady Harriot [Henrietta] by force'.[87] His tone within this correspondence is one of deference, exclaiming at one point that 'it is not possible for me to find words to express the great honour you have me by the letter I have received'.[88] The letters are also highly complimentary towards Margaret, praising her business acumen, her sense of judgement, and her

[83] See letters from the Duke of Somerset to John Holles, 21 February 1711 and 23 February 1711, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2*, p. 225.
[84] W.A Speck, 'Robert Harley', *ODNB,* (Oct 2007).
[85] See *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2*, pp. 184-193 for examples of correspondence between Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, and John Holles.
[86] See *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2,* pp. 230-232.
[87] Earl of Oxford to Margaret Holles, August 16 1711, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2,* p. 231.
[88] Earl of Oxford to Margaret Holles, August 7 1711, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2,* p. 232.

success in being a good wife to Holles.[89] It is evident that the earl is endeavouring to flatter Margaret, as well as making himself as useful to her as possible to maintain a connection. His efforts seemingly paid off and on the 31st of August 1713, Edward and Henrietta were married at Wimpole Hall in Cambridgeshire.[90]

The examples of both Henry and Henrietta Cavendish provide no indications of disagreement between parent and child, with very little recorded concerning the views of those to be married at all. This can be explained by two major factors: the importance of the matches due to their heir and heiress status, and their relative youth at the time of the arrangements. For both them and their proposed spouses, the decision-making process was made by or through parents or guardians. It is clear that Elizabeth and Henrietta were both held up as a great prize to be won by potential suitors wishing to advance themselves. However, despite a clear sense of economic advancement with regards to those pursuing their hands, there were also references to hopes of happiness from their families. It has additionally been shown that there were concerns regarding marrying too young even when there were clear economic or social motivations. For Henrietta in particular her age served to prevent certain potential matches from taking place at all. In the case of Elizabeth, however, the match did go ahead as soon as she was of legal age, suggesting that such concerns from her family were outweighed by other potential inducements.

Discord in marriage arrangements

It is evident that for both matches examined thus far there was a great deal of parental involvement. However, as Cressy has argued, the authority of parents was not absolute and 'often crumbled in the

[89] Earl of Oxford to Margaret Holles, August 20 1711, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, Volume 2*, p. 232.
[90] Lucy Worsley, 'Henrietta Harley [neé Holles], *ODNB,* (Jan 2008); see BL, Add. MS 70440, 31 Aug/1 Sept 1713; Wimpole Hall was in the possession of John Holles from 1710 before being passed down to Henrietta following his death a year later.

face of youthful independence'.[91] One example of this within the Cavendish family can be found in a proposed match for Frances, the second eldest daughter of the 2nd duke and duchess. In December of 1684 the duke organised a match for his daughter, offering her 'an English Earles sonn with five thousand pounds a yeare'.[92] However, contrary to the marriage arrangements for her brother, Frances was not merely a silent participant but made her feelings on the matter known. In a letter to the Duke of Albemarle, husband to his eldest daughter Elizabeth, Henry stated that Frances had refused the match, saying he was not good enough and that she would marry a duke.[93] Evidently, for Frances matters of rank were of more importance to her than to her father, suggesting that both had differing motivations regarding the choice of her marital partner. This potential for conflicting goals in marriage arrangements has been highlighted by Whyman in her examination of the Verney family, in which she suggests that 'individual goals were in constant tension with those of the larger family'.[94] Evidently on this occasion Frances deemed status as her main goal, in direct conflict with the opinion of her father. Indeed, Schutte has proposed that for aristocratic women in particular, 'rank was consistently of greater import' than money.[95]

The duke deemed his daughter to be undutiful to him in this matter and subsequently declared that he had 'little prospect of her happiness by marriage'.[96] In contrast to White's claims that happiness was a matter of luck, the duke's comments suggestive that it could also be affected by the actions of an individual. Even amid conflict, however, it is clear that he deems happiness in marriage as a state to be striven towards, even if he does not at this point in time envisage it as a possibility for his daughter. The duke wrote to Albemarle again in January of the following year

[91] Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death,* p. 256.
[92] UNMASC, Pw1/635, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 21 December 1684.
[93] UNMASC, Pw1/635, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 21 December 1684.
[94] Whyman, *Sociability and Power,* p. 111.
[95] Schutte, 'Marrying by the Numbers', p. 9.
[96] UNMASC, Pw1/635, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 21 December 1684.

regarding a proposed match between Frances and John Campbell, son of the Earl of Breadalbane and Holland. Along with questions regarding the particulars of the proposed match, the duke informed his son-in-law that he and his wife were not for his daughters' marrying at this time, stating that: 'she is perfectly unfitt to be Marryed but if her friends and relations thinkes it fitt to marry her my Wife and I will not opose it'.[97] This statement suggests that the decision lay fundamentally with Frances, although the consent and support of both the duke and his wife is clearly desired. This idea of being 'fit' for marriage is also shown during the proposed match between Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy, where the duchess outlines her son's improvements.[98] The use of this term in both examples suggests that individuals were expected to display certain characteristics in order to be deemed ready for marriage.[99] Despite the 'undutiful' behaviour of Frances in this situation it is evident that her opinions were considered. Stone has highlighted this apparent power of individuals in their own marriage arrangements, outlining what he terms the 'right of veto' available to them during this period, to be used in the case of disagreement with their parents regarding a match.[100] Nevertheless, although Frances was merely exercising a right available to her as an individual over the age of consent, it is evident that her behaviour on this occasion was viewed unfavourably by the duke. The resulting conflict over her decision to reject the match thus suggests that whilst agreement was not a legal requirement, it was expected nonetheless. It is clear that the approval of the duke and duchess, or at the very least their tacit compliance, was considered necessary in any future marriage arrangements.

[97] UNMASC, Pw1/636, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 22 January 1685.
[98] UNMASC, Pw1/201, Duchess of Newcastle to Dowager Countess of Northumberland, n.y.
[99] UNMASC, Pw1/636, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 22 January 1685.
[100] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 181.

Despite the issues surrounding this proposed match and the duke's belief of her being unfit for marriage, the match did take place with Frances marrying Campbell in the following year.[101] This match is of particular interest as Frances is the only individual examined within this study to marry outside of England. Whilst this period did see an increase in the number of cross nation matches, they remained uncommon, with Schutte suggesting that English aristocratic women married into Scotland at a rate of only 9.20 percent during the seventeenth century.[102] As such, whilst not unique, the match of Frances to Campbell was out of the ordinary, especially for the Cavendish family who otherwise did not traverse national borders in their marriages. The duke himself highlights the anomalous nature of this match in the following letter written to Lord Sunderland after the marriage, stating:

> I am wth all humility thankefull to his Maj^{te} for takeing notes of my marrying a Daughter; And I humbly intreate your Lo^{p} to oblige me soe much as to acquainte his Mag^{te}, I was an absolute stranger to My Lord Breadalbane tell I received your Lo^{p} letter, and I have never inquired into his Lo^{p} estate assureing my selfe an estate in ye Highlands in Scotland afford very little money. My Lord Duke of Albemarle recommended this marriage to me and his Graces recommendation and my Daughter being willing to goe in to Scotland caused my consent, otherwise I humbly assure your Lo^{ps} I would never have marryed a Daughter in Scotland.[103]

It is evident that the duke had little interest in a Scottish match for his daughter prior to this point, due to a belief that there would be little financial gain in doing so. It appears that the recommendation of his son-in-law Albemarle was the driving factor in his consenting to this particular alliance. The Albemarle family were well acquainted with the Campbells, with the Earl of Breadalbane having assisted General Monck during Glencairn's rising of 1653-4, thus lending further weight to this endorsement.[104] The duke's letter also highlights another important facet of all

[101] NRS, GD112/25/156, Copy articles of agreement for marriage of Lady Frances Cavendish, daughter of Henry, duke of Newcastle, and John, lord Glenorchy, 16th April 1685.
[102] Schutte, *Women, Rank, and Marriage*, p. 60.
[103] Duke of Newcastle to Lord Sunderland, April 21st 1685, found in Ward, *Christopher Monck,* pp. 191-192.
[104] Paul Hopkins, 'John Campbell, first earl of Breadalbane and Holland', *ODNB,* (Jan 2008).

matches, that of the consent of the individual to be married. As shown, Frances had previously been unwilling to consent to a marriage proposed by her parents, and this dispute served to derail any attempts of securing the match. On this occasion, however, it is clear that Frances was in agreement, despite the gentleman in question not being a duke as she had previously wished. This letter also calls to attention the involvement of the king in these marriage arrangements. Schutte has highlighted how both James I and Charles I actively encouraged connections between the peerages of England and Scotland to tighten bonds between the two nations, and it appears that James II was similarly keen to facilitate this particular match between the Campbells and the Cavendishes.[105] The following letter from Sunderland to Henry further emphasises his involvement in these proceedings:

> The King being informed that your Grace intends to marry one of your daughters to the Earle of Breadalbanes son his Maj: Commands me to let you know that he approve's very well of the choice you have made having a particular consideration for them and theire family which he will be ready to show on all occasions.[106]

It is evident that the king had an interest in this match, seemingly having a particular regard for the Campbells and thus championing their connection to the Cavendish family. Indeed, the advantage of this match was arguably felt most keenly by the Campbells. Sir Andrew Forrester wrote the following letter congratulating the earl on the match, stating that he was:

> …overjoyed that your Son is soe well matched… I am most confident it will contribute extreamly to your own ease as well as the additional honour, Interest & happiness of your Family.[107]

As with earlier discussions regarding matches for Frances, happiness is once again mentioned as a potential result of this marriage. However, the other advantages first mentioned of ease, honour, and

---

[105] Schutte, *Women, Rank, and Marriage*, p. 61.
[106] NRS, GD112/39/137/2, Earl of Sunderland to Duke Newcastle, 11 April 1685.
[107] NRS, GD112/39/137/3, Sir Andrew Forrester to Earl of Breadalbane, 25 April 1685. From the dates of his letters within this collection, it can be assumed that this is Sir Andrew Forrester, under sectary of State to Charles II, James VII & II- see Antti Matikkala, *The Orders of Knighthood and the Formation of the British Honours System 1660-1760* (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2008), p. 265.

interest, suggest that the economic and social gains to be made by this match were seen by Forrester to be of equal, if not greater importance in this instance.

Despite the apparent success of the match, however, it did not serve to change the duke's mind on marrying outside of England. In 1691 the Earl of Arran was proposed by Breadalbane as a potential match for their youngest daughter but was turned down by the duke. The duchess, writing to Breadalbane on her husband's behalf stated that he would 'not marry his daughter Arabella into Scotland'.[108] Evidently the duke's previous qualms regarding the economic benefits of marrying his daughters into Scotland had not been alleviated by the match of Frances and John.

The potential for discord as seen in the failed match for Frances is also demonstrated in the efforts to arrange a marriage for the duke's favourite daughter Margaret. The first indication of attempts to find her a suitable husband is seen in 1684. Following a proposed match between the Earl of Thanet and his other daughter Katherine, the duke wrote to a correspondent referred to as 'Sandys' suggesting that Margaret would be a better choice: [109]

> …my Lord Thanet is a Person I have greate essteeme and Honnor: for and am aquainted with and an alliance with ^him^ will bee very pleasing to mee his Lo[p]: could not see Kate since shee was a growne woman and I beeleeve saw my D Margaret at the same time for thay ware always together I confess to you my good freind I would much rather marie my Elder Daughter Margaret before my Daughter Katherin thay being equally deare to mee and as good children as ever father had yet if I make any difference that advantage is Margaretts and I will give her both more in Presant and much more heere after than any Child I have and may bee if my Lord Thanet sees them and considers every thing hee may change his mind from Kate for her which would bee highly Pleaseing to mee and my wife whose favoret and mine ^shee^ has bin ever and is now.[110]

As well as highlighting how matches were often viewed in terms of their utility to the wider family with regards to the alliances they would form, this letter also emphasises the duke's particular

---

[108] NA, DD/4P/35/162-1, Frances Cavendish to Breadalbane, 27th May 1691.
[109] Sandys is most likely Francis Sandys esq of Scrooby who was acting magistrate from 1660-1695 and also appeared on the marriage contract for Frances and John Campbell (see Pw1/335); Robert Mellors, 'Scrooby', (1920), at http://www.nottshistory.org.uk/articles/mellorsarticles/scrooby5.htm, [accessed 28/04/2021].
[110] BL Add MS 70500, fol.139, Duke of Newcastle to Sandys, May 1684.

preoccupation with securing a good match for Margaret. This can be explained not only by his confession that she was his favourite, but also that she was the older of the two. The duke's attempts to sway the earl with promises of greater economic gain highlight the financial aspects of such matches and how this could be a deciding factor in choosing a spouse. He seems confident that Thanet will change his mind, stating that 'when hee sees them hee shall take his choyse'.[111] The earl, however, remained unmoved in his wishes and married Katherine later that year, suggesting that for him economic advancement was not the most important factor in making this decision.[112]

Marriage arrangements for Margaret meanwhile did not go as smoothly nor as quickly as the duke had hoped. Two years later in 1686 another match was proposed between Margaret and the king's natural son Mr Fitz James. The duke relayed his discussions with the king to his brother-in-law, the Marquis of Halifax, writing:

> His Maj[te] writ me a very obligeing letter where in he desires to marry Mr Fitz James into my family and I have write two very dutifull letters to his maj[te] expressing my ernest desire to marry one of my daughters to Mr Fitz James.[113]

This match once again highlights the royal interest in the marriages of the Cavendish family, further emphasising their place in society and the importance attached to their matches, not only for themselves but for others with vested interests in their success. The proposal for the match is reported to have come from the king, suggesting a level of familiarity between himself and the duke. It is clear that the duke is pleased with this potential alliance and has intimated this to the king. However, the proposal was not met with similar approval by the duchess, who according to the memoirs of close family friend, Sir John Reresby, took exception to the king's son as a 'papist and a

[111] BL, Add MS 70500, fol. 139, Duke of Newcastle to Sandys, May 1684.
[112] See: UNMASC, NeD/463, Settlement subsequent to the marriage of Thomas Tufton, 6th Earl of Thanet with Lady Katherine Cavendish, 24 February 1685.
[113] UNMASC, Pw1/642, Duke of Newcastle to the Marquis of Halifax, 17 January 1686.

bastard', vowing that Margaret should never marry him.[114] Another account states that Margaret was also unhappy with the match, reporting that 'the mother… excepted against him as a bastard, the daughter as a papist'.[115] As with many of the considerations upon entering into marriage, it was advised within the conduct literature that there should be a parity of religion. As such, the reaction of the duchess and her daughter to the match does not appear unusual according to contemporary ideals. For the duke, however, this was evidently not a factor he deemed of enough importance to prevent the match from taking place. Historically, the Cavendish family does not appear to have held particularly strong views on religion with Henry's father William, the 1st Duke of Newcastle, facing criticism due to his inclusion of Catholic recruits in his army, earning the nickname of the 'Papist army'.[116] This position of tolerance on matters of religion continued with Henry who in 1682 wrote to an unnamed correspondent stating: 'I doe wonder y^e^ Romanist will appeare in publick places I am a frend to many of y^m^ but I shall never be of their Religion'.[117] His opinions on this matter are also shown a few months prior to the negotiations regarding the match with Mr Fitz James, when the duke was said to be 'sensible of the King's going on very fast in the promoting his own religion', but that he did 'resolve to be very loyal, and yet firm to his religion'.[118] Evidently, it was the hope of the duke to maintain his position with the crown and government, whilst still remaining faithful to his own religion. His readiness to marry his daughter to the king's son therefore suggests that religion was not deemed as important to him as the benefits that such a match could bring. For the duchess, however, even the wealth and rank of the king's son could not

[114] John Reresby, *The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, Bart., M.P For York, &c. 1634-1689 written by himself, edited from the original manuscript By James J. Cartwright* (Longmans, Green, and Co: London, 1875), 4 November 1686, p. 366.
[115] *The Ellis Correspondence: Letters written during the years 1686, 1687, 1688 and addressed to John Ellis Esq* (London: 1829), p. 317.
[116] Lynn Hulse, 'William Cavendish, first duke of Newcastle upon Tyne', *ODNB,* (Jan 2011).
[117] UNMASC, Pw1/658, Duke of Newcastle to unknown recipient, 2 November 1682.
[118] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* (August 4, 1686), p. 365.

surpass the issues surrounding his religion, emphasising its importance to her as a motivating factor for marriage.

The duchess instead proposed Lord Shrewsbury, a decision in which she was supported by her daughters. Whilst this was not the choice of the duke, negotiations did take place regarding the potential match. However, these did not go smoothly with the main point of contention being the financial terms offered by the duke. John Beaumont, MP for Nottingham from 1685 to 1689, who was involved with these proceedings, wrote to the duke explaining that the earl was unwilling to agree to the terms set out.[119] Passing on a message from Shrewsbury he states:

> if he alters his condition hee saith it shall bee to enable him to keepe a wife as well as his preasant fortune will keepe himselfe, and not to expose his presant fortune to incumbrances without a certaine reuertion to reimburst him.[120]

Evidently, in this case, the lack of financial incentive served to entirely prevent the match from taking place. Richard Grassby has suggested that it was expected at this time that the portion a woman would bring with her would 'at least defray and preferably cover or exceed the additional cost of maintaining a wife'.[121] It has also been argued that regardless of the position of the woman in question, 'she was required to make a contribution towards enlarging her prospective husbands estate'.[122] As such, the refusal of the Earl of Shrewsbury to marry on terms which would not facilitate this is hardly surprising.

The conflict between the duke and duchess over the proposed suitors continued and Reresby was called upon by the duke to 'speak to the duchess and his daughters to make them friends'.[123] An accord was not reached, however, and Reresby recounted how he found them 'very foolishly

---

[119] T.F Henderson, 'John Beaumont', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004).
[120] UNMASC, Pw1/550, John Beaumont to the Duke of Newcastle, 9 October 1686.
[121] Richard Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism: Marriage, Family, and Business in the English- Speaking World, 1580-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001), p. 47.
[122] Bonfield, *Marriage Settlements,* p. 94.
[123] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 4 November 1686, p. 366.

obstinate for the duchess had had so great a share of government in that family that she expected everything should go as she pleased'.[124] This declaration is of particular interest as not only does it highlight the apparent influence of the duchess over the marriage arrangements of her children, but also that on this occasion her actions were worthy of censure. Conduct literature during this period suggested that the household acted as a kind of government in itself. In their text *A Godlie form of Household Governance* Dod and Cleaver argued that it was 'impossible for a man to understand to govern the common wealth, that doth not know to rule his owne house'.[125] Evidently the situation in the Cavendish household at this time was an undesirable one, potentially calling into question the duke's authority within his own house and by extension in other public affairs. Following this dispute, the duke was said to have been 'infinitely troubled' and went so far as to burn his will, making another settlement which was 'not at all to the advantage of those daughters' who he considered to have defied him.[126] As well as demonstrating his anger on this occasion, his actions also highlight the way in which economic means could be used as a punishment or indeed as a way in which to secure obedience. O'Hara has examined such actions, stating that it was often the strategy of parents to 'ensure the compliance of children through deployment of economic resources'.[127] Foyster in comparison, however, suggests that such sanctions were rarely applied, with disinheritance being the 'final, and most drastic' action taken by parents.[128] It is evident that on this occasion the duke is attempting to regulate the behaviour of Margaret through economic means, a

[124] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 4 November 1686, p. 366. It is not made clear which of her daughters this is referring to, however at the time only Margaret and Arabella remained unmarried so it can be assumed that is them.
[125] John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Household Government: For the Ordering of Private Families, according to the direction of Gods word* (London: 1598), p. 1.
[126] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 4 November 1686, p. 366.
[127] Diana O'Hara, 'Ruled by my friends': aspects of marriage in the diocese of Canterbury, c. 1540-1570, *Continuity and Change*, Vol. 6, No. 1, (1999), p. 14.
[128] Elizabeth Foyster, 'Parenting Was for Life, Not just for Childhood: The Roles of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England', *History,* Vol. 86, No. 283, (July 2001), p. 318.

striking parallel to his previous plans to increase her portion in order to change Thanet's decision regarding which daughter to choose.

The conflict within the family at this time began to be known by others, with the duke himself stating in a letter to the Marquis of Halifax that he believes it is 'very well known in the country with what scorns and slight my Wife and Daughter Margrett proseed towards me'.[129] Publicization of family conflict during this period was to be avoided, as highlighted by Lisa Wynne Smith in her examination of the extremely public unravelling of the Newdigates of Warwickshire.[130] Indeed, the public nature of the disagreement in the Cavendish family was seen as a potential threat to future endeavours by Reresby who stated:

> …so fatal to families are those differences occasioned by the folly of husband or wife, or both; and if the latter thought the man hath spirit (if he have sense with it), he will suffer in some degree the insolence of a woman rather than make it public to the prejudice of his children, especially daughters, who are seldom desired out of such families.[131]

Evidently for Reresby, such a public conflict had the potential to negatively impact Margaret's prospects in the future. His predictions were shown to be quite astute, as following these disputes Lord Feversham went as far as to proclaim to Reresby that he thought himself happier in his single condition 'than married into that family as things stood'.[132] At this point, therefore, the potential benefits of an alliance with the Cavendish family were outweighed by their apparent defects in character, further suggesting that non-economic factors were also of importance when choosing a prospective spouse. The following year, however, Lord Feversham was proposed as an alternative match for Margaret, indicating that any previous reservations were either no longer of importance

---

[129] UNMASC, Pw1/642, Duke of Newcastle to the Marquis of Halifax, 17 January 1686.
[130] See Lisa Wynne Smith, 'Resisting Silences: Gender and Family Trauma in Eighteenth-Century England', *Gender and History,* Vol. 32, No. 1, (March 2020), pp. 30-53. The troubles in the family were made public following a petition to the House of Lords by Sir Richard's daughters requesting relief from their fathers severities, and amplified by his own equally public rebuttal of these claims.
[131] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, 30 November 1686, p. 367.
[132] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, 30 November 1686, p. 367.

due to a change in behaviour by the duke and his family, or overshadowed by the other benefits of such an alliance. The match, which was facilitated by Reresby, was initially received 'very kindly' by the duke. However, this was not sufficient to begin negotiations, with the duke on this occasion requiring the agreement of his wife before going ahead. Reresby recounted this situation with some surprise, writing:

> …the obstacle still remained on his side, that his wife must request his consent in writing before he would give it (which seems a strange fancy, but they being but half reconciled, there were some reasons for it).[133]

Sir John clearly regarded such actions as an aberration, suggesting that the involvement of the duchess on this level differed from what he deemed the acceptable norm. Nevertheless, the opinion of the duchess was sought and, upon being informed of the proposal, both the duchess and Margaret reportedly 'approved of him [the earl] very well'.[134] During discussions for this match, however, the duke and Feversham soon found that they were struggling to agree on conditions regarding Margaret's jointure. Curiously, despite his strong feelings on this matter, the duke had left the final terms of the treaty to his wife.[135] Her involvement on this occasion thus differs to her role in the match of her son Henry, in which she largely concerned herself with maintaining links with the Percy family. With the assistance of Reresby, the duchess agreed to the conditions as set out by Feversham, describing him as a 'fit match for her daughter'. The duke, however, was not won over, and upon being informed of the terms was reported to have 'flew into a passion, saying he never thought his wife such a fool as to do it; that this was to beggar his daughter; that she was lost forever'.[136] Of particular interest here is Reresby's description of the duke flying into a passion. The use of physical terminology at this time has been highlighted by Schneider, who has observed that

[133] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 9 July 1687, p. 375.
[134] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 9 July 1687, p. 376.
[135] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, 6 October 1687, p. 382.
[136] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 16 October 1687, p. 383.

such terms acted as 'epistolary metaphors of demeanour and behaviour'.[137] Reresby's employment of physical imagery, along with the use of the word passion to denote strong emotions therefore conjures an image of an intense reaction.[138] This is especially pertinent given the social expectation during this period of restraint for men regarding emotions such as anger, with the use of the term 'flew' indicative of an uncontrolled display.[139] Evidently the conditions which were acceptable to the duchess were not good enough for the duke, suggesting that in the case of this match he placed more importance on the financial aspects than his wife. The disagreement between them led to a short period of separation, which will be explored in further detail in the following chapter regarding how elite conflict was managed. Despite the discord between the pair, the marriage was set to go ahead, however, the duke was so angered that he refused to give his daughter away nor would he be present for the wedding.[140] These actions were regarded with some surprise by Reresby, who recounted that he could 'never believe that he [the duke] would give his consent with his hand and deny it with his tongue'.[141] He wrote to the duke entreating him to reconsider Feversham, describing him as 'one of the first men of England for quality, alliance, preferments, virtue', who even the king himself had recommended.[142] It is clear that Reresby considered this a good match, not only in terms of any financial motivations but also due to the personal qualities of Feversham. He further intimated to the duke how such actions went against promises he made to his wife, Lord Feversham, and even the king, whom the duke had corresponded with to confirm the match.[143] Reresby considered the implications of such actions in his memoirs stating:

---

[137] Gary Schneider, 'Affecting Correspondences: Body, Behaviour, and the Textualization of Emotion in Early Modern English Letters', *Prose Studies,* 23:1, (2000), p. 37.
[138] Linda A. Pollock, 'Anger and the negotiation of relationships in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 47, Issue 3 (2004), p. 573.
[139] Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006), p. 67.
[140] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, 16 October 1687, pp. 383-384.
[141] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, 16 October 1687, p. 383.
[142] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 16 October 1687, p. 383.
[143] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 16 October 1687, p. 383.

> How would this sound to the wise part of the world, that he should thus interfere with himself, either he was indiscreet to promise it, or not wise to deny to perform. To be firm and what we appear is the best character of a great man, and the best security to his friends and dependants.[144]

As with issues regarding the duchess and her 'share of government' in the house, such actions are clearly regarded as having potential ill effects on the assessment of the duke's character in wider society. The duke remained unmoved, however, causing Margaret to declare that 'since her father was so averse to this marriage, she would live single till both father and mother agreed on a husband for her'.[145] This statement once again supports the notion that children had a certain level of agency in these matters, with the ability to 'veto' a marriage decision. Her wish for her mother and father to agree also highlights that Margaret deemed their agreement with each other as a requirement for a good marriage. Following the discord within the family and Margaret's refusal to entertain the match, discussions fell through. Reresby received a letter from Feversham following these events thanking him for his trouble in attempting to facilitate the marriage arrangements. Such recognition was deemed by Reresby to be unnecessary, and he recounted that, 'the truth is he gave me more expressions of kindness than it is fit for me to own for this abortive work'.[146] Evidently he considered the breakdown of these discussions as a failure and, indeed, he does not appear to have had a hand in any subsequent marriage arrangements for the Cavendish family, suggesting that he perhaps did not deem it worth the effort.

Margaret did eventually marry in 1690, to her cousin John Holles, the Earl of Clare (Holles being the son of her mother's sister Grace Holles, the Countess of Clare). The match was first suggested by the countess, who stated that the proposal was well received by the duke who 'seemed mightily pleased with it', giving her an 'abundance of thanks' and describing the alliance as one that

---

144 Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 16 October 1687, p. 384.
145 Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 16 October 1687, p. 384.
146 Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 22 October 1687, p. 385.

he 'desired above all Matches in England'.[147] Other reports, however, indicate that the match was not so readily agreed upon, with Ward suggesting that the duke had not agreed until his eldest daughter Elizabeth reportedly persuaded him 'on her knees' to consent to the match.[148] This is supported by a letter from the duke to his daughter Frances regarding the marriage wherein he states that 'your sister Albemarle when she was here was very earnest with me about it'.[149] Regardless of the duke's initial feelings towards this match, however, it is evident that he was well pleased by it after the event, reporting that Margaret was 'very happily married' in their library at Welbeck.[150] His regard of Holles is also later evidenced by his wish to settle his estate on him and Margaret, deeming him worthy of taking his name.[151]

The examples of both Margaret and Frances highlight that their parents did not have complete control over their marriage arrangements. They were both able to make their feelings on the matter known, and ultimately, without their agreement, the matches were not able to go ahead. However, as argued by Pollock, the idea of 'uncoerced choice' does not necessarily lead to harmonious agreement, but 'involved compromise and the successful resolution of potential and actual conflicts'.[152] This is evident in the failed matches of both Frances and Margaret through the duke's reaction to their behaviour. Whilst he is aware that any match cannot go ahead without the full consent of his daughters, he bemoans their input, deeming it undutiful and even going as far as to attempt to 'correct' their actions through economic punishment. Whyman has highlighted the limits of individual agency in such situations, suggesting that at this time 'choice was not simply free

[147] UNMASC, NeL 537, Deposition of Grace Holles relating to the suits of the Earl and Countess of Clare against the Earl of Thanet, 25 April 1692.
[148] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* p. 339.
[149] UNMASC, Pw1/551, Duke of Newcastle to Frances Cavendish, 1 April 1690.
[150] UNMASC, Pw1/551, Duke of Newcastle to Frances Cavendish, 1 April 1690.
[151] UNMASC, Pw1/302, Deposition of Robert Ward concerning the mental capacity of the Duke of Newcastle, c. 1691. Issues regarding the disposal of the duke's estate will be examined in further detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis.
[152] Linda Pollock, 'An action like a stratagem: Courtship and marriage from the middle ages to the twentieth century', *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 30, No. 2 (June 1987), p. 493.

or not free, leading to happy or unhappy marriages, but placed the young people between two conflicting poles of duty and affection'.[153] Whilst both Frances and Margaret were able to voice their opinions, it came at a cost, earning the displeasure of their father. This conflict of emotions is shown within Lord Halifax's *Advice to a Daughter* in which he states:

> It is one of the Disadvantages belonging to your sex, that young women are seldom permitted to make their own Choise…and their *Modesty* often forbideth them to refuse when their Parents recommend, though their *inwards consent* may not entirely go along with it. In this case there remaineth nothing for them to do, but to endeavour to make that easie which falleth to their *Lot*.[154]

Halifax is clearly aware of the pressures which could be put upon young women in terms of marriage arrangements. His reference to their 'inwards consent' mirrors the language utilised by conduct writers regarding the internal honour wives were to have for their husbands.[155] Evidently Halifax is conscious that, despite consenting to a match to appease one's parents, women may experience internal emotional tension at having to do so. Despite his understanding of the potential emotional stress placed on women like his daughter, however, Halifax was unable to provide a solution, ultimately suggesting that compliance was the best course of action.

Margaret Cavendish's failed matches are of particular interest as they highlight not only the potential for discord between parent and child during marriage arrangements, but also that of conflict amongst other family members. It is clear that the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle were affected by their lack of agreement on this matter, with the emotive language used further emphasising how differing motivations could impact familial relationships. The reactions of both the duke and Reresby also suggest that there were perceived limits to a mother's involvement in making matches, even following express permission from her husband. Examples such as these show that

---

[153] Whyman, *Sociability and Power,* p. 111.
[154] Halifax, *Advice to a Daughter,* p. 25.
[155] John Sprint, *The Bride-Womans Counsellor: Being a Sermon Preach'd at a Wedding, May the 11th, 1699 at Sherbour, in Dorsetshire* (H. Hills in Blackfriars: London, 1709), p. 12; Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 274.

elite marriage arrangements were far from the unsentimental affairs focused merely on advancement as portrayed by Stone and Slater, but were highly emotionally charged both for the individuals themselves as well as other family members.

Gendered roles in making matches

The matches examined thus far have demonstrated that both men and women could be involved in securing suitable spouses for their children. It is evident that the Duchess of Newcastle took a hands-on approach with the matches of her son and daughters, with roles varying from corresponding with families to create and maintain links, to looking over financial terms. Her clear involvement, especially within the proposed matches for Margaret, confirms the suggestion of Mendelson and Crawford that amongst the aristocracy, women were 'as likely as fathers to play an authoritative role in regulating young women's matrimonial choices'.[156] The duke appears to have not only accepted her active participation, but even on occasion encouraged it. Despite this, the involvement of the duchess was also sometimes viewed with distaste by her husband, especially when they were in disagreement over a proposed match. Indeed, in 1686, when considering whom to leave his estate to, the duke questioned her authority in these matters stating: 'I have marryed a sonn and 3 daughters and all by my wifes advice, & did nothing concerning y^{m} but as she directed me'.[157] Such a claim must be taken with a pinch of salt, however, as it has been shown that he was clearly involved with the matches he refers to, corresponding with the families of the potential spouses as well as outlining financial terms. Nevertheless, it is evident that the role of the duchess on occasion went beyond what was deemed acceptable, both by her husband and others such as Reresby, particularly with regards to her involvement in the legal and financial aspects of the

[156] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 112.
[157] UNMASC, Pw1/285, Duke of Newcastle copy of considerations upon making his will, 20 October 1686. Due to the date it can be assumed that he is referring to the matches of Henry, Elizabeth, Frances, and Katherine.

proposed match for Margaret. Such reactions reinforce established ideals of gendered behaviour, with men and women expected to perform differing roles within the marriages of their children.

However, these roles are not absolute within the matches examined and appear to differ depending on the specific situation and position of the individuals in question. Within the match of Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy, for example, the dowager countess had an important role to play, interacting with the duke on legal and financial matters in a manner similar to that of male correspondents in other matches. This can be partly explained by her status at this time as a widow, therefore acting without a husband. Described by Mendelson and Crawford as a 'time of maximum female autonomy', it has been argued that widowhood allowed greater freedom for women and this seemingly extended to their role in marriage arrangements.[158] It has been suggested by Merry E. Wiesner that aristocratic widows had an active role to play, being placed in a 'position of great power' over their children, dealing with matters such as dowries and marriage settlements.[159]

The marriage arrangements of the duke and duchess's youngest daughter, Arabella, similarly sheds light on the differing role of widows in these proceedings. Despite some earlier references to finding her a match, discussions of Arabella's marriage prospects did not begin in earnest until after the death of her father in 1691, when she was aged around eighteen. At this time there were issues regarding the will of the late duke, and the family were in the midst of arguments resulting in legal proceedings concerning the distribution of his estate.[160] In order to gain Arabella's favour during this conflict, the duchess wrote to her daughter promising that she would put her 'forward by the authoritie of a mother tho never against your inclinenation to the best marriage'.[161] Evidently, the duchess considered herself as the best placed to arrange a match for Arabella at this point, even

---

158 Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England,* p. 180.
159 Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press: New York, 1993), p. 74.
160 See UNMASC Pw1/285-312 for court depositions regarding the mental state of Henry when he made his will; This will be examined further within Chapter Four of this thesis.
161 UNMASC, Pw1/423, Duchess of Newcastle to Arabella Cavendish, c. 1691.

going as far as to suggest that her sister Katherine and husband the Earl of Thanet, who were also involved in this conflict, would convince her to put aside the best marriages.[162]

Despite the claims of the duchess that she would aid Arabella in securing an advantageous match at this time, serious discussions did not begin until 1694. The gentleman in consideration for Arabella's hand was Charles Spencer, son to Robert Spencer, the 2nd Earl of Sunderland. As with the matches of her other children, the duchess was involved on this occasion, as evidenced by multiple letters from her regarding the match. The following letter from the duchess to Thomas Pelham, husband to John Holles's sister Grace, highlights her involvement in these arrangements, as well as her own hopes for the marriage. This letter was not written in the duchess's own hand due to 'having not yet strength enough' in her arm, a point on which she was greatly apologetic.[163] James Daybell has emphasised how correspondence written in one's own hand was thought to be 'more intimate' than that written by a third party, conveying 'emotion, politeness and respect'.[164] The duchess would have thus preferred that a letter discussing such an important topic as this was written in her own hand. The letter states:

> All the happyness of my daughter Arr: being so much my conserne makes mee y^t^ I cannot but approve of my Ld Sunderlands Proposall both by her matching in to so hon:^ble^ a family & where I cannot but promis my self she will meet with all ye good Free men Immaginable … tis more then ordinary satisfaction to mee to find y^t^ my Ld Spencers caracter both for sobriety & for all qualificatione is a young man y^t^ are ^so rarely^ found in this Age.[165]

The duchess was evidently well pleased with this proposed match, praising both the character of Charles as well as his family more generally.[166] Once again, discussion of the relative benefits of the match is prefaced by the happiness they could bring to the individuals entering into the marriage. In

---

[162] UNMASC, Pw1/423, Duchess of Newcastle to Arabella Cavendish, c. 1691.
[163] BL Add MS 70500, fol.256, Duchess of Newcastle to Thomas Pelham, 23 July 1694.
[164] James Daybell, 'Material Meanings and the Social Signs of Manuscript Letters', *Literature Compass,* 6:3, (2009), pp. 651-652.
[165] BL Add MS 70500, fol.256, Duchess of Newcastle to Thomas Pelham, 23 July 1694.
[166] See also BL Add MS 70500, fol.255, Duchess of Newcastle to her sister the Marchioness of Halifax, 23 July 1694 for the duchess's praise of his character.

addition to these concerns, the duchess also enquires about the financial particulars of the proposal, ending her letter by questioning the settlements Sunderland was 'disposed to make' for this match.[167] Whilst the duchess was evidently acting without a husband on this occasion, the extent to which her role differed greatly from when he was alive can be questioned. As wife to the duke, she was also afforded a great deal of responsibility in the matches of their children, suggesting that widowhood was not necessarily a guarantee of increased authority in such matters.

Whilst the duchess evidently had a role to play in these marriage arrangements, much of the responsibility fell to John Holles, husband to the duke's favourite daughter Margaret. At this point in time, the estates had passed to Margaret and John, who also held the title of the Duke of Newcastle from 1694.[168] The Earl of Sunderland evidently deemed Holles as of most importance in the creation of the match, writing to him stating: 'it is on your friendship and good Offices I depend and I hope you will instruct me how to Proceed and your directions shall be exactly observed'.[169] It was through Holles that the majority of the legal and monetary particulars regarding the match were discussed, mirroring the gendered roles in the discussions for the match between Henry and Elizabeth Percy. The following letter to the new duke from political pamphleteer Benjamin Overton also highlights his involvement in this affair:

> I find y^{e} whole famaly Is Extreamly fond of this Allyance; … I know my Lord nothing will be wanting on y^{r} Graces part to bring this affair to a Happy, and Speedy conclusion, and I do not doubt y^{e} successe of it; Because I beleeeve it will be very much in your power.[170]

It is evident that the new duke is the driving force behind these arrangements, not Arabella's mother, despite her earlier wishes. References to the 'allyance' this match would form also provides some indication of his motivations behind personally overseeing the arrangements, suggesting that

---

[167] BL Add MS 70500, fol.256, Duchess of Newcastle to Thomas Pelham, 23 July 1694.
[168] John Holles had previously unsuccessfully petitioned the king for a dukedom in April of 1691- See BL Add MS 70500, fol.225; The title was bestowed upon him in 1694- See P.R Seddon, 'John Holles', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004).
[169] BL Add MS 70500, fol.252, Sunderland to John Holles, 11 July 1694.
[170] UNMASC, Pw2/180, Benjamin Overton to John Holles, 19 May 1694.

he stood to benefit from the connection between the two families. Indeed, the utility of connections between the two families appears to be one of the key motivating factors for the Earl of Sunderland. Two of his representatives during discussions, T. Felton and Benjamin Overton, wrote to Holles stating that:

> …y^{e} Honour of being ally'd to so noble a famaly, and y^{e} Inclinations He Hath to improve his acquaintance and Friendship with your Grace, soone fix'd his Resolutions in y^{e} Choyce of your proposal.[171]

It is evident that a connection with the family was greatly desired, which is unsurprising given the extent of Holles' influence at this time, with the estates of both the late duke and his own family under his control.

In addition to the economic and social benefits of such a match, there are also suggestions that it was accelerated by the growing attachment of Charles to Arabella. An earlier historian on the Sunderland family, J.P Keynon, highlights this emerging affection stating that:

> Charles Spencer, always a man of violent emotions, met Lady Arabella and fell passionately – and almost unfashionably- in love: the least hint that he might now lose his dearest "Bel' had dire effects on his temper and even his health.[172]

Kenyon's suggestion that overt expressions of love to this degree were unfashionable during this period can be questioned. Whilst economic and social advancement were clearly of importance during this period, it is also evident that much of the conduct literature promoted love as an ideal within a marriage. Indications of Charles's feelings towards Arabella at this time can be found in the following letters he wrote to John Holles during the negotiation stages of the match:

> I should look upon it, as a very great happiness, if I might venture, to express my Passion, to my Lady Arabella, her self, but that is, what I dare not venture upon, unless you are Pleas'd, to let me know, you think it Proper for me either to write to her, or to wait upon her.[173]

---

[171] UNMASC, Pw2/181, T. Felton and Benjamin Overton to John Holles, 19 May 1694.
[172] J.P Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland 1641-1702* (Greenwood Press: Westport, 1975), p. 267.
[173] BL Add MS 70500, fol.280, Charles Spencer to Newcastle, 9 September 1694.

The use of the term passion here is of particular interest. Unlike the companionate love extolled within advice literature, passionate love was viewed with a level of distrust by contemporaries.[174] The way in which Charles expresses himself suggests that he is seemingly aware that such a display of emotion may not be welcomed by Holles. His request to either write to or see Arabella also further emphasises his feelings towards her at this time. It is evident that as with his professions of passion, Charles is aware that his wish may not be deemed entirely appropriate by Holles. Indeed, it was not the opinion of the duchess and the late duke that their daughters should correspond with suitors prior to marriage. Holles seemingly observed similar rules, as evidenced by the following letter from Charles:

> I find by the letter, that I had the honour to receive from you, that you do not think it Proper for me, as yet, to write to, or to wait upon My Lady Arabella; so that I can't but be very impatient, till I hear when your Grace goes to London, hoping that I shall be then allow'd, the happiness of waiting upon her. [175]

Whilst Holles has clearly not granted his permission for a correspondence between the young couple, Charles has seemingly not given up hope of contacting Arabella directly, further emphasising his feelings towards her at this time. Nonetheless, it is clear that he is having to adhere to the standards of emotional expression within the emotional community of the Cavendish family. He did not have too long to wait, however, as following the efforts of all involved the pair were married a few months later on the 12th of January 1695.[176] It is evident that Holles occupied the role of most responsibility for this particular match, suggesting that, in the absence of the late duke, he was the best placed to lead discussions. Nevertheless, the duchess was still consulted and kept abreast of the particulars of the match, highlighting that she continued to have a role of importance in the marriage arrangements of her children as a widow.

---

[174] Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death,* p. 255.
[175] BL Add MS 70500, fol.288, Charles Spencer to Newcastle, 9 October 1694.
[176] Henry L. Snyder, 'Charles Spencer, third earl of Sunderland', *ODNB,* (May 2006).

Role of others in arranging matches

In addition to close family members, such as brothers-in-law, marriage arrangements could also involve others who could be designated as 'kin'. It will be shown that such individuals were of great importance within the matches of the Cavendish family network, both in terms of proposing matches, as well as providing support during other arrangements. A useful method by which the involvement of individuals within these groups can be investigated is through the examination of marriage contracts. In all the matches for the Cavendish family an indenture was drawn up outlining the financial intricacies of the match, with information regarding dowries and estates. Many scholars writing on the topic of early modern marriage have made use of these documents, mostly to discover information on dowries or other specifics of the settlement.[177] However, indentures can also shed light on who exactly was involved within marriage arrangements, as well as providing useful information regarding kinship networks. Signatories were most often simply witnesses to the document, present at the time of its ratification. The attendance of these individuals illuminates the presence of kinship networks in the daily lives of elites, and the trust placed in them. Women are notably absent from these documents, usually appearing only in name if they are one of the parties to be married. If one were only to examine these sources for evidence of marriage arrangements it might appear that women had little to do with these proceedings, however, as has already been shown this was not the case for the Cavendish family. Whyman has highlighted this absence with reference to the marriage arrangements of the Verneys, stating that 'since women could not sign contracts, their signatures are missing from documents that determined their fate'.[178] This, however, was not the case in the marriage of Elizbeth Percy to Henry Cavendish, with the Countess Dowager

[177] See: Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p.24; Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England,* pp.128-129, 147, 266; Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* p. 63. Barclay suggests that 'male authority and female obedience' were 'at the heart of the marriage contract'.
[178] Whyman, *Sociability and Power,* p. 114.

of Northumberland appearing as a signatory on the marriage contract for her granddaughter.[179] It has been made evident that she played a central role within the marriage arrangements, due in part to her status as a widow. Elizbeth's own father and grandfather had predeceased the dowager countess, and as such she was evidently deemed the most appropriate person to sign on her granddaughter's behalf.

With regards to the other names included on the marriage contracts examined, many individuals can be considered kin by blood or marriage. For example, of the ten men whose signatures and seals appear on the settlement concerning the marriage of Margaret Cavendish and John Holles in 1690, four fall into this category.[180] In addition to Margaret's father Henry Cavendish, also included are Gervase Pierrepont (uncle to both John and Margaret), The Earl of Bridgewater (whom we can assume from the date of this document was Margaret's cousin as opposed to her uncle of the same name and title), and Thomas Pelham, brother-in-law to John Holles. As such, despite not having a direct link to this match in terms of discussing terms or creating links, other family members did indeed have a role to play in making sure it was legally binding.

However, marriage contracts of course do not provide evidence of involvement of individuals in failed matches. Perhaps the most pertinent example of this is Sir John Reresby, who was intimately involved in both proposed matches for Margaret Cavendish from 1686 to 1687.[181] It has been shown that he was in discussion with both the duke and duchess on the matter, as well as contacting others to facilitate the matches. Reresby does not fit neatly into the previously examined definitions of kin and could instead be regarded as a 'friend'. The role of friends in making matches has been highlighted by Slater, who found that within the correspondence of the Verney family the

[179] UNMASC, Pl F3/1/6, Articles of agreement for the marriage settlement of the Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy, 10 March 1679.
[180] UNMASC, NeD/79, Release and settlement after the marriage of John Holles and Margaret Cavendish, 10-11 October 1690.
[181] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* pp. 366-384.

term was often used to describe an individual who could be of use in 'advancing one's career or marriage prospects'.[182] Another individual who could also fit into this description within the Cavendish matches is John Beaumont. His involvement is shown in a series of letters between himself and the duke in 1686 discussing potential matches for Margaret.[183] As with Reresby, however, these matches did not come to fruition and as such he is not present on any legal documentation regarding settlements. Despite the eventual failure of the matches facilitated by both Reresby and Beaumont, it is evident that they did play an important role, demonstrating that non kin members could be consulted in marriage arrangements.

In addition to friends of the family assisting with matches, there was also an awareness that friends of the individuals to be married themselves could have an influence on proceedings. O'Hara has emphasised the role that they could play, suggesting that those to be married could be subject to pressures and influence from their peer group.[184] This is also reflected in advice literature of the period with Halifax outlining the importance of the counsel of friends in his *Advice to a Daughter* suggesting that for individuals to be married, 'their Friends Care and Experience are though safer Guides to them, than their own Fancies'.[185] A pertinent example of this is found in the proposed match between Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy. In her correspondence to the duchess regarding this subject, Elizabeth's mother outlined her hopes that her daughter 'may find her selfe free from any ingagement made by her frinds and then I hope with there advice she will make the best choyce'.[186] Reflecting Halifax's advice, it is suggested that Elizabeth would have a better chance of coming to a sensible decision with the advice of others. However, the countess does also express

[182] Slater, 'The Weightiest Business', p. 29.
[183] UNMASC, Pw1/550, John Beaumont to the Duke of Newcastle, 9 October 1686; UNMASC, Pw1/549, Duke of Newcastle to John Beaumont, 6 September 1686.
[184] O'Hara, 'Ruled by my friends', pp. 9-41.
[185] Halifax, *Advice to a daughter,* p. 25.
[186] UNMASC, Pw1/207, E. Countess of Northumberland to the Duchess of Newcastle, 26 December n.d.

a wish that Elizabeth may be free from decisions made entirely by her friends, suggesting an awareness that this influence had the potential to be too forceful. The importance of the opinion of one's peer group is also evident in the marriage arrangements of Frances Cavendish. In a letter to the Duke of Albemarle, the duke states that regarding potential future matches, 'if her friends and relations thinkes it fitt to marry her my Wife and I will not oppose it'.[187] Evidently for the duke and duchess, the approval of certain individuals outside of the immediate family in marriage arrangements was deemed as adequate by which to organise a match on this occasion.

Conclusions

It is clear that the marriage arrangements of the Cavendish family were affairs deemed of much importance by all involved. One of the key focuses of this chapter has been to identify the significant players in these discussions and examine the different roles they held. It is evident when exploring the matches within the Cavendish family network that parental involvement was consistently present and deemed necessary. In particular the match of Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy demonstrates the role of authority that parents could hold in the marriage arrangements of their children. The reach of their authority over proceedings in this instance was most likely due to both the young ages of the couple as well as their status as heir and heiress of their respective family estates. Indeed, the specific challenges faced by individuals who were sole inheritors of their family fortune has been emphasised, finding that they were often subject to a greater level of parental control. It has also been shown that heiresses in particular, due to their value at the time, were likely to be approached for marriage much earlier than other elite women. However, it was not only heirs and heiresses who were under pressure from their parents to make

[187] UNMASC, Pw1/636, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 22 January 1685.

advantageous marriages, and this involvement is also present in the other matches examined, though such individuals appear to have had a greater level of participation in these proceedings.

It has also been shown that the roles played by mothers and fathers within marriage arrangements were to some extent gendered, with an expectation in the matches of the Cavendish family that the duke would handle the legal particulars, whilst the duchess focused her efforts on gaining favour with relevant interested parties. This is also reflected in the absence of women as signatories on marriage contracts unless they were one of the parties to be married, highlighting their lack of involvement in this area of matchmaking. When there was a deviation in these roles such as the duchess going over terms for the proposed match with Feversham, it garnered surprise from others, suggesting that this went against the accepted social norms. The dowager countess, however, has been shown to have gone against this division of labour, being key in both the legal particulars of the match for her granddaughter, Elizabeth Percy, as well as communicating with the duchess to maintain bonds with the Cavendish family. It has been suggested that this was in part due to her status at this time as a widow, which afforded her greater legal independence. Such assertions will be further examined in Chapter Four with regards to the changing role of women following the death of their husbands.

The potential for emotional upheaval within marriage arrangements has also been examined throughout this chapter. In particular this has been shown to have occurred during instances of disagreement, both between parent and child as well as husband and wife. Whilst children were able to voice their concerns regarding a match, this was viewed with clear displeasure by the duke, who expressed his anger both through his correspondence to others, as well as through his actions such as burning his will. Although children were granted the power of 'veto', this was not without its consequences. Certainly, the refusal of Margaret and Frances to comply with their parents' choice was met with some disapproval and censure directed not only from their parents but also from

friends and even potential suitors. The wish of Feversham to not be aligned with the Cavendish family following the conflict between the duke and duchess highlights the potential ill effects of such behaviour. Despite this, it is clear that exercising their right to disagree even in such a public manner did not cause the women of the Cavendish family to suffer too harshly as a result. The duke's daughters were all married advantageously, suggesting that ultimately other factors were deemed of more importance to potential matches, such as the economic benefits, connections, and aristocratic cache an alignment with the Cavendish family could provide.

The role of other people such as extended family and friends in the marriage decision has also been examined and shown to have been of great significance. In particular the involvement of John Holles in the match of Arabella Cavendish to Charles Spencer highlights how he was able to inhabit the role previously occupied by the duke, acting at this point as the head of the family. Whilst the duchess was still a part of these discussions, it is evident that others deemed Holles as most influential and most worth building a strong alliance with. The importance of kinship links formed through marriage has also been shown within the ways in which matches were suggested. Were it not for the recommendation of his son-in-law, Albemarle, the duke would not have considered marrying his daughter Frances into Scotland, emphasising the value placed on his opinion. The worth attached to the viewpoints of others is similarly demonstrated in the correspondence between the duke and individuals such as Albemarle and his brother-in-law, the Marquis of Halifax. Through these letters they were able to provide a sounding board for the duke's troubles regarding the matches of his children, as well as offer advice on how best to proceed. In addition to those who can be defined as kin, either by blood or marriage, the involvement of others who do not fit into that category has also been demonstrated. The input of individuals such as Sir John Reresby and even on more than one occasion, the king himself, highlight the role that could be

played by non kin members as well as emphasising the significance of the Cavendish family matches, not just for themselves but also in elite society more widely.

There were many different factors potentially at play when entering into a marital agreement. These motivations can be sorted into two broad categories: the advancement of the family through social, political, or economic means, and personal qualities of both the individual and their family such as religion, temperament, age, and moral standing. Economic advancement of the family was evidently a significant concern for many of the individuals examined. This is shown most clearly in the match of Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy and the many proposals for Henrietta Cavendish. As sole inheritors to their fortunes both heiresses would have been seen as advantageous matches for any family. The promise of a sizeable portion could also be utilised as a tool in which to secure a match, as seen in the duke's attempts to sway Thanet to cast Katherine aside in favour of Margaret. Such a tactic did not work on this occasion, however, suggesting that Thanet had other motivations that served to supersede any economic benefits. As well as a clear motivating factor for marriage, financial considerations also had the potential to cause conflict and even derail discussions entirely. This is shown most evidently in the failed match between Margaret and the Earl of Shrewsbury where disagreement over terms ended any hope of an alliance. Similarly, in the midst of disagreements regarding the terms of the match between Margaret and Feversham, Reresby warned the duke against being too particular over the financial stipulations, suggesting that 'it did look more like interest than love to barter in a case of that nature'.[188] Also of importance with regards to advancement of the family was the rank of a prospective spouse. This is seen most evidently in the case of Frances Cavendish and her refusal of the son of an earl on the grounds of his rank.[189] As shown, the duke did not have the same qualms, suggesting that in this instance parent and child had

[188] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 6 October 1687, p. 382.
[189] UNMASC, Pw1/635, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 21 December 1684.

different motivators for the match. Another example of the importance of useful connections made through marriage is found in the match between the duke and duchess's eldest daughter Elizabeth to Christopher Monck, eldest son to George Monck, 1st Duke of Albemarle, where the utility of an alliance with the Cavendish family is one of the main motivating considerations.

However, it has been shown family advancement was not always the sole concern, with many different factors being considered. As stated in the conduct literature, a general equality of situation and temperament between parties was the ideal situation. A divergence from this thus had the potential to derail prospective matches. This is perhaps illustrated most clearly by the refusal of the duchess to allow her daughter Margaret to marry the King's natural son due to his being a 'papist and a bastard'.[190] Both the religion and birth status of Mr Fitz James were deemed by the duchess as factors worthy of disregarding the proposed match. Such a reaction highlights the importance of more personal qualities in creating matches. A focus on character has been seen in multiple examples discussed thus far, referenced both in terms of impressing upon others the good temperament of one's own family member or friend, as well as judging the relative worth of a potential spouse. Indeed, when discussing the impending match between Arabella and Charles, the duchess refers on more than one occasion to his good character, sobriety and humour.[191] The importance of a suitable temperament is also referenced in the match between Katherine and the Earl of Thanet, with the duke writing, 'I assure you that if I had not from all hands had soe good a caracter of you I ^should^ not be so ready as I am to give you my part in a child I love so dearly'.[192] On this occasion, however, the duke's supposed pains at letting go of a daughter he loves 'so dearly' fall slightly flat with the knowledge that his regard for her sister Margaret at first led to his

[190] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 4 November 1686, p. 366.
[191] BL Add MS 70500, fol.255, Duchess of Newcastle to sister Marchioness of Halifax, 23 July 1694; BL Add MS 70500, fol.256, Duchess of Newcastle to Pelham 23 July 1694.
[192] BL Add MS 70500, fol.140, Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Tufton Earl of Thanet, 9 August 1684.

attempting to block the match between the couple. Nevertheless, it is evident that he is concerned with the character of Thanet and has received and perhaps sought accounts of his nature from others prior to agreeing to the match. The importance of character was not limited to the individuals to be married, however, and family reputation has also been shown to be of great significance in making matches. This can be seen in the initial refusal of Lord Feversham to become involved with the Cavendish family amid their disputes surrounding marriage arrangements for Margaret.[193] It is made clear by Reresby that it was the troubles in the family which were the obstacle for Feversham, serving at the time to override any potential economic benefits of the match.

The age of those to be married was also a factor of consideration within the Cavendish network matches. As shown within the proposals for Henrietta's hand, marriages of very young individuals, whilst legal, were heavily discouraged and quite rare. Most of the matches within the Cavendish family follow this general pattern, with the average ages of bride and groom upon first marriage respectively being 21.1 and 24.6.[194] There are of course outliers in this pattern, most notably Elizabeth Percy who was just 12 upon her marriage to Henry Cavendish, only just of legal age. It appears that for heiresses there was an acknowledgment that marriage could occur earlier, as evidenced by the many proposals for Henrietta whilst she was still a child. Within the marriages of the Cavendish family there does appear to be a general parity of age between couples, with an average difference of just 3.5 years between wife and husband for first marriages, suggesting that on this point their motivations were in agreement with the prevailing ideals as espoused within the conduct literature.[195]

The importance of more emotional factors has also been examined. Within the conduct literature, it is clear that love was deemed as an important consideration when choosing a

[193] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, p. 367.
[194] See Appendix 1 for all known ages of first marriages for the Cavendish family network.
[195] See Appendix 1 for known age differences between couples upon first marriage.

prospective spouse. Due to the curious rule of the duke and duchess barring written correspondence between the individuals to be married during the arrangement stages, there is very little indication of the emotional attachment of couples prior to their marriage in the Cavendish family. As such it is difficult to explore to what extent love or affection were driving factors in many of these instances. Nevertheless, depth of feeling can still be uncovered through other means. In particular, the attempts of Charles Spencer to write to Arabella prior to their match, in conjunction with the language he used, is suggestive of a certain level of affection. Similarly, the decision of Thanet to choose Katherine over Margaret despite being offered more money to do so suggests that his choice was more to do with factors specifically related to Katherine herself than any material gains. Despite few references to love within the discussions regarding matches of the Cavendish family, it has been shown that there were multiple references to happiness, with hopes that the individuals would be content with their choice of partner. For example, the duke's statement that himself and the duchess had 'little prospect' of the happiness of their daughter Frances by marriage, suggests that this was a desired factor in creating a match in spite of the animosity between father and daughter at this time.[196] Such wishes for happiness in marriage run contrary to earlier arguments by scholars who suggest that parents were driven largely by economic and social concerns, instead confirming subsequent assessments which have highlighted the importance of less mercenary factors.[197] It is worth noting, however, that an unhappy marriage also had the potential to negatively affect the family further down the line. Separation and divorce were both difficult to procure and highly discouraged. As such, it was in the interest of parents and other family members to secure matches which had the best chance of success. Overall, it has been argued that motivations for entering into

[196] UNMASC, Pw1/635, Duke of Newcastle to Duke of Albemarle, 21 December 1684.
[197] See: Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her,* p. 65; Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death,* p. 261.

marriage within the Cavendish family network were rarely either entirely sentimental or practical in nature, but were instead indicative of the close interweaving between these seemingly opposite goals.

Chapter Three

'A differing scene': Lived Experience of Elite Early Modern Marriage

It has been shown that the arrangement of matches was an important stage in the lives of elite men and women, involving multiple individuals such as family members and other kin. Once matches had been made the next step was of course that of the marriage itself. George Savile, the Marquis of Halifax, provided the following advice to his pre-teen daughter Elizabeth, aiming to prepare her for married life and the changes that this would entail, particularly with regards to her integration within the family of her new husband:

> You must not be frightened with the first Appearances of a *differing Scene*; for when you are used to it, you may like the House you go to, better than that you left; and your *Husband's* Kindness will have so much advantage of ours, that we shall yield up all *Competition,* and as well as we love you, be very well contented to Surrender to such a *Rival.* [1]

As with the discussion of arranging matches, it is emphasised here that marriage, especially at an elite level, did not just connect two individuals, but also two families. Halifax, however, also outlines fears that the close bonds children could form with their marital relations might be to the detriment of their relationship with their natal family. The imagery of surrender utilised in this extract indicates a battle between marital and natal relations, in which the marital family was the ultimate victor. This suggestion that natal relations would move into the background, superseded by the marital family, will be examined throughout the chapter as part of a wider discussion of the importance of the ties made through marriage, and how these were utilised by various individuals. It is evident that Halifax was aware of the great changes that could await his daughter upon entering the marriage state. This has been highlighted by Mendelson and Crawford who argue that, especially for women, entering

[1] George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, *The Lady's New-Years gift, or Advice to a Daughter* (London: 1688), pp. 66-68.

marriage signified a 'critical turning-point in life'.[2] This chapter will examine life after this 'turning point' for both men and women, discussing the ideals of marriage in conjunction with lived experience and exploring how individuals within this elite family network navigated both the practical and emotional concerns of married life.

As previously demonstrated, there were varying motivating factors for entering into marriage. This chapter will examine how far the hopes and wishes expressed within the arrangement stages were mirrored in the lived experience of married couples. In particular the calls for 'happiness' which were present within many of the matches examined will be discussed, exploring both to what extent such an ideal was reached, as well as whether this outcome continued to be of importance to parents and other family members. It will be shown that individuals within the Cavendish family network were keen that their marriages should portray happiness, thus presenting the match as successful to others. Such displays are argued to represent the interweaving between emotion and pragmatism in the Cavendish family network matches, with happiness in marriage standing to benefit both the couple themselves and the wider family.

Building on suggestions from scholars such as Fletcher who argues that the ideals of the 'patriarchal household' were the core vision of prescriptive literature, this chapter will also examine how far these ideals permeated into real lived experience.[3] Women within the Cavendish family network were evidently afforded a certain level of autonomy with regards to arranging matches, both as mothers and as the individual to be married. This chapter asserts that whilst women were under the patriarchal headship of their husband during marriage, they were also able to challenge this authority on occasion. Despite garnering censure from others, such deviations from the patriarchal

[2] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), p. 129.
[3] Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1995), p. 120.

ideal will be shown to have had few long-term consequences for the women within this study, intimating that patriarchal authority was not absolute within this elite network. In particular the duties of love, honour and obedience will be examined with regards to both how couples were advised to uphold them, and how fully they adhered to these ideals in practice. It will be argued that when the ideals of marriage were challenged, especially with regards to the prescribed roles for both men and women within the patriarchal hierarchy, there was the potential for conflict.

The ways in which marital discord was handled, both by the couple themselves and other family members or kin will also be examined. Methods for navigating conflict as set out within conduct literature will be explored, assessing the ways in which this advice differed for husbands and wives. How far such advice was followed by elite couples will be discussed through close interrogation of personal correspondence outlining specific instances of conflict. The role of others such as family members and friends in resolving marital difficulties will also be explored, with a particular focus on the use of epistolary networks. These networks will be examined through the lens of Rosenwein's theory of emotional communities, emphasising their utility as a forum for individuals to both share news as well as seek advice from others, changing tone where appropriate to account for the particular emotional styles and standards of certain recipients and groups.

This chapter will also explore the emotional landscape of life for couples during marriage. It will be shown that certain 'flash points' such as childbirth, conflict, or financial difficulties led to heightened emotions both for the couple themselves and other family members. Emotional reactions to these events such as anxiety, fear, happiness, and joy will be explored, drawing on theories of performativity to examine how emotional displays in such instances could be employed both to portray relationships in a certain manner as well as to achieve desired outcomes. The role of others during these 'flash points' will also be assessed, building upon and confirming suggestions by scholars such as Foyster and Ben-Amos that parents continued to have a role in the lives of their

married children.[4] Motivations for this involvement are examined, finding that whilst support was often ostensibly provided for sentimental reasons, it also had implications for the success of the match and by extension the family. Similarly, actions regarding more pragmatic concerns such as economic support will also be shown to have had an emotional aspect beyond merely avoiding a loss in status and position. As such, sentimental and practical motivations for involvement in the lives of married couples are not considered to be binary opposites, but instead intertwined with one another.

Forging marital connections

The connections made through elite marriage alliances were of great importance when choosing a spouse. After marriage these connections became even more significant, as individuals took a step back from their natal family and integrated with their new marital family. The most obvious change of this nature was living situation. Prior to marriage, elite individuals would have lived with their parents or other family members and may have spent very little time with their future spouse, with the daughters of the 2nd Duke and Duchess of Newcastle not even being permitted to correspond with prospective suitors. Following marriage, however, this changed dramatically, with cohabitation of husband and wife outlined as one of the main marital duties by conduct authors such as Baxter.[5] Gouge similarly emphasised the importance of husband and wife dwelling together, stating that it was through this cohabitation that all marital duties were better performed.[6] However, as O'Day has noted, elite couples did not always set up their own separate households immediately following

[4] Elizabeth Foyster, 'Parenting Was for Life, Not just for Childhood: The Roles of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England', *History*, Vol. 86, No. 283, (July 2001), p. 317; Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, 'Reciprocal Bonding: Parents and their offspring in early modern England', *Journal of Family History*, (July 2000), p. 292.
[5] Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory: Or, A summ O Practical theologie and cases of conscience* (London: 1673), p. 521.
[6] William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties Eight Treatises* (London, 1622), p. 135; See also Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory: Or, A summ O Practical theologie and cases of conscience* (London, 1673), p. 521.

marriage.[7] For many newly married couples the first year or two after the wedding was spent living with the parents or family of one of the pair, although in some cases this could be up to ten years.[8] Foyster has highlighted how this practice allowed parents the opportunity to gauge how the couple interacted with one another.[9] Such behaviour suggests that new couples were deemed as needing support in the early stages of their marriage. By observing the behaviours of newly married individuals, parents and other family members would have been in a good position to provide advice and support where necessary, thus giving the marriage the best chance of success. As outlined in Halifax's advice to his daughter, it was generally expected that women would go to live with the family of their husband following marriage. Baxter similarly portrays this as the norm whilst addressing husbands within his text *Christian Directory,* stating: 'you have drawn her to forsake Father and Mother to cleave to you'.[10] Such statements thus depict marriage at this time as a decisive split of a woman from her parents and towards her husband.

Indeed, settling with the family of her new husband could draw a woman quite a significant distance from her own parents. Frances Cavendish, for example, upon her marriage to John Campbell, moved from her family seat at Welbeck in Nottinghamshire to his home at Kenmore in the Highlands of Scotland, some 300 miles away. At such a distance from her natal family, Frances would have relied on written correspondence for sharing news or seeking advice, with her letters taking an average of around twelve to fourteen days to reach their recipients in Nottinghamshire.[11] There is no record of her making the journey home to Welbeck following her marriage, not even

[7] Rosemary O'Day, *An Elite Family in Early Modern England: The Temples of Stowe and Burton Dassett, 1570-1656* (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2018), pp. 248-250.
[8] Foyster, 'Parenting was for life', p. 315; O'Day, *An Elite Family in Early Modern England,* p. 250.
[9] Foyster, 'Parenting was for life', p. 315.
[10] Baxter, *A Christian Directory,* p. 520.
[11] Average time has been taken from the dates given on multiple letters between members of the Cavendish family at Welbeck and members of the Campbell family at Glenorchy, assuming that recipients replied within a couple of days of receiving their letters.

returning for the wedding of her sister Margaret, with her father writing to her to inform her of the events of the day.[12]

Whilst Frances was able to correspond with her natal family, she also directed efforts into maintaining good relationships with her new marital relations, particularly her father-in-law, the Earl of Breadalbane. In a series of letters written soon after her marriage to John Campbell, Frances signs herself off as the earls 'most Dutyfull Daughter & most humble servant'.[13] Campbell's second wife Harriet Villiers, whom he married in 1695, four years after the death of Frances, similarly enjoyed a lengthy correspondence with Breadalbane. As Frances did before her, Harriet also used the moniker of daughter in her letters to her father-in-law, thus emphasising her link to him.[14] O'Day has highlighted the importance of this specific relationship in her examination of the Temple family of Stowe, stating that 'relations with daughters-in-law were sometimes very close'.[15] The importance of this relationship will be further examined within discussion of 'flash points' in marriage and the role of both marital and natal family members on such occasions.

Despite it being most common for women to live with the families of their new husband, this was not always the case. For example, following their marriage, Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy settled in Petworth, Sussex, a property owned by the Percy family.[16] This arrangement was stipulated within the couple's marriage settlement which stated that Henry would live with the Countess Dowager Percy until his wife, then only twelve years of age, turned twenty-one.[17] It is likely that the young age of Elizabeth was the main driving factor in this decision, keeping her close to her natal family for support and guidance. Nevertheless, Elizabeth was evidently aware of the

[12] UNMASC, Pw1/551, Duke of Newcastle to Frances Cavendish, 1 April 1690.
[13] NRS, GD112/39/137/4, Frances Cavendish to Earl of Breadalbane, 1 May 1685.
[14] NRS, GD112/39/169/6, Harriet Villiers to Earl of Breadalbane, 15 June n.y.
[15] O'Day, *An Elite Family in Early Modern England*, p. 279.
[16] UNMASC, Pw1/75, Henry Cavendish to Duke of Newcastle, May 1679. The address on this letter from Henry to his father indicates that he is now living at Petworth with his new wife and her family.
[17] UNMASC, Pl F3/1/6, Articles of agreement for the marriage settlement of the Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy, 10 March 1679.

importance of integrating herself into her new marital family, writing the following in a letter to her father-in-law, the Duke of Newcastle:

> The dayly repetition of your Graces favour and kindnesse to mee requiers more abundant acknowledgements then I can easialy express, yet I shall make it my care in every respect to yr Grace all duty… for where I have any intrust yr Grace will not fail of being ruined as becomes the tye of my being Your Graces most humble servant and obedient daughter.[18]

In addition to referring to herself as his daughter, her depiction of being tied to the duke is of particular interest. Evidently despite living at a distance from her new in-laws, Elizabeth was aware of the significance of the bonds formed through her marriage, as well as the importance of maintaining these.

In addition to providing couples with a home following marriage, parents and family members also had a key role to play in upholding other aspects of the marital agreement, such as the payment of portions or transfer of lands. It was important that any financial agreements made within the negotiation stages were fulfilled so as to avoid disagreements between the newly connected families. As such, a situation that could potentially cause great upset in a marriage was almost entirely out of the hands of the couple themselves, relying upon the actions of other family members. Letters from the duke to the Earl of Breadalbane following the marriage of his daughter Frances to John Campbell provide evidence of the importance of making good on these promises. A correspondence continued between the two men following the union, with the main topic initially being the payment of Frances's portion to her new father-in-law. The duke wrote to Breadalbane stating: 'I long to pay y^{e} Portion and I hope with in few days to have y^{e} satisfaction to heare from your Lo^{p} where I am to pay it'.[19] Despite his wishes to conclude the business, it appears that the arrangements did not go as planned. Over a month later, after contacting the earl a further three times on this subject, the duke

[18] BL, Add MS 70500, fol. 128, Elizabeth Percy to the Duke of Newcastle, 4 May 1679/1680.
[19] NRS, GD112/39/137/5, Duke of Newcastle to the Earl of Breadalbane, 1 May 1685.

wrote another letter stating: 'I shall keepe y^e^ money as your Lo^p^ desires but I hope your Lo^p^ will come soon to receve it, it is a great troble to me to be Charged wth it'.[20] After a few months, the two men made plans to meet in London to settle the payment of Frances's dowry and as such satisfy the conditions of the marriage articles.[21] It is not clear why the earl was dragging his heels on this matter since the match was an advantageous one for his family, and Frances' portion would have been very welcome in bolstering their financial position at this time. It is evident that the duke is uneasy with this situation, clearly wishing to bring a close to proceedings. There are no further mentions regarding the portion after this letter, nor is there any indication of disagreement between the two families, so it can be assumed that the duke was eventually able to pay the portion as required by the articles of agreement. This correspondence highlights not only continued parental involvement on a practical level but also the importance and potential impact of links made between families following marriage. The endurance of such ties, along with the role of in-laws in the lives of married individuals, will be further explored throughout the chapter.

Responsibilities of elite marriage

Upon entering the marriage state, elite individuals experienced a great deal of change in the responsibilities they were expected to take on. This would have been even more apparent when couples left the familiarity and comfort of living with parents or other family members, taking on their own home or estate. Within much of the conduct literature there is a particular focus on how husbands and wives were to effectively manage their household and servants, with both Gouge and Baxter including specific sections for this purpose.[22] For many newly married couples, this may have been the first time they were expected to take on this kind of responsibility. One such example of

[20] NRS, GD112/39/138/7, Duke of Newcastle to the Earl of Breadalbane, 16 June 1685.
[21] NRS, GD112/39/137/11, Duke of Newcastle to the Earl of Breadalbane, 17 May 1685.
[22] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties*; Baxter, *Christian Directory.*

this is Elizabeth Cavendish and her husband Christopher Monck, son to the 1st Duke of Albemarle, who married in 1669. Upon the death of his father in 1670, Christopher inherited both title and vast estates, aged only seventeen.[23] Over the next twelve years, the young couple enjoyed the splendour of their fortune and position, decorating and throwing lavish events at their London residence, Albemarle House.[24] Monck was also said to have spoiled his new bride, reportedly giving her 'twelve hundred pounds a year for her spending money'.[25] By 1682 their excessive spending was becoming a cause for concern, and the couple were subsequently required to sell Albemarle House, leaving them with no permanent home in the capital.[26] This loss appears to have affected Elizabeth greatly and it was at this time she was first reported to show the signs of mental instability which would continue to plague her throughout the remainder of her life. Shortly after the sale of Albemarle House she returned to her familial home of Welbeck, whereupon her father found her quite changed. He wrote of his daughter's condition to friend Thomas Osbourne stating:

> She was not madd, but there was a great consternation upon her, I sopose caused by her own folley and Pride and Mallis of others who noe doubt has indeavored her ruen a long time and sure never woman has been so deafe to good council as she has been nor did ever Parents doe so much for a Daughter as we have don for her.[27]

It is evident that the duke is concerned for his daughter at this time and is attempting to aid her to the best of his ability. Whilst it is suggested within this extract that Elizabeth did not always respond well to their aid, the support of her parents was clearly provided nonetheless, with both shelter and advice offered freely. Elizabeth and her husband were without a permanent London residence until 1684, a situation which continued to cause her distress. Once again, the duke and duchess provided support and came to the couple's aid, gifting them the use of their own London home, Newcastle

---

[23] Robin Clifton, 'Christopher Monck, Second Duke of Albemarle', *ODNB*, (2008).
[24] See E.F Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle* (London: J Murray, 1915), pp. 70-72, pp. 82-84, pp. 92-97.
[25] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* p. 63.
[26] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* p. 156.
[27] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Osbourne, p.161.

House.[28] This continuing role of parents following the marriage of their children has been similarly highlighted by O'Day in her examination of the letters of the Temple family, in which she found that in addition to maintaining a correspondence, their daughters also returned home on occasion for 'comfort, help and advice'.[29]

The relationship Elizabeth had with her parents was at times a difficult one, and she was in conflict with them on multiple occasions. One instance of this occurred in 1675 when Elizabeth and her husband held a ladies' masque at their residence in London. Emulating festivities at court in which the ladies had played roles alongside professional actresses, Elizabeth herself took a part.[30] This was met with great disapproval from her mother and led to a rift between the two women. In an attempt to both remedy this conflict and hope to bring some semblance of order to his daughter's household, the duke journeyed to London. The following extract from a letter Elizabeth wrote to the duchess outlines her thoughts on his intervention:

> … I never was soe well satisfied in my life as I am now at this time and I am the most bound to father for his love and kindness… Deare Mother you can not imagin how kind he was to me you can not blame me for being over joyed after having soe pleasant a time with my father.[31]

The duke's involvement on this occasion is clearly greatly appreciated by Elizabeth, and it appears that his visit provided her with the emotional support necessary to heal the rift between her and her mother at this time. Her description of being 'bound' to the duke is also of interest as it further highlights how the bond between them has not been completely severed due to her new role as a married woman.

---

[28] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* pp. 175-177.
[29] O'Day, *An Elite Family in Early Modern England*, pp. 280-282.
[30] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* pp.71-72.
[31] UNMASC, Pw1/68, Elizabeth Cavendish to the Duchess of Newcastle, 5 July 1675.

Whilst Elizabeth and her husband evidently required a great deal of help from her parents, this was not the case for all couples. Following the death of the duke in 1691, Welbeck was left entirely to his favourite daughter Margaret and her husband John Holles, with both taking a role in the running of the estate. Previous scholars of marriage such as Slater in her study of the Verney family argued that apart from providing a male heir, elite wives had little else to contribute to the marriage.[32] Whilst this role was of utmost importance for elite women, the suggestion that this was their only responsibility has been questioned. Larminie, for example, takes issue with Slater's assessment, arguing that whilst this may be true of the Verney family, there is little evidence that this was the case more generally.[33] Furthermore, contemporary understanding of the potential flexibility of gendered duties within marriage can be found in the prescriptive literature of the period. Gouge, for example, sanctioned the support of a wife to her husband in certain matters of trade.[34] This flexibility is seen most clearly when men were away from home. Grassby has highlighted this suggesting that 'when, as often happened, there were no men in the household, wives performed all roles- male and female'.[35] Fuller outlined the importance of this role stating:

> …in her husband's absence, is wife and deputy husband, which makes her double the files of her diligence. At his return he finds all things so well he wonders to see himself at home when he was abroad.[36]

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich in her work on colonial wives in New England examined these 'deputy husbands', utilising the term to describe a wife who 'shouldered male duties'.[37] In this role, Ulrich

---

[32] Miriam Slater, 'The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper- Gentry Family in Seventeenth- Century England', *Past and Present*, No. 72 (Aug., 1976), p. 34.
[33] Vivienne Larminie, 'Marriage and the Family: The example of the Seventeenth Century Newdigates', *Midland History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1984), p. 15.
[34] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 232.
[35] Richard Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism: Marriage, Family, and Business in the English- Speaking World, 1580-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001), p. 93.
[36] Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State* (Cambridge: 1642), pp. 2-3.
[37] Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England* (Vintage Books: New York, 1991), p. 9.

contends, women were able to cross gender boundaries 'without challenging the patriarchal order of society'.[38] Linda Pollock, however, has suggested that such explanations overlook the paradox created by women holding such a position of responsibility, whilst simultaneously being expected to uphold the ideals of submission, obedience and modesty. The upbringing of elite girls, Pollock suggests, helped prepare them for the conflicting roles of subordination and competence.[39] Girls, as well as boys, she contends, would have been educated in estate management in an equally informal manner, accompanying parents around the estate as children to learn the required skills.[40]

One such wife who utilised these skills was Margaret Cavendish during her marriage to John Holles. The pair exchanged a lengthy correspondence during his absence from home, with one of the key topics being the management of their estate. Despite unfortunately not containing her replies, the set of nearly seventy letters sent between 1698 and 1701 provides a useful window into Margaret's responsibilities in the absence of her husband, who was often in London for long periods of time participating in matters relating to Parliament. Ranging from simple tasks such as the purchasing of oats, to the investigation and disciplining of servants, John left a large proportion of the running of the estate to his wife.[41] Often her opinion was explicitly sought and seemingly held in higher esteem than that of others working on the estate, with John writing to his wife that he 'never gave any Orders to Chappell but what I Gave when you were present, I wou'd have you go your owne way to work in this matter', and on another occasion stating 'I woud have you answer as from your own opinion not from me'.[42]

---

[38] Ulrich, *Good Wives,* p. 238; See also Martyn Bennett (ed.), *Nottinghamshire village in War and Peace: The Accounts of the Constables of Upton, 1640-1666* (Thoroton Society: Nottingham, 1995) for an examination of women shouldering local government responsibilities.
[39] Linda Pollock, ' "Teach her to live under obedience": the making of women in the upper ranks of early modern England', *Continuity and Change,* Vol. 4, Issue 2, (August 1989), p. 233.
[40] Pollock, "Teach her to live under obedience", p. 237.
[41] UNMASC, Pw2/ 441, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 17 January 1698/99; UNMASC, Pw2/443, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 19 January 1698/99.
[42] UNMASC, Pw2/442 John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 21 January 1698/99; UNMASC, Pw2/460, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 16 March 1698/99.

As Ulrich has argued, 'a deputy was not just a helper but at least potentially a surrogate'.[43] It is apparent that not only was Margaret being left responsible for the everyday running of the estate, but also that John was encouraging her to make her own independent decisions in his absence. He appears to have great faith in her skills, stating in one letter: 'As for Oats if you dont get them at a reasonable Rate I believe nobody else will'.[44] The estate in question was inherited by Margaret and John from her father, the Duke of Newcastle, and as such she would have known it very well, perhaps learning informally at her parents' side as suggested by Pollock.[45] Indeed, many of the servants and agents mentioned within John's letters had been working for the family for many years, and would have been present during Margaret's childhood and early adulthood prior to her marriage.[46] Margaret's tenure as 'deputy husband' demonstrates both a recognition of her experience and knowledge of the estate and a respect for her skills, suggesting that she was not merely a last resort but a useful and valued asset. John and Margaret's daughter Henrietta was similarly praised for her role in the running of the estate with husband Edward Harley following the death of her father. William Wenman wrote to Harley in 1713, two years after the young couple took charge, congratulating him on his success at Nottingham, attributing this in part to the 'prudent measures' taken by his wife.[47] Interestingly Henrietta's involvement does not appear to be limited to the occasion of her husband's absence, suggesting that she was not just a 'deputy husband' in the way in which Fuller describes, but was able to hold a role of some responsibility in her own right.

The examples examined here suggest that despite the general ideal of the authority of the husband in all matters, this could become more flexible when circumstances required. Margaret and

---

[43] Ulrich, *Good Wives,* p. 9.
[44] UNMASC, Pw2/445, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 2 February 1698/99.
[45] Pollock, "Teach her to live under obedience", p. 237.
[46] Individuals mentioned within the correspondence between John and Margaret include: Thomas Farr, an agent to the late duke who was a beneficiary of his will (see UNMASC: Pw1/286, Pw1/288, Pw1/289); Cornelius Farr, similarly included in the late duke's will (see UNMASC Pw1/286); Richard Neale, included in the late duke's will (see UNMASC Pw1/286) and also included as a signatory on the marriage contract for Margaret and John (see UNMASC NeD 78-79).
[47] UNMASC, Pl C 1/5, William Wenman to Edward Harley, 10 September 1713.

Henrietta were not only afforded positions of responsibility in the running of their estates, but were also praised for their efforts. However, it is important to note that, at least in the case of Margaret, her duties were performed at the behest of her husband during his absence. Thus, for Margaret, her involvement in the running of the estate does not display a complete break from the patriarchal ideal, being directed by the overall authority of her husband. Henrietta, however, is commended on actions which were seemingly of her own making, suggestive of greater levels of freedom. Such distinctions thus indicate a more flexible application of gendered roles and patriarchal hierarchy within elite marriage, dependent on the couple and their specific situation.

Childbirth

Another great change for married individuals was the starting of their own family. The marriage service included within the *Book of Common Prayer* stated that the first cause for which matrimony was ordained was the 'procreation of children'.[48] The importance of this duty is similarly mirrored in the prescriptive literature, with Gouge describing procreation as the 'one maine end of marriage'. [49] This was arguably especially pertinent for elite families who, under the system of primogeniture, required male heirs to secure the future of their lineage.[50] Contrary to earlier assertions that high infant mortality rates resulted in a lack of affection from parents, more recent assessments have suggested that this meant that pregnancy and childbirth stirred powerful emotions for parents and families.[51] The most dominant of these emotions, according to Bailey, were 'apprehension, fear and pain, hope,

[48] 'The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony' in *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1662).
[49] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 106.
[50] See Eileen Spring, *Law, Land and Family: Aristocratic Inheritance in England 1300-1800* (The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill and London, 1993).
[51] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Penguin Books: England, 1977), p. 82; Joanne Bailey, 'Pregnancy and childbirth' in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), p. 211.

joy and gratitude'.[52] Pollock has emphasised in particular the anxieties surrounding pregnancy and childbirth at this time, suggesting that it was an experience 'viewed through the prism of miscarriage: as a difficult, uncomfortable, and potentially dangerous condition which, unless tended with care, was destined to end prematurely'.[53]

Correspondence within the Cavendish family network highlights this potential for peril in childbirth. Individuals utilised the emotional communities represented by these epistolary networks to demonstrate their anxiety for the health of both mother and child, displaying an awareness of the emotional standards and ideals within this group. Charles Cheyne, husband to Jane Cavendish outlined such fears in his letters to his brother-in-law, the 2nd Duke of Newcastle, following the birth of his daughter. There were evidently concerns regarding the health of the baby with Cheyne writing:

> The child is I thanke God, though little & weake born, now well and thriving; its weakness made us give itt presently a sprinkling of Christianity under much confusion; shee hath been I praise God ever since well.[54]

It is likely that Cheyne is referring to a lay baptism, carried out either by a family member, or the midwife or doctor attending the birth. Performed in emergencies when there was a perceived time constraint, such actions were the matter of some controversy during this period. Cressy has outlined how some Puritans saw them as 'abominations that had to be eradicated', taking issue with what they perceived as meddling in the affairs of ministers. Others, however, accepted that the urgent necessity of lay baptisms was allowable to save the child from the danger of damnation.[55] Evidently in the case of Jane and Charles's daughter, such was the fear regarding her health that it was deemed

---

[52] Bailey, 'Pregnancy and childbirth', p. 211.
[53] Linda A. Pollock, 'Embarking on a rough passage: the experience of pregnancy in early-modern society', in Valerie Fildes (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (Routledge, Oxon: 2013), p. 59; See also Michael MacDonald, *Madness, anxiety, and healing in seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge University Press, New York: 1981), p. 108.
[54] UNMASC, Pw1/84, Charles Cheyne to the Duke of Newcastle, 20 May 1656.
[55] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death, Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), pp. 118-119.

necessary to take this action. The anxiety displayed by Cheyne for his daughter highlights the importance attached to the survival of the child. Whilst not a son, and therefore potential heir, the wellbeing of his daughter was evidently of great concern to him. Viewed in conjunction with his praise for his wife who he described as having 'great patience and courage', Cheyne's letter is thus indicative of not only practical concerns but also a wish to portray his affection for both wife and child.[56]

The perilous nature of childbirth for women is similarly exhibited in the correspondence from John Egerton to his brother-in-law, the duke, regarding the birth of his son with his wife Elizabeth Cavendish. He wrote that his wife had been 'very much weakened, by a very hard, tedious, & exceeding dangerous labour', but that she had been delivered of a 'very large boy, which is since Christened Henry'.[57] There were evidently fears regarding the health of both mother and baby, with Egerton providing assurances to the duke that his son was 'very likely to live' and expressing hopes that his wife would recover.[58] In a further letter, he relayed an updated account regarding the health of his wife stating:

> …on Sunday last she was in a very sad & ill condition, & on Munday so ill y^{t} all our hopes were intirely converted into feares, but I thanke God, since yesterday at no one, when my trouble & sad apprehension was greatest, she hath begun to amend…[59]

It is apparent that Egerton is showing great concern regarding the health of his wife, which evidently was in a poor state following her labour. As well as highlighting his anxiety at this point, his willingness to share such emotions could also suggest that such expressions were to a certain extent expected. Whilst there was a social expectation that men be in control of their emotions, on this

[56] UNMASC, Pw1/84, Charles Cheyne to the Duke of Newcastle, 20 May 1656.
[57] UNMASC, Pw1/121, John Egerton to Charles Cavendish, 3 June 1656.
[58] UNMASC, Pw1/121, John Egerton to Charles Cavendish, 3 June 1656.
[59] UNMASC, Pw1/122, John Egerton to Charles Cavendish, 10 June 1656.

occasion John is clearly willing to candidly share his intimate feelings on the matter with his brother-in-law, demonstrating both his anxieties and by extension his affection for Elizabeth.

Charles Spencer similarly expressed fears over the health of his wife Arabella during her pregnancy in 1695. In September of that year her mother, the duchess, died following a period of illness. However, to protect his wife from anything that may upset her, Charles endeavoured to keep this information from her at this time. He wrote to his brother-in-law John Holles stating:

> Poor Lady Arabella is not in a Condition to hear it, for I am sure in her Present Condition, it would be certain death to her; so that I must beg your Grace… that you would desire her not to mention any thing of this, but to write in a manner as if she was onely very ill, but not Dead- I must beg this favour of your Grace, for otherwise I am sure, she will not be able to bear it in this condition, & she is now, I thank God, as well as can be expected; & if she should fall ill upon this sad news, I am ye miserablest man in ye world.[60]

It has been suggested that during this period, the thoughts and emotions of a mother were considered to negatively impact on the development of her unborn child, with fear, disgust and surprise deemed as particularly damaging.[61] Such beliefs are echoed by Gouge who cites 'violence of passion, whether of griefe or anger' as potential causes of miscarriage.[62] Charles' calls to shield Arabella from this upsetting news can thus be viewed as an attempt to protect both his wife and unborn child. With reference to the prescriptive literature of the period, husbands were encouraged to be attentive to their wives during their pregnancy, with Gouge stating: 'husbands also in this case must be very tender over their wives, and helpful to them in all things needfull'.[63] Whilst there is no clear evidence to support whether or not the secret of the death of the duchess was kept, Charles's

[60] BL, Add MS 70500, fol. 325, Charles Spencer to John Holles, 24 September 1695.
[61] Bailey, 'Pregnancy and childbirth', pp. 211-212.
[62] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 506; William Pierrepont similarly warns daughter Frances of the dangers of grief in childbirth following the death of her mother in 1657- see UNMASC, Pw1/372, William Pierrepont to the Duchess of Newcastle, 11 July 1657.
[63] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 506.

desire to protect his wife, as well as his description of how he would react if she did fall ill, suggests that the affection he exhibited during the arrangement stages continued during their marriage.

The birth of a child could also lead to renewed interest in a marriage from family members, such as parents who were anxious to receive news about grandchildren.[64] Upon hearing of his daughter Frances' pregnancy in 1688, the Duke of Newcastle expressed his delight in a series of letters to her father-in-law the Earl of Breadalbane. He wrote to the earl stating: 'I am mightily rejoyced to heare from my Lord your Sonn y^{t} my Daughter is wth Child I pray God send it a Sonn, and her a safe delivery of it'.[65] Pollock has outlined how such news would have been welcomed by elite family members at this time, stating that not only was it 'testimony to the productive potential of the union' but that it also served as a public symbol of the sexual intimacy of the couple, and by extension an 'affirmation of the contentment of the two parties involved'.[66] Parents were anxious that their children made good and harmonious matches, thus news regarding a pregnancy would have been welcomed as a sign of a successful marriage. As well as demonstrating his happiness at the prospect of a grandchild, it is also made clear by the duke that a son would be preferable. Following the death of his only son, Henry Cavendish, in 1680, the duke was at this point in time without a male heir. His only other married child at this time was Elizabeth, who also had not yet provided an heir, giving birth to one son who sadly died shortly after delivery.[67] As such it is hardly surprising that the duke would wish for a grandson upon whom he could settle his estate and title. He wrote a further letter to the earl stating: 'I am much obliged to your Lordship: for your great Care of my Deare Daughter and I am very glad she is well and wth Child.[68] Despite being at a distance, the duke is showing concern regarding the well-being of his daughter, being unable to

[64] Foyster, 'Parenting was for life', pp. 315-316.
[65] NRS, GD112/39/142/9, Duke of Newcastle to Earl of Breadalbane, 24 April 1688.
[66] Pollock, 'Embarking on a Rough Passage', p. 40.
[67] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* p. 77.
[68] NRS, GD112/39/143/8, Duke of Newcastle to Earl of Breadalbane, 18 May 1688.

provide any practical support himself. This letter also serves to further highlight the importance of the new relationships formed with in-laws following marriage, with the earl now in a position to provide the care that Frances' natal family could not. Whilst this pregnancy did not result in a living child, in 1690 Frances fell pregnant again, with her father once more taking an active interest. In his letters to the earl, the duke attempted to provide advice regarding the care of his daughter, writing:

> I am very glad my deare Daughter Glenorchy is wth Child, God send her a happy time. As to her travelling, I can not advise in it, and ^pray^ your Lo^{p} not to expect I shall advise your Lo^{p} in any thing I know your Lo^{p} and my Daughter are well able to advise your selves.[69]

Despite once again being evidently aware that his daughter's new father-in-law was better placed to support her, the duke's attempt to provide some practical advice highlights his wish to help regardless of the distance now between them. He also wrote to Frances directly, expressing his concern over her health:

> I earnestly begg of you to have a Care of y^{r} health and not to gitt colds, it is a griat griefe to mi you lost two children, and it may trouble you very much, but you should… have care of your health I pray God bless you and send you bring my Lord many children to live.[70]

That Frances had lost two children by this point explains the duke's heightened worry for the health of her and her unborn child. Unfortunately, the duke's fears were proved to be founded, and her labour resulted in the death of both mother and baby. Following Frances' death, the duke wrote to his son-in-law Campbell expressing his grief for his daughter and grandchild, stating that he had 'shid many a tear'. He described himself as being 'more afflicted' still after discovering that the child she was carrying was a boy, and claimed to be unable to write in his own hand due to the distress he felt at this time.[71] As suggested by Schneider, during this period the mind and body were thought to

[69] NRS, GD112/39/151/6, Duke of Newcastle to Earl of Breadalbane, 15 January 1690.
[70] UNMASC, Pw1/551, Duke of Newcastle to Frances Cavendish, 1 April 1690.
[71] NRS, GD112/39/151/19, Duke of Newcastle to John Campbell, 24 February 1691.

be very closely linked.[72] The duke's apparent inability to carry out the physical action of writing, therefore, can be seen as an indicator of his emotional state, emphasising both his affection for his daughter as well as the importance attached to the birth of a male heir. Handwritten letters were also an essential mark of respect during this period.[73] The use of a scribe by the duke is thus indicative of his state of mind, suggesting that the emotional upheaval was such that it prevented him from adhering to this key marker of social etiquette.

As well as attempting to offer advice via correspondence, as the duke did with Frances, family members could also provide support in person. During her daughter Katherine's lying in period, the duchess travelled from Welbeck to London to stay with her and her husband Thanet for about five weeks in 1690.[74] Pollock has highlighted how women during this period often either returned to the natal home or had their mother come to them for the delivery of their child, desiring familiar places or people.[75] On this occasion, however, the actions of the duchess and her daughter came under the censure of the duke, who felt that Katherine had used him ill, reportedly stating that she 'sent for her mother to her gossiping when her father lay a dying'.[76] Despite the opinion of the duke, the duchess appears to have seen it as her duty to support her daughter in this way, later stating she 'could not with satisfaction leave her... until shee was pretty well recovered out of that condition'.[77] Evidently on this occasion the duty of parental involvement and affection was deemed as more important by the duchess than her vow of obedience towards her husband, suggesting that, in this instance at least, there were some limitations to the reach of the duke's patriarchal authority.

---

[72] Gary Schneider, 'Affecting Correspondences: Body, Behaviour, and the Textualization of Emotion in Early Modern English Letters', *Prose Studies,* 23:1, (2000), p. 37. The duke is similarly described as unable to write during a period of illness of his wife in 1657, see UNMASC, Pw1/375, William Pierrepont to the Duke of Newcastle, 5 October 1657.
[73] James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635* (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2012), p. 87.
[74] NA, DD/4P/35/64, Deposition of the Duchess of Newcastle in the contestation of the late duke's will, 1692.
[75] Linda A. Pollock, 'Childbearing and Female Bonding in Early Modern England', *Social History*, Vol.22, No.3 (Oct., 1997), p. 292.
[76] UNMASC, Pw1/302, Deposition of Robert Ward concerning the mental capacity of the Duke of Newcastle, c. 1691.
[77] NA, DD/4P/35/64, Deposition of the Duchess of Newcastle in the contestation of the late duke's will, 1692.

As with her husband during their daughter Frances' pregnancy, it is clear that the duchess continued to have a role in Katherine's life following her marriage, with childbirth acting as the catalyst for this increased involvement. The duke's lack of concern on this occasion, in comparison with his bearing towards Frances, can be partly explained by his differing relationships with both daughters. Whilst Frances had previously come under the censure of her father due to her refusal of a proposed match, by marrying Campbell she had seemingly placated him. Katherine, on the other hand, was at this point not in favour with her father. Despite his initial aspirations for Thanet to marry Margaret, and subsequent acceptance of his marriage to Katherine, it is suggested that he soon came to regret consenting to the match. This change of heart was reportedly due to the earl misleading the duke regarding his financial state during negotiations.[78] His dislike for Thanet evidently also tarnished his opinion of Katherine, affecting not only his concern for her in childbirth but also, as shall be shown in the next chapter, how he was to dispose of his estate.

It is apparent that within the Cavendish family, pregnancy and childbirth were viewed as important events in the lives of not only the couple themselves, but also for the wider family. The anxiety portrayed by both husbands and other family members supports assertions that this experience was one that was often steeped in fear. Husbands utilised correspondence to express anxieties over the health of both their wives and children, highlighting the affection which could exist between couples, as well as how this was exhibited to others. Building upon work by scholars such as Butler and her concept of gender performativity, and Scheer who suggests that emotions are a 'kind of practice', the wish for men to display their anxiety and by extension affection for their wives during this period can be seen, at least in part, as a performative action.[79] Aimed at assuring

[78] UNMASC, NeL 537, Deposition of Grace Holles relating to the suits of the Earl and Countess of Clare against the Earl of Thanet, 25 April 1692.
[79] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999); Monique Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Takes them have a History)? A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory,* Vol. 51, No. 2 (May 2012), pp. 193-220.

others within the identified network, particularly their in-laws, of their ideal behaviour in this situation as well as the strength of their union, such actions highlight the importance of how a marriage and indeed marital affection was displayed within an emotional community. The letters of Cheyne, Spencer, and Egerton during the occasion of their wives' labours and pregnancies do not shy away from displaying their fears, anxieties, and affections, thus assuring the recipient of their emotional stake in the outcome and by extension the relative success of their marriage. The position of these men within society and thus the importance of a male heir raises questions as to whether such concerns were sentimental or driven by concern for the future fecundity of their wives. Elite men would have certainly been concerned with the continuation of their lineage, especially within a family such as this where the first son to be born to one of the duke's daughters would have become the heir of the Cavendish estates and title. However, concern for the health of daughters as well as sons suggests that inheritance and the production of an heir was not always a key motivator. Similarly, anxiety over the wellbeing of wives by individuals such as Charles Spencer, when viewed in conjunction with the affection portrayed within his match to Arabella, is indicative of more than simply a display of fear regarding the potential for future heirs.

Both the duke and duchess were evidently concerned with the pregnancies and labours of their daughters, providing advice from a distance as well as practical support in person. Their concerns are indicative of parental affection and duty, as well as a more practical desire for the continuity and longevity of the family line. Despite the clear importance attached to the birth of a grandson, however, none of the duke and duchess's children were able to provide a surviving male heir. This would go on to have serious repercussions in the decisions guiding the duke in the disposing of his estate, and will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Maintaining and expressing marital love

In addition to the duty of procreation, conduct writers were also keen to impress upon couples the importance of love within marriage. At least a 'hopeful prospect of love' was desired in the creation of a match, with writers discouraging marriage purely on the basis of economic advancement.[80] An emphasis on the love couples ought to have for one another was not limited to courtship, but also expected to continue throughout marriage, with the maintenance of love viewed as a guard against conflict. Baxter, whilst providing directions for 'maintaining conjugal love', proclaimed that 'if love be removed' between husband and wife, there would be 'no ease, no order, no work well done' until this was restored.[81] Fleetwood similarly suggested that an absence of love could negatively affect a marriage stating:

> And whence proceed those endless and innumerable domestick Miseries, that plague, and utterly confound so many families, but from want of Love and kindness in the wife of Husband.[82]

It is evident that, for Fleetwood, a lack of love between a wife and her husband was potentially detrimental to the happiness of not only the couple themselves but also the family as a whole. Women were deemed more naturally inclined to love their husbands, so the absence of love from a wife would have been a particular cause for concern, going against the supposed natural order of things. Conversely, Gouge suggested that 'if there bee not love predominant in the husband, there is like to be but little peace betwixt man and wife'.[83] Despite having a differing emphasis on whom is responsible for this duty, it is clear that both authors deem love to be of utmost importance in maintaining marital harmony.

---

[80] William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (London: 1705), p.44; Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* pp. 110-111.
[81] Baxter, *Christian Directory,* p. 520.
[82] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties*, p. 43.
[83] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 350.

Throughout this period there were various ways in which marital love could be exhibited and, as Baxter advised, maintained. It has been suggested by Barclay that love at this time could be 'reflected in actions and conveyed in messages that closely linked obligations with affection'.[84] This is shown within the prescriptive literature of the period, with Fleetwood advising husbands that they should demonstrate their love for their wives by 'taking care of, and making all due provision for them'.[85] An example of such actions can be seen in the way individuals disposed of their estates through will and settlement. The following letter from Henry Cavendish to his wife Frances, written in 1667, outlined his wishes for her provision after his death:

> My Dearest,
> I shall leave this paper with you to sattisfie my self concerning y^{e} settlement I am resolved to make concerning my Children and yours… The reason y^{t} makes me resolve to doe this is out of my affection to you my best frend and to my Children… God bless you my dearest and all my deare Children and bless you and them all wth long life and perfect health
> Your most affectionate most obliged Husband.[86]

Whilst this was not the duke's final will, being written nearly twenty years prior to his death, this letter serves as an indication of his wishes at this point in time. It is evident that the duke is making a clear link between his affection for his wife, whom he refers to as his 'best frend', and the provisions he hopes to leave her. Unlike marriage, friendship was not a legal bond, and as such it was a relationship which was continued, at least in part, by personal choice. In this instance then, the duke's reference to his wife as his friend suggests a layer to their relationship beyond that of husband and wife; one in which personal choice played a key role.

---

[84] Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2011), p. 103.
[85] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 217.
[86] UNMASC, Pw1/70, Duke of Newcastle to the Duchess of Newcastle, 23 November 1667.

One of the most useful methods for examining the affection or love between couples is through their letters.[87] Of course, such correspondence could only occur when a couple was apart from one another. Co-habitation was deemed a duty for both husbands and wives by conduct writers, and deviation from this was discouraged.[88] A departure from this, therefore, was viewed unfavourably by conduct writers such as Carter, who stated that 'onely *Adultry* separateth man and wife'.[89] Constant co-habitation was not always possible, however, even in times of relative harmony in marriage. For elite couples, matters of business, politics, or warfare could draw men away for long periods, often placing them at a great distance from their wives. Gouge recognised this, providing examples of occasions on which such distance was unavoidable. Urgent affairs concerning the 'good of the Church or common wealth', war, or duties related to a man's occupation were all deemed acceptable circumstances for husband and wife living apart.[90] The following advice was provided by Gouge for couples on occasions when this distance was unavoidable:

> Provided also that they take no delight to live asunder, but rather be grieved that they are forced so to doe: and in testimony thereof to take all occasions that they can to manifest their longing desire one after another by letters, messages, to kens, and other like kindnesses: and to returne with all the speed they can. No distance, or absence ought any whit to diminish their mutuall love.[91]

Evidently, for Gouge the relative proximity of couples was of great importance when maintaining their 'mutuall love', suggesting that marital love was an emotion that had to be cultivated. Whilst men were frequently reminded of their duty to love, women were deemed as having a natural tendency to love their husbands. This extract from Gouge, however, suggests that distance made

---

[87] See Sara Mendelson, 'Debate: The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper-Gentry Family in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present,* Issue 85, (November 1979), pp. 127-8; Alan MacFarlane, *Marriage and Love in England 1300-1840* (Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, 1986); J.A Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550-1760* (London: 1993), p. 55.
[88] Baxter, *A Christian Directory,* p. 521.
[89] Thomas Carter, *Carters Christian Commonwealth; or Domesticall Dutyes dechiphered* (Purfoot: London, 1627), p. 29.
[90] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* pp. 135-136.
[91] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 136.

love difficult for both parties, necessitating additional effort from both husbands and wives in its maintenance.

The use of correspondence to maintain love, as suggested by Gouge, is seen within the letters of Elizabeth Cavendish during the absence of her husband Christopher Monck whilst he was fighting the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth against James II in 1685. Her many letters demonstrate the extent to which she has been affected by his absence, outlining her fears for his safety as well as a desire for him to return home. Shortly after his departure she wrote:

> I have not sleped all ye last night, my feares have increased Soe fast and with such Great reson. Deareist cretuare, you will wonder at this letter foloeing ye outher soe fast, excuses ye trouble I give you and when you consider ye danger that is round you, you will pardon me eseyar for being soe Tender; did you know my thoughts your love to me would mocion you to Greeve for my present Torment.[92]

There is a great deal to examine within this short extract. It is evident that the duke's absence is causing Elizabeth considerable anxiety. Emotive terms such as fear and torment highlight the anguish Elizabeth is wishing to portray to her husband, perhaps in an attempt to hasten his return. In addition to her anxiety, this letter also demonstrates the depth of Elizabeth's feelings for her husband at this time. The use of the moniker 'Deareist Creature' is of particular interest. Stone has suggested that, during this period, there was an abandonment of more formal modes of address, with terms such as Sir and Madam being discarded in favour of first names and terms of endearment.[93] However, the inclusion of such terms within correspondence was a matter of some contention among conduct writers, particularly for women. Gouge, for example, asserted that the way in which a wife addressed her husband had a bearing on her obedience to him, stating that 'For the titles which a wife in speaking to her husband, or naming him, giveth unto him, they must be such as signifie superiority, and so savour of reverance'.[94] This view is echoed by Sprint who also

---

[92] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* Elizabeth Cavendish to the Duke of Albemarle, 4 June 1685, p. 196.
[93] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 220.
[94] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* pp. 282-283.

drew a clear connection between the way in which a woman addressed her husband and what he termed the 'External Honour' she ought to have for him. In his sermon Sprint suggests that 'those women who will not condescend to give their Husbands the Title of Lord and Master, it is to be fear'd will not scruple in little time to usurp that Authority which that Title doth imply'.[95] Evidently for Sprint, the use of such terms by women was indicative of both a lack of honour and obedience towards their husbands, two of the main duties of marriage. Nevertheless, Elizabeth utilised expressions and monikers of endearment on multiple occasions during the distance between herself and her husband, seemingly without rebuke.[96] The use of such terms in spite of the advice put forward by conduct writers is suggestive of the limits of patriarchy within elite marriage at this time, indicating that in private such standards were not always adhered to. In her examination of elite marriage in Scotland, Barclay has highlighted the importance of utilising such phrases as a method of expressing affection between couples.[97] The use of these terms by Elizabeth therefore is indicative of her feelings towards her husband at this time, as well as a method by which to maintain love whilst at a distance. The following letter from Elizabeth similarly utilises terms of endearment, further emphasising her depth of feeling for her husband at this point. She writes:

> Your kind letter was very wellcom to me and Jo. Ffontane came heare to-day to tell me my Deare love is well, but no sertanty of being blessed with your presances which is as much desired as a pachion can force; to be from what won loves is fare from being esey, which you will believe knowing how often I have reseved favers and indearements from your Justis and True affection which I will always indever to ancer with all greatatued and fauthfull love that you can emagin from your Dutyfull Wife.[98]

---

[95] John Sprint, *The Bride-Womans Counsellor: Being a Sermon Preach'd at a Wedding, May the 11th, 1699 at Sherbour, in Dorsetshire* (H. Hills in Blackfriars: London, 1709), p. 62.
[96] See: Ward, *Christopher Monck,* Elizabeth Cavendish to the Duke of Albemarle, 19 June 1685, p. 205; Elizabeth Cavendish to the Duke of Albemarle, 23 June 1685, p. 208; Elizabeth Cavendish to the Duke of Albemarle, 31 June 1685, p. 210.
[97] Katie Barclay, 'Intimacy and the life cycle in the Marital Relationships of the Scottish Elite during the Long Eighteenth Century', *Women's History Review,* 20:2, (2011), pp. 189-206.
[98] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* Elizabeth Cavendish to the Duke of Albemarle, 12 July 1685, pp. 213-214.

The reference to the duke's 'kind letter' suggests that Elizabeth was at this time also receiving correspondence from her husband, which is evidently greatly appreciated. Of particular interest is Elizabeth's use of the word passion. The term at this time had several meanings, ranging from religious connotations to 'an extreme imbalance of a dangerous mental state'.[99] Within this letter, Elizabeth highlights the potential power of such an emotion, relating it to her desire to have her husband return home. Referring to the love she has for her husband on more than one occasion within this short letter, it is evident that Elizabeth is anxious to make her feelings known, perhaps hoping to utilise this emotional display as a way in which to expedite his return and thus end the distance between them. The emotive tone and content of Elizabeth's letters is particularly striking as her match to Monck did not appear to be motivated by any great love on either side, but instead by the goals of their parents in creating an advantageous alliance between the two families. Nevertheless, it is evident that at this point in time Elizabeth was displaying feelings of affection towards her husband, sharing these with him them in order to achieve her aim of his speedy return.

Such distance was also felt keenly by husbands, such as the Earl of Thanet who in a letter to his mother-in-law, the duchess, in May of 1685, described his plans for coping with any period of separation from his new bride, Katherine Cavendish, writing:

> …she has begun to sitt for her picture to Crosse which he promyses me shall be well done before I leave the Towne and doubt not but to make it very like for I long to have in my pokett when I am absent ye likeness of what I soe dearly love.[100]

It was not uncommon for elite individuals to have miniatures made of themselves or their loved ones, with multiple examples being created for members of the Cavendish family.[101] By having a

[99] R.S White 'Language of Emotions', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), p. 35.
[100] NA, DD/4P/35/155, Earl of Thanet to Duchess of Newcastle, 25 May 1685.
[101] See Richard William Goulding, *The Welbeck Abbey Miniatures belonging to His Grace the Duke of Portland* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1916). This painting of Katherine in particular is referenced, described as a small oval portrait on ivory, see p. 134.

miniature of Katherine on his person, Thanet was keeping her close to him in spite of any potential distance between them. Evidently Thanet was anxious at this point about leaving his new wife, wishing instead to be with her. As previously shown, the circumstances surrounding the match between Thanet and Katherine were suggestive of motivations other than economic advancement, with Thanet refusing the duke's favourite daughter Margaret even in the face of financial persuasion. This short extract regarding his unwillingness to be parted from his wife suggests that Thanet continued to have a great deal of affection for Katherine following the marriage.

Thanet's letter to the duchess also calls attention to the practice of many individuals examined within this thesis of appearing keen to publicise their marital felicity, especially to family members and kin gained through the marriage. It has been shown that during the arrangement of matches there were frequent wishes for the future happiness of the couple, often from the parents of the individuals to be married. Such hopes seemingly continued during marriage, as shown in the following extract taken from a letter from Lord Oxford to his son Edward Harley, husband to Henrietta. He writes:

> I know you need not be told how much you ought to love and value her. It is a great pleasure of my life to see you so mutually happy in each other.[102]

Evidently for Lord Oxford, the love and happiness exhibited by both Edward and Henrietta was a desired outcome of their marriage. This short extract also highlights that the happiness between the pair was not concealed but was instead easily visible to other family members. As with Thanet's letter to his mother-in-law, there are multiple examples of individuals wishing to demonstrate their felicity in marriage to others. The duke's son, Henry, following his marriage to Elizabeth Percy, wrote to his father stating 'I find every thing … so well to my future happinesse', mirroring the

[102] Lord Oxford to Lord Harley, February 2 1715-16, found in *Historical Manuscripts Commission: The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland preserved at Welbeck Abbey, Volume 5* (London, 1899), p. 530.

statements of family members prior to the match.[103] Frances Cavendish, writing to her new father-in-law shortly after her marriage, similarly made efforts to outline her good fortune in her match, stating that she was 'most sencible of my great happiness in my Dearest Lord your sonne'.[104] The use of affectionate terms to refer to one's spouse in correspondence to other family members is also seen in the letter from Charles Cheyne to his brother-in-law during the occasion of his wife's labour, in which he refers to her as his 'dearest lady'.[105] Used between couples, such terms are indicative of a desire to display affection to one another. However, when directed towards other family members, particularly in-laws, it can be argued that the use of these expressions portrays a wish to highlight the happiness of a marriage, and by extension its success. As with the letters of husbands to in-laws regarding the condition of their wives in childbirth and pregnancy, the use of such emotive terms to others can therefore be seen, at least in part, as a performative action, aimed at providing assurance of the success of a marriage, regardless of the truth of this in lived experience.

It is evident that during this period, there was a great emphasis on maintaining love throughout a marriage, both from the conduct writers and from elite individuals themselves. A display of love was indicative of a successful match, by which hopefully children and heirs would be born. Within the Cavendish family this love was shown in a multitude of ways, such as through financial provision and by using correspondence to maintain affection at a distance. Through comparison with the motivating factors for the arrangement of certain matches it has been shown that love and affection could both continue as well as flourish, even if this was not clearly present prior to the marriage. Calls for happiness as found within marriage arrangements have also been shown to have endured, with individuals and other family members keen to highlight the love and affection between a couple, thus providing assurances of the relative success of a match.

---

[103] UNMASC, Pw1/75, Henry Cavendish to Duke of Newcastle, May 1679.
[104] NRS, GD112/39/137/4, Frances Cavendish to Earl of Breadalbane, 1 May 1685.
[105] UNMASC, Pw1/84, Charles Cheyne to the Duke of Newcastle, 20 May 1656.

Causes of marital conflict

At a time where formal separation was rare, it is unsurprising that harmony in marriage would be sought after, particularly for elite couples who also had a high economic and social stake in the marriage. Whilst legal separation through Divorce by Act of Parliament was introduced in the late seventeenth century, it was not commonplace, even among the elite who could afford it. Stone has suggested that between 1670 and 1799 there were only 131 such acts, nearly all raised by husbands, with just 17 passed before 1750.[106] Nevertheless, many instances of dispute were aired in court, and multiple studies on marital conflict and breakdown during this period utilise court and church records.[107] Whilst court records provide useful information regarding reasons for the breakdown of marriage, as well as the roles of both husband and wife in the proceedings, it has been highlighted that these records detail instances where marital dispute has reached crisis point after all other options for reconciliation have been exhausted.[108] As such, there is a need for further analysis of difficulties in marriage which did not necessarily make it to the courts but were nonetheless significant to both the couple themselves and the wider family. Personal correspondence offers further insight into these instances of discord; its causes, how it affected those involved and the ways in which resolutions were reached, thus allowing conflict to be assessed more fully within the context of the course of marriage as a whole.

The reasons for conflict within marriage during this period were diverse and wide-ranging, depending on the specific circumstances of the couple in question. However, many of these factors

---

[106] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage,* p. 34.
[107] See Frances E. Dolan, *Marriage and Violence: The Early Modern Legacy* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Pennsylvania, 2008); Joanne Bailey, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660-1800* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003); Lawrence Stone, *Broken Lives: Separation and Divorce in England, 1660-1857* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993).
[108] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England,* p.126; Joanne Begiato, 'Bearing Grudges: Marital Conflict and the Intergenerational Family', in Janny DiPlacidi and Karl Leydecker (eds.), *After Marriage in the Long Eighteenth Century: Literature, Law and Society* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 41.

can be grouped together as actions which upset or threatened to disturb the ideals of the time. It was expected that couples cohabit following marriage, with just a few notable exceptions. During any period of separation both husband and wife were encouraged to maintain their bond through correspondence and expected to take 'no delight' in the distance between them.[109] Deviations from this ideal, therefore, had the potential to cause conflict in a marriage, as is demonstrated during a period of distance between John Holles and his wife Margaret Cavendish. Between 1698/9 and 1701 John wrote a series of letters to his wife whilst in London attending Parliament. Twenty-five out of nearly seventy letters within this correspondence mention his absence, and there are frequent demonstrations of his wish to return home. Phrases such as 'I wish every hour to be with you', 'I might be soon where I long to be with you' and 'I am in a very great hurry to get out of town to be with you' are found across the correspondence.[110] The use of such phrases could portray a genuine wish to return to his wife, however, they may also be indicative of an absorption of the ideals as portrayed within conduct literature. Holles may be utilising phrases that he believes are expected of him in order to placate his wife. Indeed, his letters to Margaret appear to suggest she is sending regular requests for his return. Statements such as 'if you saw how I lived you wou'd not think I take any pleasure here' and 'If you wou'd enquire how I live you wou'd rather conchid my stay here is a punishment for my sins y^{n} for any diversion I take', suggest a wish to portray his time away from home as both undesired and unpleasant, mirroring Gouge's advice that if at a distance from one's spouse they should feel 'greived that they are forced so to doe'.[111] Whilst only John's letters remain

[109] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 136.
[110] UNMASC Pw2/441, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 17 January 1698/9; UNMASC, Pw2/445, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 2 February 1698/9; UNMASC, Pw2/454, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 28 February 1698/9; UNMASC, Pw2/472, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 15 April 1698/9.
[111] UNMASC, Pw2/447, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 7 February 1698/9; UNMASC, Pw2/458, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 11 March 1698/9; Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 136.

for this correspondence, close reading of his answers also reveals that he may be responding to accusations of neglect from his wife. In one such letter he writes:

> I saw no manner of reason to say from my letter y^{t} I had a mind to stay in town. In this cause you have always been an unjust judge.[112]

It appears that not only is his staying in town the cause of some disagreement between the pair but also that this was not the first instance, suggesting that it has been an ongoing problem. Further letters in the correspondence are suggestive of an ongoing conflict, with John writing on one occasion 'You need not press me about coming if you saw what a hurry I am in to get out'.[113] He also appears to lay the blame for the discord between them at his wife's feet, writing to her stating 'About coming down I can only repeat y^{t} y^{u} blame me without a cause I never thought of staying'.[114] Contrary to calls by writers such as Gouge to utilise correspondence in order to maintain love, therefore, for John and Margaret it was at least in part a forum in which grievances were aired and conflict could breed. This rich set of sources emphasises the potential dangers of distance for husband and wife, as well as the ways in which discord was articulated within correspondence. Barclay has similarly examined the use of letters between elite Scottish couples to voice points of contention, emphasising the relative freedom of expression afforded to wives by their husbands.[115] In contrast, the correspondence between John and his wife shows that, whilst Margaret was seemingly able to express her opinions, this was met with distaste, causing conflict between the pair. John's letters thus shed light on the minutiae of marital discord, offering a window into the everyday conflicts within elite married life which would not have reached the courts.

---

[112] UNMASC, Pw2/469, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 8 April 1698/9.
[113] UNMASC, Pw2/475, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 22 April 1698/9.
[114] UNMASC, Pw2/461, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 18 March 1698/9. There are further examples of argumentative language within this correspondence such as 'you always take… what my Lady & I write further than they are meant' (UNMASC, Pw2/466, 1 April 1698/9) and 'To shew you I am better natured y^{n} y^{u} are I write & I send you y^{e} prints Thô your letter is fill'd with mistakes' (UNMASC, Pw2/485, 13 May 1701).
[115] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* pp. 130-131.

Within much of the conduct literature of the period, discord within marriage was often attributed to the lack of obedience of a wife to her husband. Dod and Cleaver, for example, outlined how wifely disobedience could lead to ill effects within the household, stating:

> If she be not subject to her husband to let him rule all household especially outward affaires: if she will make head against him, and seeke to have her owne waies, there will be doing and undoing. Things will goe backward, the house will come to ruine: for God will not blesse where his ordinance is not obeyed.[116]

It is apparent that Dod and Cleaver viewed the obedience of a wife to her husband as key to the maintenance of a contented and well-run household. When this role was not adhered to by women therefore, there was the possibility for discontent.

The period of marital conflict between the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle over potential suitors for their daughter Margaret usefully highlights the potential for disorder when patriarchal authority was, or was perceived to have been, threatened. The discord between the pair resulted in a short period of separation in November of 1686, outlined by family friend Sir John Reresby in his memoirs thus:

> I went to see the Duke of Newcastle at Welbeck, but was extremely surprised to find a great disorder in the family by reason of so great a falling out between the duke and duchess that they were parted from bed and board.[117]

The decision of the duchess to willingly distance herself from her husband is one that would not have been taken lightly. Whilst separation of husband and wife was looked on unfavourably within by conduct writers, in certain situations, such as matters of business, politics or warfare, such distance was accepted as unavoidable. Contrary to this was separation due to conflict, which conduct writer Baxter advised was 'not to be done upon passions and discontents, to feed and gratifie each

---

[116] John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Householde Government: For the Ordering of Private Families, according to direction of Gods word* (London: 1598), p. 88.
[117] John Reresby, *The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, Bart., M.P For York, &c. 1634-1689 written by himself, edited from the original manuscript By James J. Cartwright* (Longmans, Green, and Co: London, 1875), 4 November 1686, p. 366.

other viscous distempers or interests'.[118] Of particular interest is Reresby's use of the legalistic phrase 'bed and board', as this implies a more formal type of separation. Laura Gowing has suggested that during this period, 'separation from bed and board' could be interpreted as the closest to being divorced as a couple could be.[119] Bailey, however, asserts that a decree of this kind was 'ostensibly only until the couple could settle their differences', thus suggesting that it was intended to be a temporary solution, as opposed to a permanent decision.[120] Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that on this occasion any decree was formally made through the Church Courts, the use of the phrase indicates that at least in the eyes of Reresby, the separation of the duke and duchess at this time was somewhat similar in nature to a more formal breakdown of marriage.

Due to their inability to agree, both the duke and duchess were forced to abandon their hopes for these matches. The Earl of Feversham was subsequently proposed as a potential husband, although this again caused tensions within the family. The duke had on this occasion left all the terms of the marriage treaty to his wife, but was displeased by the conditions to which she had agreed with regards to Margaret's portion. This generated a strong emotional response, with the duke described as having 'flew into a passion' on hearing the news.[121] The actions of the duchess on this occasion can be seen as going against the prescribed responsibilities of a wife regarding her children at this time. Gouge, for example, suggested that:

> A wife may not simply without, or directly against her husbands consent, order and dispose of the children in giving them names, apparelling their bodies, appointing their callings, places of bringing up, marriages, or portions.[122]

Despite the clear involvement of women in the arrangement of the Cavendish matches, Gouge evidently felt that there ought to be limits to this responsibility. His directions on this matter are

---

[118] Baxter, *Christian Directory*, p. 536.
[119] Laura Gowing, *Gender Relations in Early Modern England* (Routledge: Oxon, 2014), p. 37.
[120] Bailey, *Unquiet Lives,* p. 31.
[121] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 16 October 1687, p. 383.
[122] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 180.

closely linked to the duty of wifely obedience, with his main concern seeming to be whether such actions were undertaken without, or against the consent of a husband. In this case, then, the reaction of the duke perhaps seems disproportionate, as he did consent to his wife discussing the terms of the contract. It was only when he was made aware of the terms agreed upon that he took issue with the actions of the duchess. Following this disagreement, the duchess requested the permission of the duke to take her leave to London. His consent was seemingly given, and the duchess left for the family's London residence along with Margaret and another of her daughters.[123]

The distance now in place between the couple therefore necessitated correspondence to mediate the conflict. The use of letters to voice concerns within marriage has been highlighted by Barclay, who has observed how for some couples distance allowed them 'vital space' and enabled the writer to 'say or express emotions that he or she would not have done in person'.[124] The following letter was sent from the duke to his wife after her departure to London. He writes:

> My Dear,
> I intreat you to consider y^{t} your parting with me and goeing to London will be a prejudice to you, and your two daughters unmarryed: and to me.[125]

Despite permission originally being granted, the duke was now requesting that his wife return home to the family seat at Welbeck. His attempt to persuade by stressing the 'prejudice' her actions would cause to all parties is of particular interest. As with the issues surrounding arranging a match for Margaret, there is an understanding of the impact this behaviour could have on others than just the couple themselves. O'Day has emphasised the dangers of marital conflict in her examination of the Temples of Stowe, stating that 'the deteriorating relationships between spouses had as much significance for the well-being of the wider family (in a material as well as an emotional context) as

[123] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 23 October 1687, p. 386.
[124] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* p. 30.
[125] UNMASC, Pw1/548, Duke of Newcastle to Duchess of Newcastle, 26 Oct 1687.

did the building up of such a relationship in the family'.[126] In addition to how it would affect his family, the duke also outlines the prejudice this dispute would be to himself. A man's inability to successfully manage his own domestic affairs at this time could also be seen as a reflection of his character and competence more generally in society. Foyster, for example, has emphasised how the way in which a man was able to control his household was an indication of his ability to govern in the 'public world'.[127] As such, the duke would have desired a resolution to this conflict in a way that would not threaten his own position within the household, and by extension the wider community. For elite couples in particular, there was much that was dependent upon a stable relationship between a couple in terms of both social and financial standing. Conflict was not merely seen as a personal or familial issue, and the hierarchical implications of marriage breakdown made elite conflict a particularly sensitive matter. Therefore, a great deal of emphasis was placed on not only how to avoid conflict, but also how to manage it once it had occurred.

Managing conflict: Individual and network approaches

Due to the nature of marital conflict as an issue that affected the extended network as well as the couple themselves, resolving such issues was not only an individual task, but one that was also undertaken by family members and kin. Of course, the couple themselves were key in attempting reconciliation in the first instance. As with the causes of marital conflict, advice for how to manage and resolve disputes was similarly connected to the prescribed ideals and duties of both husbands and wives within marriage. For men, the ways in which they were to settle disputes was closely related to both their authority and their honour. Pollock in her work on early modern honour argues

[126] Rosemary O'Day, 'Tudor and Stuart Women: their Lives through their Letters' in James Daybell (ed.), *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700* (Palgrave: Hampshire, 2001), p. 133.
[127] Elizabeth A. Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (Addison Wesley Longman Limited: Essex, 1999), p. 4.

that during this period there was an expectation that elite men resolved conflict through reconciliation. Landed gentlemen, she suggests, were expected to display good judgement, knowing 'when to restrain themselves and when to mend a divide'.[128] Barclay has proposed that a similar principle can be applied to marital conflict.[129] This can be seen within the discord between the duke and duchess, with Henry utilising correspondence in an attempt to reconcile the situation. During their time apart he frames his letters to the duchess with seemingly affectionate terms, addressing her as 'my dear' and signing off 'your affectionate husband'.[130] Whilst this could merely be a convention employed by the pair, the use of such terms in a letter of this nature may have also acted as a means by which the duke was hoping to achieve his aims. Such approaches were encouraged by conduct authors of the period, such as Sprint who provided the following advice for husbands:

> Therefore let your Authority be united with love, as your love must be governing love, let your Commands be loving Commands.[131]

Such a pragmatic solution suggests that masculine authority at this time was unsafe. Foyster has highlighted that, according to the writers of advice literature of the period, 'men's authority in marriage was not absolute or unconditional, but instead brought with it duties and responsibilities'.[132] Indeed, despite calls to temper authority with love, men were also warned against exercising this love 'so imprudently as to destroy the exercise of authority'.[133] The appropriate balance between these two essential duties was key for elite men such as Henry, especially when endeavouring to resolve marital discord.

The duke also attempted to negotiate with his wife in more practical terms as a method by which to mediate the conflict between them. In a letter sent during their separation he writes: 'It

---

[128] Linda Pollock, 'Honor, Gender, and Reconciliation in Elite Culture, 1570-1700', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 46, No. 1 (January 2007), pp. 3-29, p. 27.
[129] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* p. 130.
[130] UNMASC, Pw1/548, Duke of Newcastle to Duchess of Newcastle, 26 Oct 1687.
[131] Sprint, *The Bride-Womans Counsellor,* pp. 15-16.
[132] Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England,* p. 66.
[133] Baxter, *A Christian Directory,* p. 529.

troubles me very much; if you will go, I desire you will promise me under your hand, you will spend me not above a thousand a year, including Servants wages; and all Expenses'.[134] His offer of such a large sum of money along with a request for a signed guarantee suggests he is taking steps to indemnify himself against debt, one of the consequences of a private separation at this time. Although not yet in agreement with his wife, the duke's tone within the correspondence to the duchess is indicative of hopes of reconciliation, or at the very least of damage control. In contrast to this are the letters from John Holles to Margaret written during his time in London. Rather than acting as a method by which to mitigate conflict, their correspondence instead seems to act as the catalyst for it. Within the letters between the couple there are very few instances of displays of affection, with the exception of an early letter in which John refers to Margaret as his 'dear soul'.[135] Their correspondence is mostly concerned with instructions as to the running of the estate, however, the conflict caused by John's distance is also referred to on multiple occasions. The tone and content of his letters runs contrary to both that of the duke when writing to his wife, and the advice contained within the prescriptive literature of the time. Far from mitigating any conflict between the pair, John's clear displeasure at his wife pressing him regarding his absence suggests that their correspondence in fact added to the discontent between the couple. The letters of both men thus emphasise the potential impact of the emotive language utilised in correspondence between husband and wife, capable of both remedying ills as well as causing them.

For women, the advice for conflict resolution was closely linked with the ideals of love and obedience towards their husbands. The guidance provided by conduct writers for wives was more focused on preventing conflict in the first instance, with Gouge suggesting that women could calm disorder within the house through submission to their husbands:

---

[134] UNMASC, Pw1/548, Duke of Newcastle to Duchess of Newcastle, 26 Oct 1687.
[135] UNMASC, Pw2/440, John Holles to Margaret Cavendish, 24 May 1690.

> And though her husband should be of an harsh and cruell disposition, yet by this meanes he might be made meeke and gentle. For the keepers of Lyons are laid to bring them to some tamenesse, by handling them gently and speaking to them fairely.[136]

Halifax similarly suggested in his *Advice to a Daughter* that wives may be able to discourage conflict, advising women that 'you may know how to *cure* your Husband's *Mistakes,* and to *prevent* your own'.[137] Such assumptions can be found during the conflict between the duke and duchess in correspondence from Thomas Shadwell, a poet and playwright to whom Henry offered patronage. In his letter he suggested that the discord could come to an end if his wife had 'wisdome enough to find y^{t} it is fit for her to submitt' to the duke in 'all affaires whatsover'.[138] It is evident that Shadwell believes that obedience of the duchess to her husband would calm any disagreement between the pair and that to do so would be a wise choice on her part. The correspondence of Shadwell also highlights another important facet of the conflict between the duke and duchess, in that it was evidently not kept private between the couple or even within the family.

Public airing of marital conflict could be damaging, particularly to the reputation of a husband, and therefore was to be avoided if possible. However, during this period, the sharing of information regarding difficulties in one's marriage was also to a certain extent encouraged. In her examination of marital difficulties between couples, Bailey has suggested that to seek advice and interference from extended family and friends on such matters was not uncommon.[139] She argues that 'husbands and wives who could no longer effectively manage their own conflict turned first to their families, friends, neighbours, servants and clergymen for assistance', observing that most disputes were dealt with through these more informal channels.[140] In the case of the duke and duchess, some such channels were indeed utilised, with Henry corresponding with multiple

---

136 Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 278.
137 Halifax, *Advice to a Daughter,* p. 33.
138 UNMASC, Pw1/248, Thomas Shadwell to the Duke of Newcastle, 31 January 1688.
139 Bailey, *Unquiet Lives,* p. 32.
140 Bailey, *Unquiet Lives*, p. 32.

individuals who could be classed as kin, family or friends throughout the lengthy dispute with his wife. One of the individuals with whom he shared information regarding their disagreement was Thomas Osbourne, Earl of Danby, who lived at Kiveton, Yorkshire, less than ten miles from Welbeck. Referred to in the letter as Henry's 'most noble Frend', Osbourne was not a family member, but evidently judged by the duke to be a suitable confidant regarding his marital conflict. Within the letter he informs Osbourne that his wife 'went to London much against my opinion and desire to her'.[141] Perhaps most strikingly, the duke not only recounts his own version of proceedings but also includes a copy of the letter he wrote to his wife, entreating the earl to keep it and stating that he has other copies in 'some frends hands'.[142] This practice of sharing correspondence was not uncommon during this period, even when detailing seemingly "personal" affairs. Schneider, for example, has emphasised that letters were not as private as they may at first seem, but instead were 'understood, and expected to circulate within designated epistolary circles'.[143]

Another individual who received information regarding this dispute was the Earl of Breadalbane, father-in-law to the duke's daughter Frances. The duke and the earl shared a lengthy correspondence both leading up to and following the marriage of their children, and two of these letters mention the conflict with the duchess explicitly. In the first of these letters the duke writes:

> Your Lo^{p}: is a wise person and I am very glad you approve of wt I writ in my last, but your Lo^{p} expresses it better then I can, but indeed I will putt y^{e} mistakes of my Wife and Margeret to me …and ^their^ unkindness in a Bundler and throw y^{m} from me.[144]

It appears that the duke is responding to advice from the earl which had been provided in an earlier letter. This advice was seemingly to move on from the conflict and work towards a reconciliation of sorts, consistent with calls of advice writers that such a method was the most suitable for elite men

---

[141] UNMASC, Pw1/547, Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Osbourne, 5 December 1687.
[142] UNMASC, Pw1/547, Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Osbourne, 5 December 1687.
[143] Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolary: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500-1700* (University of Delaware Press: Newark, 2005), p. 22.
[144] NRS, GD112/39/141/23, Duke of Newcastle to Earl of Breadalbane, 23 December 1687.

to preserve honour. Nevertheless, it is evident that the duke still blames the disagreement on his wife, referring to her mistakes and unkindness. The physical imagery employed within the letter is of particular interest as it suggests a wish of the duke to distance himself from the difficult emotions associated with the conflict. Physical metaphors could be used to underline the intent of a letter, with the duke's language here serving to emphasise the intensity of his feelings towards the conflict, and in particular the way in which the behaviour of his wife and daughter has affected him. [145] Furthermore, the inclusion of information regarding the conflict also emphasises the importance of the links made through the marriage of the duke's daughter to John Campbell. The duke is clearly willing to share this personal information with the earl, suggesting that the link between the two families went beyond merely a surface level economic arrangement, with emotional support also being sought and provided through this connection.

As well as reaching out to others, the duke also received letters regarding the conflict with his wife which aimed to provide support and advice. Thomas Shadwell has been shown to have written to the duke during this period of conflict, stating within his letter that he was 'very much troubled to heare of any divisions or disorder' in the Cavendish family.[146] There is no indication that the duke had written to Shadwell regarding the conflict so it can be assumed that he heard of it from other sources, further highlighting the public nature of this conflict. The letter from Shadwell is very complimentary towards the duke, and despite admitting that he knows not the 'secret causes from whence this disorder springs', he declares that he is 'well assured yt yr Grace is a man of yt judgement & yt honour that yu will not bee in the wrong'.[147] The deferential and flattering tone of this letter is markedly different from others that the duke received or sent regarding this conflict. This can be explained due to the relationship between Shadwell and Henry. Whilst Shadwell was

[145] Schneider, 'Affecting Correspondences', p. 37.
[146] UNMASC, Pw1/248, Thomas Shadwell to the Duke of Newcastle, 31 January 1688.
[147] UNMASC, Pw1/248, Thomas Shadwell to the Duke of Newcastle, 31 January 1688.

evidently connected to the duke well enough to discuss his marital problems, he did not occupy the same sphere as some of his other confidants. The epistolary networks utilised by the duke can thus be seen as emotional communities, working from Rosenwein's own definition that they are groups which 'value or devalue' the same emotions, encouraging and tolerating certain modes of emotional expression and deploring others.[148] This model also accounts for the differing styles of expression of the duke to the recipients of his letters, with Rosenwein suggesting that displays of emotion and the judgements made could be adjusted as individuals moved between differing environments.[149] Whilst within his letters to Breadalbane the duke utilises strong emotive terms, emphasising the depth of his feelings on this occasion, the correspondence with Shadwell and Osborne is more muted, focusing on the particulars of the conflict as opposed to his own emotional response to it. The use of such terms to Breadalbane is not merely restricted to the conflict between the duke and his wife, however, with his letter regarding the death of his daughter Frances being similarly descriptive of his emotional state. Such distinctions suggest that the duke was changing the tone and the emotional content of his letters to suit both what was expected and what might be tolerated within these differing epistolary communities.

It is apparent that the duke was able to utilise various networks for support during this conflict, writing to friends or extended kin for advice and support. For women, however, their place within these larger networks and the ways in which they were able to utilise such connections was a point of contention. In contrast to the advice for men, women were discouraged from discussing their marriage with others. Baxter, for example, linked the public airings of marital issues to the honour a wife ought to have for her husband:

---

[148] Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Cornell University Press: New York, 2006), p. 2; Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context,* No.1, (2010), p. 11.
[149] Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 3 (June 2002), p. 842.

> *Honour your husbands according to their superiority.* Behave not your selves towards them with unreverance and contempt, in title, speeches or any behaviour… Speak not of their infirmities to others behind their backs.[150]

The importance of verbal restraint has been examined by Gowing who states that it was deemed 'one of the cornerstones' of female virtue during this period.[151] Women sharing marital details was also seen as conflicting with a wife's duty to obey their husband, with Foyster arguing that concerns around female gossip were closely linked to 'men's fears about their ability to control and rule their wives'.[152] Such suggestions indicate that unchecked female conversation represented a weakness of patriarchal authority within marriage, thus seen as a danger and subsequently discouraged. The duke, writing to his brother-in-law the Marquis of Halifax, asserted his displeasure at his wife sharing information regarding their disagreement, stating:

> Your lo^{sh} must heare of y^{e} difference between my Wife and I and indeed my Lord Mrs Grace Johnson will not find her Counsell to my Wife wise, for I will not be Hectored; I humbly beg your Lop pardon for this freedom, but if I had not presumed to have done it I would not have forgiven my selfe for I am not ashamed of my proceeding.[153]

The identity of Mrs Johnson is unfortunately unknown; however, her name does also appear as a witness to a will of Frances' sister Grace Pierrepont in 1701, suggesting that she continued to have links with the family.[154] It is evident from this letter that the duke does not approve of his wife reaching out to others regarding their discord, despite many of the particulars already being shared by himself. His petition to Halifax to put an end to the dialogue between Mrs Johnson and his wife emphasises the perceived impact such behaviour could have, with the potential to reflect poorly on his own authority within the marriage. Nevertheless, this letter demonstrates that despite garnering his disapproval, such behaviour did occur, indicating the limitations of patriarchal headship on this

---

[150] Baxter, *A Christian Directory,* p. 530.
[151] Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1996), p. 61.
[152] Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England,* p. 60.
[153] UNMASC, Pw1/641, Duke of Newcastle to Marquis of Halifax, 8 January 1687.
[154] UNMASC, Pw2/319, Will of Grace Holles Dowager Countess of Clare, 14 Oct 1701.

occasion. Indeed, the duchess did not only reach out to Mrs Johnson for support during the conflict with her husband, but also family friend Sir John Reresby. This interaction was noted by Reresby in his memoirs:

> I had letters from the Duchess of Newcastle, wherein she complained of the continuance of my lord duke's severities to herself… She gave me an account of several other unhappy circumstances of that family, and owned very particularly the obligation she had to me.[155]

The sharing of details by the duchess with Reresby can be explained in part by the role he played in the marriage arrangements for Margaret, which were the catalyst for much of the conflict between the couple. He was already privy to many of the details through his conversations with both the duke and duchess on this matter. This extract, however, suggests that the duchess did not merely limit her complaints to the particulars of the proposed match between Margaret and Feversham, but also additional points of conflict within the family, further emphasising her relationship with Reresby and the amount she was willing to share with him.

It is clear that the use of epistolary networks was of great importance to both husbands and wives in negotiating conflict. Letters were used to request advice and support but also to share their emotions regarding the situation. It has also been shown that the information shared and the way in which this was communicated depended on the relationship between the writer and recipient, with epistolary networks acting as 'emotional communities'. The disagreement between the duke and duchess did eventually come to an end with the marriage of Margaret to John Holles.[156] How far this was a direct result of the attempted mediation by the couple themselves and the support of others is unknown, but it is nevertheless evident that steps were taken to ensure the eventual end of the conflict, emphasising the importance attributed to harmony within marriage.

---

[155] Reresby, Memoirs *of Sir John Reresby,* 22 October 1687, p. 385.
[156] UNMASC, NeD/79, Release and settlement after the marriage of John Holles and Margaret Cavendish, 10-11 October 1690.

Extra-marital sex

Another challenge to harmonious marriage was infidelity, viewed within the conduct literature as contrary to the ideals of matrimony. Previous scholars such as Thomas in his seminal work on the 'double standard' of sexuality have argued that these ideals were particularly damaging to women, holding them to higher standards of behaviour than men.[157] A contemporary emphasis on the danger of sexual transgressions of women was largely due to the consequences it could have, with many advice books outlining the potential risk of illegitimate children. Allestree, for example, warned his readers of the dangers of an adulterous wife 'robbing her husband of his Posterity; obtruding a base and adulterous Issue, and so stealing away his Estate and Inheritance, by giving it to a stranger'.[158] Gouge similarly outlined the potential dangers of female adultery stating:

> More inconveniences may follow upon the womans default then upon the mans…The man cannot so well know which be his owne children, as the woman; he may take base children to be his owne, and so cast the inheritance upon them; and suspect his owne to be basely borne, and so deprive them of their patrimony.[159]

Such concerns were arguably of even greater concern within elite families, where lineage and inheritance were of utmost importance. Due to the severe consequences that could follow the infidelity of women, therefore, conduct writers saw it as an unforgivable offense. Fleetwood, for example, suggested that 'the Perjury and Injustice of an adulterous Wife, are such offences as can receive no reparation or amendment'.[160]

However, more recent assessments by scholars such as David Turner have questioned Thomas's position that male infidelity was pardonable, suggesting that adultery was deemed as

---

[157] Keith Thomas, 'The Double Standard'*, Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Apr., 1959), p. 195.
[158] Richard Allestree, *The Government of the Thoughts: A prefatory discourse to the Government of the Tongue* (London: 1694), p. 107.
[159] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 219.
[160] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 180.

equally sinful for both sexes during this period.[161] This is highlighted within the conduct literature, with Gouge stating 'Yet in regard of the breach of wedlock, and transgression against God, the sinne of either party is alike. God's word maketh no disparity betwixt them'.[162] Turner has argued that in some instances adultery on the part of the husband was deemed as more serious- due to their privileged position in the marriage, he contends, men were expected to set a 'virtuous example'.[163] Men were also deemed more able to keep their emotions in check, thus, as Turner suggests, 'some commentators asserted that his adultery was logically the more blame worthy'.[164] Indeed, when discussing the differences between the treatment of this sin for both men and women, Gouge suggested that, 'if difference be made, it is meet that adulterous husbands be so much the more severely punished, by how much the more it appertaineth to them to excel in vertue, and to governe their wives by example'.[165] For Fleetwood, infidelity was also seen to be at direct odds with a husband's duty to love his wife, which he stated ought to be shown by 'Being faithful to them, in keeping to their promise and engagement'.[166] Clearly for the writers of conduct literature, regardless of the difference between the severity of the transgression, adultery was disapproved of for both husbands and wives. Within elite circles, however, it has been suggested that attitudes to infidelity differed, not receiving the same level of censure. Stone has argued that at this time there was a 'shift of sensibilities among the English elite…away from regarding illicit sex as basically sinful and shameful to treating it as an interesting and amusing aspect of life'.[167] Turner, however, has questioned this, suggesting that some moralists placed a special emphasis on such actions by 'great

[161] David Turner, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2002), p. 60.
[162] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 219.
[163] Turner, *Fashioning Adultery,* p. 62.
[164] Turner, *Fashioning Adultery,* p. 62.
[165] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 219.
[166] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 217.
[167] Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1990), p. 248.

persons', as they were expected through their good breeding and education to know better, and thus set a good example for others.[168]

Within this study one such example of an elite extra-marital relationship has been identified in the documents pertaining to the Earl of Breadalbane. Following the death of his second wife, Mary Campbell, in 1699, the earl embarked upon a relationship with a Mrs Mildred Littler, housekeeper at one of the earl's residences.[169] Slater in her examination of the Verney family has suggested that a relationship of this kind with a servant was not uncommon for elite men, highlighting the liaison between Ralph Verney and a maid of the house.[170] The relationship between the earl and Mildred resulted in an illegitimate child, a daughter named Mary Campbell. Other family members were evidently aware of the girl's existence, with the earl's son John Campbell openly discussing bonds to be made for both Mildred and Mary in correspondence with his father, suggesting that both should be 'secured from any trouble'.[171] Despite being illegitimate Mary was evidently well provided for and several documents refer to her as the 'lawful daughter' of the earl.[172] Whilst the earl's actions did not constitute adultery, the apparent acceptance of his illegitimate child is still striking. At this time Scotland had particularly harsh laws regarding extra-marital sexual relations, with so called 'notorious adultery', that which resulted in a child, being a capital crime punishable by death.[173] Such was the distaste for adultery that one contemporary, George Mackenzie, advocated for the extension of this punishment to 'ordinary adulterers', stating 'I see no

---

168 Turner, *Fashioning Adultery,* p. 61.
169 See Paul Hopkins, 'John Campbell, first Earl of Breadalbane and Holland', *ODNB,* (January 2008) and NRS, GD112/15/93 for memo of wages due to servants on the 15th of December 1701 which includes Mildred Littler at £78 4s.
170 Slater, 'Weightiest Business', p. 39.
171 NRS, GD112/39/194/1, John Campbell to Earl of Breadalbane, 5 January 1705.
172 NRS, GD112/3/92, Legal papers, 1710-1716; NRS, GD112/25/166, Papers concerning Breadalbanes settlement on his daughter Lady Mary Campbell, 1710-1719.
173 George Mackenzie, *The laws and customes of Scotland, in matters criminal wherein is to be seen how the civil law, and the laws and customs of other nations do agree with, and supply ours* (Edinburgh, 1678), p. 171. See also Brian P. Levack, 'The Prosecution of Sexual Crimes in Early Eighteenth-Century Scotland', *The Scottish Historical Review,* Vol. 89, No. 228, Part 2, (October 2010), p. 174; Allan Kennedy, 'Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Scotland: The secular Courts of Restoration Argyllshire 1660-1688', *International Review of Scottish Studies,* Vol. 41 (2016), p. 21.

reason why the Justices may not as well, inflict death, without any express Law here, as they do in Theft, and other less Crimes'.[174] However, Allan Kennedy in his study of crime and punishment in Restoration Argyllshire has suggested that there was not a complete adherence to these rules, pointing to a 'reluctance to execute for adultery'.[175] Whilst the earl's actions did not constitute adultery as he was at this point widowed, it is evident that both within the conduct literature and the laws of the land, his actions were expected to have been regarded with some censure. It is likely that the reaction to the earl's behaviour would have differed if the child had been a son as opposed to a daughter. The bearing of an illegitimate son was a cause for concern as it could affect inheritance and the passing down of titles. Mary, however, would not have been deemed as much of a threat by the earl's children by his two marriages. Certainly, John Campbell's matter of fact way of discussing the arrangements for both Mildred and Mary suggests that he was not worried by this turn of events. Despite the apparent lack of consequences for his actions, it is evident that Breadalbane was aware of the possible barriers his daughter's illegitimate status could cause her. Even with financial provisions and connections, such a situation could serve to put off prospective matches, as in the case of the duchess and her veto of the king's natural son. As such, the earl took steps to limit the damage to his daughter's reputation, marrying Mildred Littler morganatically in around 1712 to legitimate her.[176]

Whilst the earl was seemingly spared from censure for his actions, another example within the Cavendish family highlights the potential for criticism over extramarital dalliances. Reresby recalled in his memoirs an occasion on which the duke and duchess's eldest daughter Elizabeth supposedly received attentions from an unknown suitor during her marriage to the Duke of Albemarle:

---

[174] Mackenzie, *The laws and customes of Scotland,* p. 172.
[175] Kennedy, 'Crime and Punishment', p. 23.
[176] Hopkins, 'John Campbell', *ODNB,* (January 2008).

> He [the duke] told me a secret relating to his family, that his daughter, the Duchess of Albemarle, had received and concealed a love letter, which her lord knew of, which had made her dissemble herself distracted; but she was not disordered, as she pretended, and that both the one and the other were great misfortunes to him; yet he had rather she were guilty of the letter than the distraction, because it was an imputation on the rest of his children.[177]

Despite not being a confirmed act of infidelity, it is evident that the duke was greatly affected by the actions of the duchess in concealing this letter. It has been suggested by Turner that it was not enough for women to simply refrain from adulterous practice, but that they were also required to comport themselves in a manner that would portray their 'inward purity'.[178] Fleetwood, for example, stated:

> But it is not refraining from adulterous Practice only, that is enough to denominate a *Conversation chast*: The outward Carriage must be also honest and inoffensive, void of *Suspicion* as well as *Blame*.[179]

The importance attached to the behaviour of women such as Elizabeth can also be linked with the concept of honour. In addition to the importance of upholding the duty to honour in marriage, individuals were also advised to maintain the reputation of their family. It has been argued that the actions of women in particular were key to the upholding of this honour. Dod and Cleaver, for example, state that 'as the provision of the household dependeth onely on the husband: even so the honour of all dependeth onely of the woman'.[180] Foyster has suggested that men at this time were conscious of the impact the behaviour of their wives could have, declaring that they 'were all too aware that their honour depended on the actions and words of their wives'.[181] Shepard has additionally highlighted how the gendered nature of honour and reputation during this period led to conflicting messages for husbands. Whilst the focus on a wife's honour led to allowances being

[177] Reresby, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* 10 April 1683, p. 277.
[178] Turner, *Fashioning Adultery,* p. 61.
[179] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 143.
[180] Dod and Cleaver, *Godly Forme,* p. 171.
[181] Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England,* p. 2.

made for men, it also took the control of household honour out of the hands of the husband, placing him in what Shepard has described as a 'precarious position'.[182] The potential ill effects of behaviour calling into question the honour of the family can be seen in the actions of Elizbeth in this case, with the duke questioning how it might affect the rest of his children. His reaction can be further explained by the attitudes of the Cavendish family on other occasions. The ruling of the duke and duchess against their daughters corresponding with suitors prior to marriage, as well as the reaction of the duchess to Elizabeth taking part in a ladies masque emphasises their concerns regarding perceived undesirable behaviour. Evidently for the duke and duchess, even the suggestion of impropriety was enough to warrant concern for their daughter and her reputation, highlighting both the impact infidelity or rumours of it could have on marriage, as well as the specific attitudes of the Cavendish family towards any behaviour that could negatively impact the image of both the individual and the family as a whole.

Conclusions

This chapter has examined the experience of couples in the 'differing scene' of marriage, exploring the duties and responsibilities of those entering the marriage state as well as the challenges they faced. In particular the duty of love between husband and wife has been discussed, building upon suggestions from conduct writers that at least a 'hopeful prospect' of love must be present prior to marriage.[183] It has been shown that within the prescriptive literature, this emphasis on love continued following marriage, with writers advising on how best to maintain this between couples. Proximity was seen as key to the upholding of this duty, with distance between couples discouraged. To overcome this challenge couples were advised to utilise correspondence to maintain their love.

[182] Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006p. 83.
[183] Fleetwood, *Relative Duties,* p. 35.

This is shown most evidently in the calls of Elizabeth for her husband the Duke of Albemarle to return home. Whilst opposed by conduct writers, Elizabeth utilised terms of affection to both emphasise her feelings for Albemarle and by extension attempt to persuade him to return home. Couples also demonstrated their affection in other ways, such as the financial provision promised by the duke to the duchess, and Thanet's wish to keep a miniature of Katherine on his person during their separation. Affection between couples has additionally been highlighted in the anxieties and fears of husbands for their wives during pregnancy and childbirth. Whilst it has been suggested that these fears were in part due to concerns regarding lineage, anxieties for daughters as well as sons are indicative of affection. In particular Charles Spencer's wishes to protect Arabella from the news of her mother's death for fear of harming her or their child indicate that the love he expressed for her during the arrangement of their match continued during their marriage.

In addition to highlighting love between couples, it has also been suggested in this chapter that some declarations of affection could be viewed as performative when aimed at relatives, particularly in-laws. It has been shown that the focus on happiness between couples within the arrangement of matches continued to be of importance to parents and other family members. A happy and affectionate marriage was seen as a success, with the potential to provide heirs, thus securing the linage of the family. As such, both the couples themselves and other family members appear keen to highlight the success of their marriages, adhering to the emotional standards of the identified network. This was achieved both through the expressions of anxiety during childbirth as well as declarations of affection and love, or even just an acknowledgement of the advantageous nature of the match.

The role of parents following marriage has also been examined. As well as guiding new couples through the first stages of their married lives such as ensuring adherence to contractual obligations set out within articles of agreement and providing shelter in the family home, they were

also able to offer emotional support and advice throughout the duration of a marriage. The use of correspondence ensured that family members were able to remain involved in the lives of their married children despite the distance between them. It has been demonstrated that this involvement was most likely to occur during "flash points", events of significance or particularly high emotion in a marriage, such as the birth of children or during financial difficulties. Such involvement has been shown to be neither entirely practical nor sentimental in nature, with the seemingly opposing motivations often closely interweaved. For example, whilst parents may have hoped for their child's happiness in marriage, such an outcome was also likely to result in a more successful match, which would benefit the family as a whole.

This chapter has also further emphasised the importance of the links formed through marriage. For the individuals entering into marriage, the relationship with their new in-laws was one that was maintained and utilised. It is also apparent that family members who helped to arrange advantageous matches made sure to maintain these useful links after marriage. Correspondence between individuals such as the duke and the Earl of Breadalbane highlight that these ties were maintained, further cementing the importance of making a 'good match' in the first instance. Such links will be examined in further detail in the following chapter, with a discussion on how these were able to endure after the death of a spouse. When referring back to Halifax's fears of being usurped by the marital family of his daughter, it has been shown that such anxieties were displayed by the duke upon the marriage of Frances to John Campbell. Nevertheless, even at a distance he attempted to provide advice to his daughter during her pregnancy, highlighting the importance of correspondence in maintaining links with one's natal family.

Conflict in marriage has also been examined, finding that this was often caused by behaviour or situations which ran contrary to the prescribed ideals. For John and Margaret, their continued distance from one another was evidently a source of tension. Rather than utilising their

correspondence to "maintain" their love, as suggested by conduct writers of the period, it instead became a forum by which to air grievances, further adding to the animosity between the pair. The disagreement between the duke and duchess stemmed from the duke's belief that his wife had usurped his authority in the marriage arrangements of their daughter. Such behaviour evidently runs contrary to the ideals of wifely obedience, and the well-known nature of their conflict in society had the potential to affect the duke's standing outside of the home, and by extension his honour. The behaviour of the duchess during their conflict has also been shown to have emphasised the potential limits of patriarchal authority, as whilst her actions clearly garnered censure, there were no long-term consequences.

The ways in which such conflict was navigated has been explored, with a particular focus on the role of friends and extended kin, through epistolary networks. These networks can be viewed through the concept of emotional communities, with individuals such as the duke occupying different spheres and tailoring his emotional expressions accordingly. Within these networks, private information was able to be shared seemingly without fear of judgement or censure, but rather in the belief that to do so would aid the situation. Despite women being discouraged from revealing details of their marriage to others, it has been shown that the duchess did indeed reach out to seek counsel and share her feelings during the conflict with her husband. The methods by which couples were advised to solve disputes between themselves has also been examined. In particular the use of correspondence has been highlighted, finding that the duke appeared to follow the general advice to landed gentleman at that time by aiming to resolve his differences with his wife through calm attempts at reconciliation. Contrary to this was the correspondence between John and Margaret, which rather than being utilised as a tool to soothe conflict acted as an arena by which the couple aired their issues, thereby stoking the discord between them.

It is evident that a great deal of emphasis was placed on both creating and maintaining a harmonious and successful marriage, both for the benefit of the couple themselves as well as the wider family. The following chapter will examine life after marriage, exploring the changes that occurred in this next phase as well as the challenges that arose.

Chapter Four

'As free as they who were never before married': Death, Grief and Remarriage

It has been shown that entering into marriage led to substantial changes for both men and women. Once married there were few available exits, even in the face of conflict and disorder. As such, the way in which nearly all marriages ended during this period was through the death of one or both of the couple. Previous studies by scholars such as Stone have suggested that due to the high mortality rates of the period many individuals displayed few emotions following the death of a spouse.[1] However, this view has been criticised by subsequent scholars such as Cressy who argues that evidence points to a society in which grief was 'deeply rooted and widely experienced'.[2] Houlbrooke has also highlighted that texts such as Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy,* published in 1621, which outlined the symptoms of bereavement, point to contemporary understandings of grief.[3] Lucinda Becker has similarly noted the existence of books such as *An Essay on Grief,* published in 1695, which advised women on how to deal with death and mourning.[4] These contemporary discussions of grief and mourning came hand in hand with prescribed ideals about how best to experience and display such emotions. It has been suggested that excessive or uncontrolled sadness following the death of a loved one was strongly discouraged during this period, as it was thought to portray a lack of self-control, faith and reason.[5] Clergyman Robert Bolton, for example, wrote that of 'all other passions

[1] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Penguin Books: England, 1977).
[2] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death, Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), p. 393.
[3] Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000), p. 220.
[4] Lucinda M. Becker, *Death and the Early Modern Englishwoman* (Routledge: London, 2003), p. 18.
[5] Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family,* p. 221.

of the Soule…sadnesse, and griefe grates most upon the vitall spirits; dries up soonest the freshest marrow in the bones; and most sensibly suckes out the purest, and refinedst bloud in the heart'.[6]

This chapter will examine the advice regarding mourning for a spouse at this time, with a particular focus on the ways in which this guidance differed for men and women, building on suggestions by scholars such as Jennifer Vaught that both the ideals and representations of grief during this period were 'profoundly shaped by gender'.[7] It will be shown that the emotional standards regarding how to display one's feelings upon the death of one's spouse were closely linked to the beliefs of male and female emotional control. The way in which grief was expressed by individuals within the Cavendish family network will also be examined, exploring both private and public demonstrations of this. Expectations for elites regarding the grief portrayed upon the death of a spouse will be explored, arguing that a certain level of grief was expected in order to highlight the relative success of the marriage. As such, this chapter contends that there was a performative aspect to elite grief, both within public displays of mourning and private correspondence.

In response to the question regarding whether those who 'have buried their husband or wife' were free to remarry, Gouge responded in the affirmative, stating that they were 'as free as they who were never before married'.[8] This chapter examines not only the freedom to remarry but also the other freedoms that could occur as a result of the change from married status to that of a widow or widower. In particular the transformation from wife to widow will be explored, building upon and assessing suggestions from scholars such as Mendelson and Crawford that in this stage of their life women were likely to enjoy greater independence.[9] This will be discussed with regards to

---

[6] Robert Bolton, *Instructions for a Right Comforting Afflicted Consciences with Speciall Antidotes Against Some Grievous Temptations* (1631), p. 20.
[7] Jennifer Vaught, 'Introduction', in Jennifer Vaught with Lynne Dickson Bruckner (ed.), *Grief and Gender 700-1700* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2003), p. 1.
[8] William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties Eight Treatises* (London: 1622), *Domesticall Duties,* p. 186.
[9] Sara Mendelson, and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), p. 175.

involvement of women within the Cavendish network in marriage arrangements, matters of estate management, and in legal matters such as the contestation of wills.

Following the death of one's spouse, a choice faced both men and women; the question of remarriage. This chapter will examine the ideals and advice surrounding remarriage for both men and women, as well as how these differed in comparison to first matches. Agency upon remarriage will be explored, considering suggestions by conduct writers that as a widow or widower, individuals had greater influence over their choice of partner than in a first match.[10] Through examination of examples within the Cavendish family network it will be shown that despite such advice within the prescriptive literature, agency in remarriage was subject to many of the same considerations as in first marriages. The motivations for remarriage will also be explored with regards to both the individuals themselves and their wider family. It will be shown that, despite many similarities in terms of motivations and agency in the arrangement of matches, remarriage presented a unique set of challenges for both the individuals involved and their families, emphasising the importance of understanding it as distinct from first marriage.

The role and importance of the network links created through marriage will also be examined throughout this chapter. It will be shown that these connections remained of importance even following the end of unions. Acting as emotional communities, these network links provided practical and emotional support to individuals both at the end of unions and the making of new matches, whilst also valuing certain emotional responses and displays.

[10] Daniel Rogers, *Matrimoniall Honour or The mutall Crowne and comfort of godly, loyall, and chaste Marriage* (London: 1642), p. 78.

Public mourning

One way in which individuals were able to express grief on the death of their spouse, as well as honour their memory, was through the erection of monuments and memorials. Described by Peter Sherlock as 'unique windows on to the early modern past', monuments have been cited as useful tools for historical analysis.[11] Nigel Llewellyn has similarly argued for the importance of memorials as public sites of grief, highlighting the increasing popularity of large and extravagant grave monuments during this period.[12] The nature of monuments as public representations of mourning provides a useful insight into the performativity of grief for elite individuals, as will be explored with reference to examples of memorialisation within the Cavendish family network.

A pertinent example of elaborate memorialisation on the death of a spouse is found in the actions of John Egerton, the 2nd Earl of Bridgewater, on the death of his wife Elizabeth Cavendish, who passed away in 1663 during an early delivery of her tenth child.[13] The funeral conveyance for Elizabeth was a great display of extravagance, with 'nine mourning coaches with six horses apiece… accompanied by an Extraordinary great number of the Nobility, & many of the Gentry about London'.[14] The monument commissioned by Egerton for his wife was also excessively expensive, to the extent that it led him into debt. He wrote the following account to his son explaining the cost of the monument erected in memory of 'that most invaluable, & unprisable Jewell', his 'entirely beloved and truly loving Wife':

> I come noe to another [debt] occasion'd by the greatest of sorrowes that sorrow which is unexpressable, & under which I have groaned, ever since that sad & dolefull time, in which

[11] Peter Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Ashgate Publishing Limited: England, 2008), p. 231.
[12] Nigel Llewellyn, *Funerals and Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Nigel Llewellyn, *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual, c.1500-1800* (Published in Association with the Victoria and Albert Museum by Reaktion Books: London, 1991), p. 115.
[13] Betty S. Travitsky, 'Elizabeth Egerton, countess of Bridgewater', *ODNB,* (September 2004).
[14] Hunt. MS El 8348, cited in Marion Wynne-Davies, "With such a Wife 'tis heaven on earth to dwell': Memorialising the Early Modern Englishwoman', *Journal of the Northern Renaissance* 2 (2010), p. 4.

> (by the death of my deare, & never to be forgotten Wife) it fell upon me; & shall groane as long as it pleaseth God to permit me to draw out my miserable dayes upon the Earth.[15]

Egerton is evidently keen to highlight the intense grief he felt on the death of his wife, thus justifying the debt incurred. The description of groaning under his sorrow is also of particular interest, with physical metaphors often used to describe or emphasise emotions at this time.[16] The use of such terminology by Egerton thus serves to further emphasise his intensity of feeling on this occasion. Within his letter he continued to justify the extravagance of the monument in the following terms:

> I should have thought myselfe totally unworthy, if I should not (in some measure) have endeavoured to perpetuate the remembrance of so admirable a person, so neerely related to me, & who had beene so many yeares my whole felicity; I cannot therefore conceive that this Expence whatsoever it was (& that it was considerable, I believe whosoever lookes upon it cannot doubt) can fall under any hard censure.[17]

For Egerton, the considerable cost of the monument was evidently deemed suitable to appropriately commemorate his late wife and by doing so also convey his own depth of feeling. He seems confident that others would not censure him for his actions, suggesting that they might similarly view this as a necessary expense. His use of the term felicity here is also of particular interest. Used to denote 'felicitous feelings and experiences' it was largely replaced by the term happiness after the 1550s.[18] Happiness has been shown to have been a wish of family members both prior to a match and during the marriage itself. Egerton is evidently keen to impress upon his son the happiness that his wife brought him during their marriage, both highlighting his affection for his wife as well as the success of their match, thus justifying the expense of the monument. Following her death he was also determined regarding keeping her memory, even going as far as to raise a suit against biographer

---

[15] Hunt. MS EL 8117, cited in Davies, 'Memorialising the Early Modern Englishwoman', p. 8.
[16] Gary Schneider, 'Affecting Correspondences: Body, Behaviour, and the Textualization of Emotion in Early Modern English Letters', *Prose Studies,* 23:1, (2000), p. 37.
[17] Hunt. MS EL 8117, found in Davies, 'Memorialising the Early Modern Englishwoman', p. 8.
[18] Phil Withington, 'The Invention of Happiness' in Michael J. Braddick and Joanna Innes, *Suffering and Happiness in England 1550-1850* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2017), p. 29.

David Lloyd upon publication of an account of Elizabeth's life entitled *The Countess of Bridgewaters Ghost.*[19] As such, whilst this kind of extravagant memorialisation can be interpreted as performative, indicating both the social status of those involved as well as a way in which to publicly attest to the relative success of a match, for Egerton his efforts can also be viewed as a reflection of his attachment to his wife throughout their marriage.

Charles Cheyne also commissioned an imposing monument following the death of his wife Jane Cavendish in 1669. Housed in Chelsea Old Church, the monument which measured around six metres high cost five hundred pounds, a substantial outlay although not as expensive as some of the most extravagant memorials during this period.[20] Mistakenly attributed to sculptor Bernini, the monument was one of the few at the time to be imported into the country from overseas.[21] The choice of Chelsea as the location of the monument was also a deviation from the norm, with most monuments at this time being built at a family's country seat.[22] By choosing London, therefore, Cheyne emphasised his position as a multi-county figure, with connections to the capital as well as his own county. In addition to the extravagant monument, the church itself was also enlarged and its roof repaired using money bequeathed by Lady Jane. As highlighted by Linda Levy Peck, combined with the extravagance of the monument, these actions portray an intention on the part of Cheyne to impress both his in-laws and society more widely.[23]

Cressy has examined the public nature of grief at this time, describing it as 'both a natural and cultural phenomenon', being 'something people felt, but also something they performed'.[24] The use of monuments and memorials by individuals such as Cheyne and Egerton for their deceased

---

[19] Francis Espinasse, revised by Louis A. Knafla, 'John Egerton, second Earl of Bridgewater', *ODNB,* (May 2007).
[20] For a discussion on the cost of monuments during this period see Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family,* p. 368.
[21] Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005), p. 277.
[22] Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England,* p. 147.
[23] Peck, *Consuming Splendor,* p. 294.
[24] Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death,* p. 393.

wives clearly served as public forms of mourning. As with flash points such as childbirth, individuals and family members may have wished to portray certain emotions in order to highlight affection within a marriage. Expressing grief in such a public manner through the commission of impressive memorials similarly serves to emphasise the love felt for a spouse, and by extension the success of the marriage as a whole. Monuments also provide an interesting insight into the connection between emotions and objects. As argued by Downes, Holloway and Randles, objects can be viewed as 'material manifestations of emotion'.[25] Memorials provide a clear example of this, created both to portray the emotions of the grieving, whilst simultaneously attempting to garner an emotional response from those who view them, thus further emphasising the potential for their use as tools of emotional performativity.

Another example of a public expression of grief for one's spouse is found in the funeral elegy. Taking the form of lyrical, often rhyming poems, elegies could be written as a 'solace for private grief', but could also be read by others and even printed.[26] Often these were commissioned by family members or spouses, such as the elegy written by Thomas Lawrence on the death of Jane Cavendish. Within the 112 line verse Lawrence described the collective grief felt upon her demise, stating that 'at her Death an Universal groan Was heard, as if Fate had our own', and referring to the tears that 'drown'd our joy'.[27] Printed alongside Lawrence's elegy was a sermon by Adam Littleton which provides further information regarding the reaction of Cheyne upon her death, describing him as her 'sad and afflicted husband' and stating that following her death he:

[25] Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway, Sarah Randles, 'Introduction', in Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway, Sarah Randles (eds.), *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions through History* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018), p. 1.
[26] Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the family,* pp. 327-328.
[27] UNMASC, Pw V 19/1, MS entitled 'An Elegy on ye death of the thrice noble and vertuous lady the Lady Jane eldest daughter to William Duke of Newcastle', 1669.

> …finds no Reason to live, no Joy in life, but This, to look after those living Remains of his Dear and Pious Deceased, and to be Paying on that Love, which was Due to Her, in the Indulgent Care of Her Children…[28]

It is important to note that neither the elegy nor the sermon for Jane are first-hand accounts written by Cheyne himself, instead commissioned to others. As such, elements of flattery towards both Jane and her husband are to be expected, as well as the inclusion of certain conventions of the time. The descriptions of both Cheyne's individual grief as well as the wider mourning by others thus provide an excellent insight into the expectations of the period. Such a reaction would have therefore been deemed not only suitable for Cheyne, but also the idealised standard for a man of his position. The description of Cheyne's reaction upon the death of his wife serves as an indicator of his grief at this time, as well as highlighting his love for her. As previously demonstrated, joy was sought after within a marriage during this period, thought to be a product of a successful match. By claiming that Cheyne no longer found joy in life following the death of his wife, Littleton's sermon thus both further emphasises the importance of joy within marriage, as well as suggesting that grief and his new stage in life as a widower were incompatible with this particular emotion.

Elegies could also be written by individuals with a more personal connection to the deceased, such as that written by John Egerton on the death of his wife Elizbeth. As with the elegy for Jane Cavendish, the earl references a widespread mourning for his late wife, stating:

> Did you not heare that gale of sighes, that tore
> The upper Elements when just before
> A tyde of Teares had overflow'd the Earth,
> And mad't as 'twas before it's second byrth.[29]

The reference within this elegy to tears is of particular interest. It has been suggested by Capp that elite men were discouraged from excessive shows of grief, such as public tears, as this loss of

---

[28] Adam Littleton, *A Sermon at the funeral of the Right Honourable the Lady Jane eldest daughter to His Grace, William, Duke of Newcastle, and wife to the Honourable Charles Cheyne* (London: 1669), pp. 53-54.
[29] Hunt. MS EL 8354 found in Wynne-Davies, 'Memorialising the Early Modern Englishwoman', p. 6.

restraint was thought to indicate effeminacy.[30] Humoral theories of the time posited that women were less able to effectively regulate their emotions and as such were more prone to excessive grief. Therefore, such a display by men could be construed as effeminate behaviour and thus something to be avoided in order to preserve masculinity. The reference to tears in the elegies for the wives of both Cheyne and Egerton, however, suggests that there are limitations to the argument regarding the negative associations of tears. Instead of being hidden, the concept of tears is front and centre in these elegies, which would have been read publicly. Indeed, male grief was not wholly discouraged during this period, and other scholars have suggested that not to mourn at all was seen as a deviation from natural behaviour.[31] Vaught, for example, has highlighted how throughout the seventeenth century, attitudes towards grief began to change, and whilst men remained anxious of 'feminine tears of grief', their own tears were sometimes deemed necessary as a sign of their humanity.[32] Capp himself also outlines the limits to the idealised stoic nature of male grief, suggesting that 'disapproval of male tears was never absolute'.[33] Tears of grief in a rhetorical context, Capp argues, were acceptable to contemporaries.[34] Rather than simply being permitted, these descriptions of tears are being publicised by both Egerton and Cheyne, portraying not just an acceptance of grief but an expectation of it, further suggestive of a performative element to this particular emotion.

For both Cheyne and Egerton, the funeral processions, monuments, elegies, and sermons for their wives acted as sites of emotion, meant to be shared with the public.[35] Matthew Craske has outlined how monuments in particular were often intended to illicit a specific reaction from their

---

[30] Bernard Capp, "Jesus Wept' But did the Englishman? Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, No. 224 (August 2014), p. 76.
[31] Houlbrooke, *Death Religion and the family,* p. 221.
[32] Vaught, 'Introduction', *Grief and Gender: 700-1700,* p. 5.
[33] Capp, 'Jesus wept', p. 80.
[34] Capp, 'Jesus wept', p. 93.
[35] See Susan Broomhall, 'Renovating affections: Reconstructing the Atholl family in the mid eighteenth century' in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Spaces for feeling: Emotion and Sociabilities in Britain, 1650-1850* (Routledge: Oxon, 2015), p.58 in which she outlines memorialisation as a 'space of feeling'.

audience, whether this be grief, reflection on the accomplishments of the deceased, contemplation on one's own mortality, or even terror.[36] The monuments erected for both Jane and Elizabeth were demonstrations of wealth and status, serving as permanent reminders of the position of the deceased as well as their family. They also placed the grief of both Egerton and Cheyne on public display, emphasising their affection for their wives, and by extension the relative success of their marriages. However, the extent to which such expressions of grief were merely performative can be questioned. Both Cheyne and Egerton expressed affection for their wives during marriage, particularly in their anxiety for their health during childbirth. Therefore, the extravagance of the monuments for their wives could be seen in part as a reflection of their true feelings, whilst also serving to satisfy in-laws of the success of the marriage and impress their wealth and status upon others. Whilst the elegies examined were arguably of a more personal nature, however, especially the one penned by John himself, they were also available for public consumption, either at the funeral service itself or in the form of a published verse. Thus whilst the elegies and memorials for both women provide a useful insight into how both husbands felt towards their wives, they are also indicative of how these emotions were portrayed to others, highlighting once again the interweaving of both sentimental and more practical motivations in emotional expression.

"Private" grief

Whilst elegies and monuments are a useful way of examining the experience and portrayal of grief, they represent only one aspect of mourning. Also of importance are the ways in which this was displayed more privately to family and friends, through means such as correspondence. The

[36] Matthew Craske, *The Silent Rhetoric of the Body: A history of Monumental Sculpture and Commemorative Art in England, 1720-1770* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2007), p. 158, p. 334.

epistolary networks utilised by individuals during periods of difficulty in marriage were once again employed in expressing grief, acting as emotional communities where individuals conveyed their feelings according to the relationship they had with the recipient and the emotions valued within that group. Vaught has suggested that during the early modern period, public and communal rituals of mourning were gradually replaced by increasingly private expressions of grief.[37] The sending of letters to family members and friends allowed individuals to express their grief as well as seek support. William Pierrepont, for example, sent multiple letters to his daughter Frances following the death of his wife in 1657 to express his grief, stating:

> I have lost a most affechonat and Vertious wife My children a most tender and good mother If it pleas God to continue mee for the good of our children or how ever hee pleas to dispos of mee his holy will be done I know I must goe to her she cannot returne to mee But I must I may lament my losse of soe good a wife.[38]

It is evident that William is greatly affected by the death of his wife, grieving the loss of her in his life and expressing his wish to join her again. Within the same letter he also provides an indication of how the death of his wife has had an impact on his physical wellbeing, stating 'I have with much troble been able to write this'.[39] Such a connection between intense emotion and a physical inability to write in one's own hand has been highlighted previously with reference to the Duke of Newcastle on occasions such as the death of his daughter.[40] As with the duke, the difficulties William is having with writing at this time can be seen as an indication of his emotional state, emphasising his grief and by extension the affection he had for his wife. Taking into account the importance attributed to physical representations of emotions during this period, such a description could also be partly performative in nature, aimed at portraying the depth of his grief and the love he had for his wife,

---

[37] Vaught, 'Introduction', *Grief and Gender,* p. 7.
[38] UNMASC, Pw1/371, William Pierrepont to the Duchess of Newcastle, 4 July 1657.
[39] UNMASC, Pw1/371, William Pierrepont to the Duchess of Newcastle, 4 July 1657.
[40] NRS, GD112/39/151/19, Duke of Newcastle to John Campbell, 24 February 1691; NRS, GD112/39/142/9, Duke of Newcastle to Earl of Breadalbane, 24 April 1688; UNMASC, Pw1/375, Duke of Newcastle to John Campbell, 24 February 1691.

thus emphasising the relative success of the match.[41] Whilst male grief was supposed to be controlled and tempered, a complete lack of mourning was viewed unfavourably, with a display of grief not only accepted but expected in certain situations such as the death of a spouse. William's letter thus serves as a useful indicator of not only his mourning but also how he wished to present this grief to others.

The expectation of grief as from a widowed husband is shown most clearly in the reaction of family members on the death of Frances Cavendish. Following her death in childbirth in 1690, her father the Duke of Newcastle wrote to her recently widowed husband, John Campbell, expressing that he was 'exceedingly obliged to your Lo[p] for yor great sorrow at ye desease of my dear Daughter Glenorchy'.[42] Her sister Margaret also wrote the following in a letter to John's father, the Earl of Breadalbane:

> The unhappy news of my Dear Sister was very suprueing to mee & a Great affliction; I beg yr Lordships leve to most Heartly condole with yr son & my Brother in this Paper to avoide giving him ye trouble of a nother; Whos Grafe I am confedent is Great hee being so good a man.[43]

It is evident that both the duke and Margaret expected and were gratified by the grief portrayed by Campbell, going as far as to connect it with his character in general. If he had not displayed an acceptable level of grief, it is suggested that this would reflect poorly on him, further emphasising that not to mourn at all was seen as unnatural. This letter also highlights the continuing relationship between the Cavendishes and the Campbell family, even following the death of the individual who connected them. It is clear that Margaret still recognises the link between herself and Campbell, referring to him as her brother in her letter.

---

[41] Schneider, 'Affecting Correspondences', p. 37.
[42] NRS, GD112/39/151/19, Duke of Newcastle to John Campbell, 24 February 1691.
[43] NRS, GD112/39/151/18, Margaret Cavendish to John Campbell, c. 1691.

Frances's mother, the duchess, similarly expressed sentiments regarding the link between the two families upon hearing of her daughter's decease:

> Your Lo[p] has bin soe afectionately kind a husband to her while shee did live with you that you have obliged mee for ever to that afection and esteeme for you as will never die while I live that my Prayers and wishes shall follow ~~in~~ you in all your consernes and wish it in my power to serve you as a freind tho our neere relation bee unfortunately desolved to yours and our unspeakeable affliction which only time can cure.[44]

As well as highlighting the affection she deemed John to have had for Frances, this letter also further demonstrates a clear wish for continued ties following the death of the individual who provided the link. Frances had died without issue and as such there was no longer a living relative with whom the duchess could claim connection to the Campbells. Nevertheless, it is evident that both she and Margaret wished to sustain this relationship. Tadmor has argued that the 'recognition of kinship' did not have to end in such instances, with some individuals continuing to refer to the family of their deceased spouse using terms such as father, mother, or brother.[45] Great importance was attached to the connections that could be acquired with a good match, and family members on both sides would be reluctant to relinquish such useful ties. The duchess is evidently aware, however, that the link between them has been changed by the death of Frances, referring to the earl as a friend as opposed to kin. The value attributed to this relationship by both Margaret and her mother highlights the perceived importance of maintaining ties with Campbell, in spite of the loss of the family member who connected them.

Thus far only the mourning of men on the death of their wives has been examined. In the population in general, women were more likely to outlive their husbands despite the dangers of

[44] NRS, GD112/39/151/21, Duchess of Newcastle to John Campbell, 25 Feb 1690/1.
[45] Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001), p. 136.

childbirth.[46] Among the elite, however, where women generally married earlier and had more children, therefore running higher risks, husbands were more likely to outlive their wives.[47] As such, despite an overall higher proportion of widows than widowers in the general population, this has been suggested to have been reversed within elite circles. This is reflected within the Cavendish family network with most marriages ending upon the death of the wife as opposed to the husband. Nevertheless, there are of course instances in which women did find themselves widowed following the death of their husband. Unlike men, women were thought to be naturally more passionate in their grief with an inability to effectively control their mourning. Despite their supposed natural tendencies, however, the ideal of restraint in grief was also promoted for women. *The Ladies Dictionary* published in 1694 provides a useful example of this ideal of controlled mourning in its entry for a "Good Widdow":

> Her grief, though moderate for the death of her husband, is yet not withstanding real; it is not a violent storm that is soon over, but a still Rain that continues long, soaks their Hearts with grief that is not easily removed.[48]

The grief described in this extract is evidently controlled, but nonetheless strong, emphasising the intensity of feeling women were thought naturally inclined to experience on the death of their husbands. Such ideals of female grief are portrayed within the Cavendish family network by Elizabeth Pierrepont, who, upon the death of her husband, utilised correspondence to reach out to her sister-in-law the Duchess of Newcastle. She wrote extolling the affection she felt for her late husband, informing the duchess that she would spend the remainder of her life bewailing her loss

---

[46] Olwen H. Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe* (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1996), p. 223.
[47] Lawrence Stone and Jeanne C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite?: England 1540-1880* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1986), p. 94.
[48] N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary; Being a General Entertainment For the Fair-Sex* (Printed for John Dunton; London, 1694), p. 481.

and looking to her husband's children.[49] As with *The Ladies Dictionary* description of a good widow, Elizabeth is clearly indicating that her grief would be long lived, emphasising the importance attributed to a lengthy grieving process for women. The expressions used within her letter to the duchess are similarly indicative of the actions of the 'ideal widow', who was expected to keep her husband at the forefront of her mind and 'cherish his memory' following his death.[50] As with William Pierrepont in his letters to his daughter, it is evident that Elizabeth is happy to share such emotions with her sister-in-law. The sharing of this information could be due to her genuine grief on the death of her husband and the need for familial support, however, there could also be a performative element to this. As highlighted with the death of Frances, daughter to the duke, there were certain expectations placed on individuals to portray their grief in order to meet the ideals of the period. By expressing such sentiments to her sister-in-law, Elizabeth highlighted the affection she had for her husband and by extension the success of the marriage, whilst also serving to maintain useful links with Frances and the duke.

Whilst not as public in nature as the monuments examined earlier in this chapter, it is evident that personal correspondence was also governed to a certain extent by the contemporary emotional standards regarding grief. For John Campbell the praise from his in-laws regarding his character as a husband as well as his grief suggest that such behaviour was anticipated by the Cavendish family. Not portraying the expected level of grief could be detrimental to both how his temperament and integrity were perceived by wider society, and his ties to the family. As discussed in Chapter Two, the creation of connections through marriage was of great importance, and as such both he and the Cavendish family would have been disinclined to do anything that may jeopardise this link. Personal correspondence has also been found to have been of use when seeking support in

[49] UNMASC, Pw1/208, Elizabeth Pierrepont to the Duchess of Newcastle, n.d.
[50] N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary,* p. 482.

grief, with both William and Elizabeth Pierrepont utilising this form of contact to outline their feelings to family members. In contrast to earlier assessments that grief was discouraged, it is evident that individuals made use of the emotional communities formed through epistolary networks to emphasise their emotions and by doing so also publicise the strength of a union. Such displays can thus be deemed as performative, as whilst not as public as memorials or elegies, these letters similarly served to portray specific standards of emotions.

Widowhood

As with entry into the marriage state, the death of a spouse similarly brought great changes for individuals, particularly for women. It has been suggested by scholars that widowhood was a time in a woman's life in which she held the most power, no longer under the patriarchal authority of either husband or father. Mendelson and Crawford, for example, have highlighted how widows could have the best of both worlds, retaining the social status and prestige of their married state, whilst also being legally freer to engage in certain economic activities.[51] This is argued to have been particularly pertinent for widows of a more advanced age, with Grassby suggesting that 'widowhood combined with age gave a woman power, a legal identity, and independence'.[52] Contemporaries were also aware of the independence which could be afforded to widows, with the following extract from *Lawes Resolutions of Women's Rights* outlining the potential benefits of the situation:

> Why mourne you so, you that be widdowes? Consider how long you have been in subjection under the predominance of parents, of your husbands, now you may be free in liberties, free *propriiuris* at your owne law.[53]

Allestree similarly questioned the logic of wishing to remarry thus:

---

[51] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 175.
[52] Richard Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism: Marriage, Family, and Business in the English- Speaking World, 1580-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001), p. 150.
[53] John More, *The Lawes resolutions of womens right: or, the lawes provision for woemen* (London: 1632), p. 232.

> it seems not very prudent to relinquish both Liberty and Property, to Espouse at the best a Subjection, but perhaps a Slavery; it a little resembles the mad Frolicks of freed Gallyslaves, who play away their Liberty as soon as they regain it.[54]

The use of the metaphor of slavery is of particular interest as it contradicts the protestations of his fellow contemporary writers such as Gouge who, as discussed in Chapter One, was keen to distance marriage from such comparisons. Despite the contemporary distaste for the metaphor of servitude, however, Allestree evidently sees a difference between the relative freedoms of widows to those who once again entered the marriage state. This newfound liberation from the control of others has also been highlighted by Barbara Todd who suggests that unlike her married counterparts a widowed woman was, if she was lucky enough, 'able to control her independent means in her own interest and on behalf of her children'.[55]

One way in which a widow could act independently in the interests of herself and her children was through the arrangement of matches. This was discussed in Chapter Two, examining claims by scholars such as Merry E. Wiesner that aristocratic widows were in a 'position of great power' over the matches of their children.[56] In particular the role of the dowager countess, grandmother to Elizabeth Percy, was explored. It was argued that she exceeded the standard involvement of women in marriage arrangements, being instrumental in financial discussions as well as appearing as a signatory on the marriage contract, despite this being uncommon for women during this period. Such actions demonstrate not only her power as a widow but also the potential for greater legal independence than her married counterparts. Conversely, Elizabeth's mother appears in only a couple of letters regarding these arrangements, suggesting that she had far less influence in this match.[57] Following the death of her first husband Joceline Percy in 1670, she had

---

[54] Richard Allestree, *The Ladies Calling in two parts* (Oxford: 1673), p. 222.
[55] Barbara Todd, 'The Remarrying Widow: A Stereotype reconsidered', in Mary Prior (ed). *Women in English Society 1500-1800* (Methuen & Co. Ltd: London, 1985), p. 55.
[56] Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press: New York, 1993), p. 74
[57] See UNMASC, Pw1/192-206 for correspondence from the Dowager Countess.

remarried to Ralph Montagu, the 1st Duke of Montagu in 1673. As such, during the marriage arrangements for her daughter, she was not acting as a widow like the dowager countess, but instead as a married woman. Whilst it has been suggested that by remarrying women might forfeit some of their influence, on this occasion the lack of involvement by Elizabeth's mother was not merely a reflection of her marital status but directly impacted by it. Within the will of her first husband, the Earl of Northumberland, it was stipulated that upon remarrying she would have to rescind custody of her daughter to her mother-in-law, the dowager. Such an action was likely taken to protect Elizabeth from any fortune seeking stepfathers attracted by the heiress's inheritance.[58] This legal impediment placed upon Elizabeth's mother thus represents an extreme example of the potential loss of certain freedoms for women upon remarriage, as well as the powers that could be afforded to widows such as the dowager countess.

However, the extent to which this period in life constituted a substantial increase in influence in family affairs for the women in this study can be called into question. Whilst widows evidently played a large part in the marriage arrangements of their children, this was also often the case before the death of their husbands. Frances Cavendish, for example, arguably played a larger hand in organising matches for her children as the Duke of Newcastle's wife than she did as his widow. Despite evidently being involved in the marriage arrangements for Arabella, most of the correspondence regarding the match was directed to John Holles, who together with his wife Margaret, inherited the estate following the death of the duke. It can thus be argued that Frances was afforded a greater deal of influence over the matches of her children by her husband, despite his many protestations throughout their married life. As such, whilst widowhood in general could afford women greater agency in arranging matches this could be dependent on a variety of different factors.

[58] Katharine Aygne Walker, 'Seventeenth Century Northern Noble Widows: A comparative study', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Huddersfield, 2004), p. 119.

It has also been argued that widows had a greater share of influence over financial matters, with Amy Erickson suggesting that if made an executrix to her husband's will, a widow had 'virtually complete control' over his estate.[59] However, the extent to which this control represented a true increase in influence was often dependent upon individual circumstance. During her husband's lifetime Margaret Holles had great responsibilities in the running of the Cavendish estate, with duties such as managing staff and buying stock. Following the death of John, Margaret did indeed still have a role to play, liaising with agents on issues regarding tenants and her own financial concerns.[60] By this point, however, her daughter Henrietta and husband Edward Harley were largely in control of the estate, thus reducing her responsibilities.[61] For most widows the role of their husband in terms of estate management was not passed to them, but instead to the new male heir, whether that be a son, or in the case of Margaret, a son-in-law. Thus, as with the role of women in marriage arrangements, the extent of their influence was dependent not just on their status as either wife or widow, but on the responsibility afforded to them by the male head of the household. It could be, therefore, that some women enjoyed a greater level of responsibility in marriage if this was facilitated by their husbands, as opposed to in widowhood when the same allowances may not be extended by a son or son-in-law.

It is evident that the death of a spouse brought a great deal of changes, particularly for widows. Contemporaries saw it as a period of great independence and power, a state of affairs both celebrated and distrusted. A clear example of this difference in responsibility is found in the roles of Elizabeth Percy's mother and grandmother in her marriage arrangements. The widowed dowager was afforded a key role in these proceedings, whereas Elizabeth's mother was relegated to the side-

[59] Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (Routledge: New York, 1995), p. 161.
[60] See UNMASC, Pl C 2/2, Ralph Gowland to Margaret Cavendish, 27 April 1714; UNMASC, Pw2/539, Ralph Gowland to Margaret Cavendish 17 April 1716.
[61] See UNMASC Pl C 1 for correspondence relating to the Harley estates based at Wimpole and Welbeck.

lines as a direct result of her remarried status. However, the extent to which all widows gained more responsibility upon the death of their husbands can be questioned. With regards to the Cavendish family examples it has been shown that the role of a woman in both personal matters such as arranging matches and financial matters such as the running of an estate, could be as much dependent on the responsibility afforded to her by either her husband or subsequent male head of the family as it was on her marital status.

A contested will: the widow's role

The death of a spouse also posed practical concerns for elite individuals, particularly for women. As highlighted by Erickson, the most common executor of a will at this time was an executrix, with many wives carrying out this duty following the death of their husbands.[62] Within the Cavendish family there are multiple examples of women taking on this role, both for husbands as well as other male relations.[63] Larminie in her examination of the Newdigates has suggested that the choice of a wife as one's executrix was also an acknowledgement by her husband of her capabilities.[64] Indeed, Margaret Holles, who as has already been shown was afforded a great deal of authority in matters of estate management, was named as one of the executors of her husband, John Holles' will.[65] Despite being a fairly usual occurrence, the role of executrix had the potential to cause a great deal of stress and worry for elite women who outlived their husband. A useful example of this is the contested will of the 2nd Duke of Newcastle, which, as will be demonstrated, also reveals a great deal about the

[62] Erickson, *Women and Property,* p. 156.
[63] See UNMASC, NeD 88 and NeD 89 (Elizabeth Pierrepont acting as executrix for her husband William Pierrepont); Other female relations could also act as executrix such as Frances Spencer, daughter of Arabella, who was chosen as executrix by Margaret Holles (nee Cavendish): See NA, DD/4P/39/53, and Lady Elizabeth Pierrepont, sole executrix of her brother Gervase Pierrepont: See UNMASC, Ne D 38881/1-2.
[64] Vivienne Larminie, 'Marriage and the Family: The example of the Seventeenth Century Newdigates', *Midland History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1984), pp. 1-22.
[65] See NA, DD/4P/39/52, Probate will of John Holles, 1707.

marriage of the duke and duchess as well as the role of a widow in such situations. Frances was named by her husband as the executrix of his will and was thus central to the events that followed.[66] Custom and law dictated that the duke and duchess's only son Henry would have stood to inherit the vast Cavendish estate and title. However, as Erickson has observed, 'early and frequent death' often made the seamless transfer of titles and property via the male line unlikely, and following Henry's untimely death in 1680, the line of succession was in doubt.[67] Under the system of primogeniture, lands were to be split equally between daughters in the absence of sons.[68] Individuals were, however, at liberty to bypass this system by settlement or will if they so wished.[69] Such was the case with the duke, who instead of dividing his estate equally between his remaining children, made his third and favourite daughter Margaret sole heir, excluding his other daughters. His decision to settle the estate on Margaret and her husband caused great upheaval within the family, eventually leading to a contestation of the will by his son-in-law, the Earl of Thanet, husband of rebuffed daughter Katherine. John Addy in his examination of disputed wills brought to the consistory courts from 1660-1750, has suggested that cases such as these reveal family relationships at this time to be rife with the sins of greed and envy.[70] The presence and portrayal of such emotions will be discussed with regards to the case of the duke's will, with a particular focus on how this was managed by the duchess.

The first indications that the duke did not plan to split his estate equally among his daughters can be found in the following statement penned in October of 1686:

> In my Paper writ in Feb: 85 I lamented the loss of a sonn, and that I esteemed it my duty to keepe up the memory of my Father and Grandfather for they made their family; and that I

[66] UNMASC, Pw1/289, Copy draft of will for Duke of Newcastle, 26 May 1691.
[67] Erickson, *Women and Property*, p. 5.
[68] Erickson, *Women and Property,* p. 26.
[69] Lloyd Bonfield, 'Review of Eileen Spring, *Law, Land, and Family: Aristocratic Inheritance in England, 1300-1800*', *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 100, No. 2 (April 1995), p. 514.
[70] John Addy, *Death, Money and the Vultures: Inheritance and Avarice 1660-1750* (Routledge: London, 1992), p. 55.

> would keepe my Estate as much together as I could. I am in Great Greif seeing my wife endeavour to have my great estate divided amongst my daughters.[71]

It is evident that the duke's intentions to keep his estate whole predate this statement, seemingly coinciding with the death of his daughter Frances and the son she was carrying. His decision was clearly already beginning to sow the seeds of conflict between himself and the duchess. Within the same statement he continues to refer to the disagreement, declaring that he would not be persuaded by his wife to change his mind. As discussed in Chapter Two, he also stated at this point that his wife had previously enjoyed too great a share of power in previous decisions, suggesting that she had been the key instigator in arranging marriages for their children and claiming that he did only as she directed.[72] Regardless of the truth of this statement, it is evident that the duke felt that his wife had previously exercised too much control in family decisions, and that in the case of his will he wished to have the final say. Such was the extent of the conflict between the duke and duchess that he expressed that he did not intend to make his wife executrix of his will at this time, seemingly not trusting that she would honour his wishes.[73]

The inability of the couple to come to an agreement on this matter came to a head in April of 1687, leading to their temporary separation from bed and board. Their conflict was well known among family and friends, with the cause thought to be their disagreement over proposed marriage arrangements for Margaret. Correspondence between the duke and duchess, however, suggests that the dispute was also in part due to their differing opinions over the disposal of the estate. The duke wrote to his wife during their separation expressing the following sentiments:

> I see as I have done some time you would have me to extinguish the memory of my Father to divide my estate amongst my daughters and not give it a grandson of mine that shall beare My name This is the Quarell between us, and not that you pretend it is.[74]

---

[71] UNMASC, Pw1/285, Duke of Newcastle copy of considerations upon making his will, 20 October 1686.
[72] UNMASC, Pw1/285, Duke of Newcastle copy of considerations upon making his will, 20 October 1686.
[73] UNMASC, Pw1/285, Duke of Newcastle copy of considerations upon making his will, 20 October 1686.
[74] NA, DD/4P/35/155, Duke of Newcastle to the Duchess of Newcastle, 1 April 1687.

It is evident that the duke and duchess were at odds with each other on this topic, with the duke being driven by concerns regarding the lineage of his family name. Following the death of his only son the duke was anxious for a grandson upon whom to settle his estate and pass on his title, and such wishes were clearly governing his actions at this point.

The duchess returned to Welbeck following this period of conflict, however neither she nor the duke changed their views regarding the disposal of his estate, and it continued to cause unease even during the period of illness leading up to his death. Despite the disagreement between them, however, the duke was also comforted by his wife's presence during his illness. In a letter to a friend in October of 1690, he expressed how 'exceedingly joyed' he was to have his wife with him and the 'great comfort' that this gave him.[75] This was evidently seen by the duke as a reconciliation of sorts, as in his final will written in May of 1691 he made his 'deare wife Frances' his sole executrix, seemingly trusting at this point that despite their differences she would not attempt to overturn his decision.[76] Nevertheless, he was unmoved by his wife's arguments and his will remained a point of contention between them up to his death. The duchess referenced the conflict between them in a letter to her daughter Katherine following the duke's death, outlining how it added to her grief at this time:

> My hart is full of greefe not only for my ireparable loss which I wonder I have bin able to bare but for the seeds of ill will betweene my 3 good daughters is sowne by the deed and will thare father has left bee hind him.[77]

It is evident that the duchess was much affected by the death of her husband, voicing both her grief and her difficulties in coping with it. Her reference to 'three daughters' is of particular interest. Whilst Arabella, Katherine and Margaret are all shown to have been involved with and affected by

[75] NA, DD/4P/35/155, Duke of Newcastle to Patricius Crow, 8 October 1690.
[76] UNMASC, Pw1/289, Copy draft of will for Duke of Newcastle, 26 May 1691.
[77] UNMASC, Pw1/422, Duchess of Newcastle to Earl of Thanet and Katherine Cavendish, c. 1691.

the aftermath of the duke's will, his eldest daughter Elizabeth is notably absent. She is rarely referred to in either family correspondence or official court documents regarding the case, being deemed at this point incapable of 'managing any estate' due to her deteriorating mental state, and thus not entertained as a possible inheritor.[78] The resulting conflict between the duchess's other daughters, however, clearly added to her troubles following the death of her husband. Indeed, the duchess later recalled how the dispute made her grief on the duke's death more manageable, writing to her daughter Arabella that it 'made mee bare the loss of him better and with more patience then ever I could have dun'.[79] As with earlier discussions regarding grief, there could also be an element of performativity to the duchess's statements. Women were deemed less naturally inclined to be able to control their emotions and were expected during this period to portray grief for their husbands. Thus, despite her anger at the duke regarding the situation, the duchess would not have wished to be seen as lacking in the display of her mourning.

The issues surrounding the Duke of Newcastle's will also demonstrate the potential authority of an elite woman both as a wife and a widow. Prior to her husband's death the duchess was approached by the rebuffed Earl of Thanet to put his case forward to the duke. Despite Thanet's apparent confidence in the duchess's influence on her husband, however, her attempts to change the duke's mind on his behalf were met with censure and she later recalled how 'my Lord Duke always took it very ill when I intermedled about his ^disposeing of his^ estate'.[80] She did, however, continue to appeal to her husband to not completely break the bonds with his daughter and son-in-law, and in her deposition recounted how she begged the duke 'upon my knees and with

[78] E.F Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle* (London: J Murray, 1915), pp. 342-343.
[79] UNMASC, Pw1/423, Duchess of Newcastle to Arabella Cavendish, c.1691.
[80] UNMASC, Pw1/311, Draft statement of Duchess of Newcastle concerning the will of Henry Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, 1691.

teares' to remain civil to Thanet.[81] Katherine also wrote to her mother for support following attempts to reach her father which had fallen on deaf ears. Hoping to appeal to her mother's affection for her, she asked the duchess to 'endeavour to reconsile all things as they ought to be', although this was also to no avail.[82] However, it was following the death of her husband that the influence of the duchess was arguably most strong, and this was noted by her youngest daughter Arabella. Overlooked by her father's wishes, Arabella seemingly planned to join forces with her sister Katherine and brother-in-law Thanet to overturn the will.[83] She was evidently aware of the potential power of the duchess, however, and on the day of her father's death she wrote to Thanet stating, 'my mother I am afraid will doe all in her power to doe us what injury she cann'.[84] As sole executrix, the dowager duchess was afforded a great deal of responsibility in this matter, a role she seemingly took very seriously. Despite the disagreement between herself and the duke on this subject, the duchess honoured his wishes and did all in her power to ensure that his requests were fulfilled. As well as a wish to follow her late husband's request, the position of the duchess in this matter was also guided by her hopes of avoiding any further dispute among her children.

The conflict between the sisters caused by her late husband's will necessitated practical action on the part of the duchess to negotiate the resulting emotional fallout, as well as to ensure the good social standing of the family. Letters were written to both Arabella and Katherine entreating them to abandon the case, with the duchess utilising both practical and emotional arguments. The financial importance of maintaining bonds with Margaret was highlighted to both daughters. Margaret and her husband had not yet had any children, and as such both Katherine and Arabella

[81] UNMASC, Pw1/311, Draft statement of Duchess of Newcastle concerning the will of Henry Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, 1691.
[82] NA, DD/4P/35/155, Katherine Cavendish to the Duchess of Newcastle, 1 July 1691.
[83] See: UNMASC, Pw1/308, Arabella Cavendish to Katherine Cavendish, 23 September 1691.
[84] UNMASC, Pw1/309, Arabella Cavendish to the Earl of Thanet, 26 July 1691.

potentially stood to inherit. The duchess warned them both of the importance of remaining in favour with their sister writing:

> …you two sisters are her heires and will have all when the debts are Paid beetweene you therefore tis not wise in nether of you to disoblige her by blasting your fathers reputation now hee is dead or being unkind and uneasy with her or her husband.[85]

The duchess employed further practical tactics with Arabella through the promise of an advantageous marriage. This was a shrewd move as Arabella was at this time the only one of her siblings yet to secure a match. An alliance with Thanet and Katherine was also discouraged by the duchess, who outlined that Arabella was unlikely to benefit financially even if they did win the case. She wrote to her daughter stating, 'tis not reasonable you shoud ruin your selfe for if you trust in your brother-in-law the Earle of Thanets hands his estate is not soe good as your fathers and is intailed soe cannot be any good security to you'.[86] An entailed estate, settled upon the 'yet-unborn eldest son' of Thanet, would indeed have been of little benefit to Arabella, thus serving as a useful point in favour of abandoning the cause.[87] The use of this as a bargaining tool by the duchess underlines both her knowledge of Thanet's financial position as well as her willingness to utilise this information to achieve her aims, further emphasising her efforts in this case.

As well as outlining the practical concerns of inheritance and marriage prospects, the duchess also called upon both daughters to examine how their actions would reflect on themselves as well as the family. She related her fears of the impact such a public case would have on their standing, imploring Katherine and Arabella not to 'blast' the reputation and memory of their father, and by doing so 'dishonnor him in his grave'.[88] The personal morality of her daughters was also called into question and in her letter to Arabella she issued an ultimatum, stating 'I as a Mother

---

[85] UNMASC, Pw1/423, Duchess of Newcastle to Arabella Cavendish, c.1691.
[86] UNMASC, Pw1/423, Duchess of Newcastle to Arabella Cavendish, c.1691.
[87] Erickson, *Women and Property,* p. 102.
[88] UNMASC, Pw1/422, Duchess of Newcastle to Earl of Thanet and Katherine Cavendish, c. 1691; UNMASC, Pw1/423, Duchess of Newcastle to Arabella Cavendish, c.1691.

command you never to ofer it any such thing for if either you or your Sister Thanett doe you loose mee for I will never have mor to doe with either of you'.[89] Katherine was likewise issued an ultimatum by her mother, and warned that if she did not 'publickly disowne soe wicked a cause' she was 'not to com where either your sister Arabella and I am'.[90]

The actions of the duchess in this situation highlight the influence she had within her family both as a widow and a mother. Acting alone to attempt to quell the discord between her daughters and fulfil her role as executrix of her husbands will, the duchess displayed a great deal of authority within her correspondence. The use of both emotional and practical tactics, including the threat of disownment, suggesting that to defy her would be of detriment to her daughters, emphasises the position of authority she held as a mother and widow. It is evident that the influence the duchess held was understood both by herself and her family. Whilst her efforts seemingly influenced her youngest daughter Arabella who expressed that she did 'hartely repent' of her previous actions, Katherine remained unmoved and her and her husband Thanet subsequently raised a case against Margaret and her husband the Earl of Clare to contest the late duke's will.[91]

The charge raised by the Earl of Thanet was that the late duke was not in his right mind at the time of writing and signing the document, therefore lacking capacity.[92] Accusations of this kind, however, were difficult to prove either way, and courts were dependent on witness statements. Throughout the case many individuals were called upon to give their account of the duke's mental state prior to his death, ranging from family members and close friends to servants and tenants. All of the major players in the case provided lengthy testimonies, including the duchess and her

[89] UNMASC, Pw1/423, Duchess of Newcastle to Arabella Cavendish, c.1691.
[90] UNMASC, Pw1/421, Duchess of Newcastle to Katherine Cavendish, 9 September 1691.
[91] UNMASC, Pw1/308, Arabella Cavendish to Katherine Cavendish, 23 September 1691.
[92] In his study of cases of contested wills, Bonfield found that most were challenged on the grounds of either a lack of testamentary capacity, or undue influence on the testator. See Lloyd Bonfield, *Devising, Dying and Dispute: Probate Litigation in Early Modern England* (Routledge: Oxon, 2016), p. 81.

daughters. Emily Fine has explored the important role women could play in such proceedings in her examination of Mary Honywood's narration of the legal battles over her late father's estate.[93] She argues that this role was often obscured by official court documents, in which women were largely excluded.[94] Within this case, however, the women of the Cavendish family are represented both in personal correspondence as well as being called upon as testators for the court case itself. Both Katherine and Margaret appear in joint statements with their husbands, whilst Arabella and duchess were questioned individually.[95] Following the death of her husband a woman was no longer under coverture in the eyes of the law, thus afforded greater legal autonomy.[96] Additionally, despite not having the advantages of a widow, Arabella was at this point unmarried and therefore also able to provide her own testimony, in contrast to her sisters who appeared only in conjunction with their husbands.

Two deponents of particular interest in this case are the Earl of Breadalbane and his son, John Campbell, the widowed husband of the duke and duchess's daughter Frances. Campbell had been to visit the duke during his illness and spoke to him regarding his will at that time. He had seemingly shared information of this visit with others, stating that the duke was of sound mind and that he was clear in his plans to settle the estate on Margaret.[97]As such, he was a very valuable witness and both sides attempted to gain his favour in order to aid their case, even going as far as to offer financial incentives.[98] Both Campbell and his father Breadalbane eventually attested to the

[93] Emily Fine, '"The Law of thy Mother": Contesting Inheritance in Seventeenth-Century England', *English Literary Renaissance,* Vol. 51, No. 2, (Spring 2021), pp. 270-302.
[94] Fine, 'The Law of thy Mother', p. 270.
[95] See NA DD/4P/35/67, Joint testimony of Margaret Cavendish and John Holles, c. 1691; NA, DD/4P/35/63, Joint testimony of Katherine Cavendish and the Earl of Thanet; NA, DD/4P/35/64, Testimony of the Duchess of Newcastle, c. 1692; NA, DD/4P/35/65, Testimony of Arabella Cavendish, c. 1692.
[96] Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (Yale University Press: London, 2009), p. 199.
[97] NA, DD/4P/35/163, Copy memo of negotiations between John Holles and the Earl of Breadalbane re: vouching for the late duke's sanity, c. 1693/4.
[98] See UNMASC, Pw1/338, John Campbell to John Holles, 4 November 1692; UNMASC, Pw1/358, John Holles to Robert Murray, 26 June 1693; UNMASC, Pw1/364, unfinished letter from John Holles, c. July 1683.

sound mind of the duke at the time of making his will in their depositions, aiding Clare's case.[99] As previously explored, upon the death of her daughter Frances the duchess expressed a wish to maintain ties to the family. The involvement of both gentlemen in events surrounding the duke's will highlights that these links did indeed endure. For Campbell, a sustained relationship with the family of his deceased wife held potential financial incentives, as well as allowing him to maintain ties with other influential individuals in the extended network such as Thanet and Clare. For the duchess and Margaret who both intimated a wish for continued links upon the death of Frances, Campbell and Breadalbane proved to be useful allies when needed.

The contestation of the duke's will provides a great deal of information regarding the duke and duchess's marriage as well as the potential power and influence of an elite widow at this time. As executrix of her husband's will, the duchess was afforded a great deal of responsibility over his affairs. She also displayed her influence as a widow and mother in her attempts to persuade her daughters to drop the case. Using both practical and emotional tactics, it is evident that the duchess was determined to avoid the contestation, despite disagreeing with her husband during his lifetime. Also of particular interest in this case is the clash of emotions portrayed by the duchess. Whilst clearly affected by the unrest caused by his decision, Frances ultimately followed his wishes, suggesting that despite an apparent increase in power upon widowhood, the wishes of her husband still governed her actions. The anger the duchess felt both prior to and following her husband's death seemingly affected the way in which she experienced her grief, with suggestions to her daughters that his actions helped her to bear it better. Nevertheless, it is evident that she did still portray grief on his death, thus adhering to the emotional standards of the 'ideal widow' who mourned her husband and cherished his memory, entreating her daughters to afford him similar

[99] UNMASC, Pw1/338, John Campbell to John Holles, 4 November 1692; NA, DD/4P/35/94, Deposition of the Earl of Breadalbane, n.d.

respect in her calls for them to cease court action. Despite the efforts of Katherine and Thanet in both the Prerogative Court and subsequently via appeal through the Chancery, the will was not overturned, and the estate passed to Margaret and her husband, thus honouring the duke's wishes. Whilst the case inevitably damaged bonds between family members, not all ties were cut entirely. Arabella appears to have maintained a correspondence with her sister Margaret, and in 1694 reported that Katherine had been enquiring after the wellbeing of their mother.[100] As such, whilst the contestation of the will does reveal the 'sins of envy, hatred, pride and greed' as posited by Addy, this did not permanently break the familial bonds beyond recognition. The efforts of the duchess in particular can be seen as key in this, as well as the clear advantages to belonging to the Cavendish family and all the benefits that brought. In addition to providing useful information on the role and power of a widow, therefore, the case of the duke's will thus sheds light on the nature of familial bonds within elite circles, emphasising their importance and endurance.

Remarriage: Contemporary concerns

Following the death of one's spouse, there was of course the option of remarriage. At this time remarriage was entirely legal with few caveats. Indeed, as suggested by Gouge, widowed individuals were theoretically 'as free as they who were never before married'.[101] Allestree similarly highlighted the affirmation of the Apostle that, 'the wife when her husband is dead, is at liberty to be married to whom she will'.[102] However, despite being legally permissible, some contemporaries advised caution upon remarriage. Within the same passage Allestree also entreats widows to consider seriously whether remarriage would be the best choice, stating that 'marriage is so great an Adventure, that once seems enough for a whole life; for whether they have bin prosperous or adverse in the first, it

[100] BL, Add MS 70500, fol. 245, Arabella Cavendish to Margaret Cavendish, 8 May 1694.
[101] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 186.
[102] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 222.

does almost discourage a second attempt'.[103] Such cautions were particularly pertinent for widows, and during this period contemporaries raised multiple concerns regarding the remarriage of women. It has been suggested by Stephen Collins that the argument against the remarriage of women was presented in two ways; the highly idealised image of widowhood, and a 'ruthless criticism' of women who chose to remarry.[104] The ideal widow during this period was described as a woman who devoted herself to charity, piety and good works, and grieved for her husband, cherishing his memory.[105] Most importantly, however, as outlined in the entry for a 'good widow' in *The Ladies Dictionary,* she remained chaste and single after the death of her first husband.[106] Described by Vickery as the 'eternally faithful widow of male fantasy', the ideal during this period was of a woman who never remarried.[107] In contrast, women who did choose to remarry were presented unfavourably by contemporaries, featuring often as a comedic trope in early modern plays as 'foolish, pathetic creatures'.[108]

The distaste for widows remarrying was also found in the advice provided for men, in which they were warned against choosing such a woman as a bride. One of the most overt examples of this is found in Joseph Swetnam's popular text *The arraignment of lewd, idle froward, and unconstant women,* first published in 1617 under a pseudonym.[109] Swetnam warned men against marrying a widow in the following terms:

> Woe be unto the unfortunate man that matcheth himselfe unto a widdow; for a widdow will be the cause of a thousand woes… if shee be rich, shee will look to governe… for

---

[103] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 222.
[104] Stephen Collins, "A Kind of Lawful Adultery': English Attitudes to the Remarriage of Widows, 1550-1800', in Peter C. Jupp and Glennys Howart (eds.), *The Changing Face of Death: Historical Accounts of Death and Disposal* (Macmillan Press Ltd: London, 1997), p. 36.
[105] See N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary,* p. 481.
[106] N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary,* p. 481.
[107] Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors,* p. 204.
[108] Todd, 'The Remarrying Widow', p. 54; See also Jennifer Panek, *Women and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge University Press: 2004).
[109] The text was reprinted at least thirteen times in the seventeenth century alone, with a further five editions in the eighteenth century- See Cis van Heertum, 'Joseph Swetnam', *ODNB*, (September 2004).

> commonly widdowes are so froward, so waspish, and so stubborne, that thou canst not wrest them from their willes.[110]

This extract emphasises one of the main 'dangers' of marrying a widow; that she would look to govern and as such upset the patriarchal hierarchy of an ideal marriage. Todd has highlighted how the newfound independence of the role also exposed widows to censure as potential threats to the 'theoretical order' of early modern society.[111] Another text warning men against marrying a widow was Alexander Niccholes' *A discourse of Marriage and Wiving*, in which he stated that, 'At the decease of their first husbands, they learne commonly y^{e} trickes to turne ouer the second or third, and they are in league with death'. [112] As with the extract from Swetnam, it is evident that Niccholes is wary of the remarrying widow, going as far as to suggest that this might be to the detriment of the health of any man choosing one as his wife. Both Swetnam and Niccholes also outline fears regarding the 'trickes' or 'willes' of the remarrying widow. Such anxieties have similarly been discussed by Whyman in her study of the Verney family, in which she outlines how Sir Ralph Verney warned against marrying a widow, suggesting that 'widows cheat more than any'.[113] These fears surrounding the remarriage of widows appear closely linked with the perceived increase in freedoms and power they could have in comparison to women who had not yet entered into marriage. Statements regarding the self-government and forward nature of widows also feeds into a wider discussion regarding anxious patriarchy. Contemporaries were evidently unsure of the authority of husbands in being able to secure wifely obedience and respect from widows, emphasising the perceived limitations of patriarchal headship. As such, the discouragement of marrying widows both by

---

[110] Joseph Swetnam, *The arraignment of lewd, idle froward, and unconstant women* (London:1617), p. 59.
[111] Todd, 'The Remarrying Widow', p. 55.
[112] Alexander Niccholes, *A discourse of marriage and wiving* (London: 1615), p. 25.
[113] Susan E. Whyman, *Sociability and Power in Late-Stuart England: The Cultural World of the Verneys 1660-1720* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1999), p. 142.

prescriptive authors and members of the elite such as Sir Ralph served as a method by which to protect patriarchal authority within a marriage.

Marrying a widow was also discouraged within advice literature due to the potential of comparisons with her first husband. Allestree, for example, stated that, 'two good Husbands will scarce fall to one Womans share, and an ill one will become more intolerable to her, by the reflections she will be apt to make on the better'.[114] Of particular concern, Collins suggests, were comparisons of a sexual nature, further emphasising the importance of men marrying a maid as opposed to a widow.[115] The issue of comparison was not merely contained to widows, however, and within this study there are also examples of comparisons being drawn between a man's first wife and his second. Indeed, Elizabeth Percy's third husband the Duke of Somerset who remarried following her death reportedly lamented his new wife's lack of refinement when she laid a hand on his shoulder uninvited, exclaiming 'My first wife, who was a Percy, never presumed upon such a familiarity'.[116]

In spite of the concerns voiced by contemporaries, however, they were also aware of the limits of their influence in preventing or otherwise policing remarriage. Allestree, for example, conceded that, 'women (tho the weaker sex) have commonly fortitude enough to encounter and baffle all these considerations. It is not therefore to be expected that many will by any thing that hath or can be said be diverted from remarrying'.[117] Jennifer Panek in her study of the portrayals of the remarrying widow on stage has also questioned the extent to which such depictions discouraged women from getting married again, arguing that for many widows remarriage was 'not only a

---

[114] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 222.
[115] Collins, 'A Kind of Lawful Adultery', pp. 36-37.
[116] Ward, *Christopher Monck,* p. 130. This event is also referenced with slightly different wording in other texts such as Edmund Lodge, *Portraits of Illustrious Personages of Great Britain: Vol X,* 'Charles Seymour: Sixth Duke of Somerset', (London: 1835), p. 4: "Madam my first wife was a Percy, and she never took such a liberty".
[117] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 223.

common fact of life… but a socially, economically, and morally approved fact as well'.[118] Many elite women and men did indeed remarry, with some estimates contending that about twenty-five percent of individuals among the squirarchy and above married more than once in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[119] The remainder of this chapter will examine the remarriage of individuals within the Cavendish family network, exploring the differences and similarities with first matches with regards to both agency and motivating factors.

Agency in remarriage

Chapter Two demonstrated the extent to which family members were involved in arranging matches, finding that whilst individual choice over one's marital partner was strongly recommended within prescriptive literature, the decision often involved others. For remarriage the importance of the freedom of individuals to choose was once again highlighted by conduct writers. Many authors placed a higher emphasis on individual choice for widows and widowers, suggesting that there was less need for parental involvement upon remarriage. Daniel Rogers in his text *Matrimoniall Honour* outlined this increased freedom in second marriage stating:

> For although there be a difference of judgement in sexes, yet, in this both are reputed to have equall liberty to match themselves, and to be discharged from the power of the parent.[120]

Marriage brought with it many changes, one of which was a distancing from the influence of one's parents. Whilst married children could and often did continue to have a relationship with their parents, relying on them for practical and emotional support, they were no longer required to obey them in all matters. Evidently Rogers sees this liberation from parental influence as continuing even

[118] Panek, *Widows and Suitors In Early Modern English Comedy,* p. 11.
[119] Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 46.
[120] Rogers, *Matrimoniall Honour,* p. 78.

following the death of one's spouse. Such claims also add further weight to suggestions that being a widow was a time of increased independence for women; a period in which they were free from the authority of both husband and parents.

Many scholars have similarly argued that the new liberties afforded to widows resulted in a greater level of autonomy over their choice in subsequent matches. It has been suggested by Slater that in addition to the considerations of equality and suitability, 'only widows were in a position to choose a marriage partner on the basis of romantic inclination'.[121] Barclay, in her examination of Scottish marriages during this period, similarly asserts that 'once daughters married, they usually became independent of their parents, even if widowed at a young age'. [122] In particular Barclay highlights an example of a widowed countess who, despite seeking counsel from her family, chose her second husband on the basis of love, suggesting that even in the upper ranks of society, a widow could be afforded greater agency in her choice.[123] However, despite ultimately making the decision herself it is important to note that the countess first consulted her family. The independence of widows to remarry was not seen as absolute, with some conduct writers advising against acting with no external counsel from family members. Rogers, for example, despite professing that parental influence was not necessary, encouraged women to seek it nevertheless, stating:

> That it were the part of such widows to remember that they are children, and to ascribe a reverentiall and honourable esteeme of their parents counsell, out of wisedome and discretion, although a precise command of God doe not absolutely urge it.[124]

Evidently for Rogers, the new position of a widow did not diminish the bonds of respect she was expected to have towards her parents. Within the network under examination, parents continued to

---

[121] Miriam Slater, 'The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper- Gentry Family in Seventeenth- Century England', *Past and Present,* No. 72 (Aug., 1976), p. 51.
[122] Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2011), p. 75.
[123] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* p. 75.
[124] Rogers, *Matrimoniall Honour,* p. 79.

be of importance in the lives of their married children, providing advice and support when necessary. The bonds of child and parent were not irrevocably broken upon marriage and as such, although not specifically required, the advice and blessings of a widow's mother and father were desired in remarriage.

As with the arrangement of first matches, the level of familial involvement in remarriage was determined by a variety of factors, such as age and situation. For younger individuals it has been shown that they were likely to have little to no participation in their first matches. This is also reflected in remarriage, particularly in the case of Elizabeth Percy who was widowed at the age of just thirteen following the death of her first husband Henry Cavendish in 1680. As revealed in Chapter Two this match was arranged largely by her grandmother the Dowager Countess of Northumberland, with little input from Elizabeth herself. During this period both men and women were customarily considered independent at twenty-one, and Barclay has suggested that many families felt that their children should have a greater freedom of choice at this age.[125] In her first match to Henry Cavendish it was stipulated in the marriage contracts that Elizabeth would live with her grandmother up to the age of twenty-one, the legal age of majority during this period.[126] At thirteen years old, the widowed Elizabeth was thus far off an age at which she might be considered more able to make her own decisions, and as such her second match was once again arranged largely by others.

The man selected as her second husband was Thomas Thynne, a landowner known as 'Tom of Ten Thousand' due to his great wealth, who succeeded to the estate of Longleat in Wiltshire following the death of his uncle in 1670.[127] The details of this match and the personal affairs of the

[125] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* p. 75.
[126] UNMASC, Pl F3/1/6, Articles of agreement for the marriage settlement of the Henry Cavendish and Elizabeth Percy, 10 March 1679.
[127] Alan Marshall, 'Thomas Thynne', *ODNB,* (January 2008).

young heiress were seemingly well known and discussed within society at this time. This is highlighted in the following correspondence from Sir Charles Lyttleton to Christopher Hatton, first Viscount Hatton, in which he describes the period after the death of Henry Cavendish when Elizabeth was once again able to receive suitors:

> Tom Thinne… who, by ye way, lyes there to be wthin ye sent of my Lady Ogle, for he does not yet visit her, nor is like to doe so, till she comes hither, wch will be the last of this month, when her mourning is out.[128]

The reference here to Elizabeth's period of mourning is of particular interest. Tied into ideals regarding grief and widowhood, contemporaries were concerned with what constituted an appropriate amount of time between losing one's spouse and subsequent remarriage. Allestree, for example, suggested that 'common decency requires that there be a considerable intervall between the parting with one husband & the chusing another'.[129] A deviation from this ideal was heavily discouraged with Allestree stating:

> The wounds of grief are seldom heal'd by any hand but that of time, and therefore too sudden a cure shews the hurt pierc'd not deep; and she that can make her mourning veil an optic to draw a new lover neerer to her sight, gives cause to suspect the sables were all without.[130]

The emotional ideal of a 'good' widow at this time was one who cherished the memory of her husband by maintaining a strong yet controlled grief on his death. Remarrying too soon was evidently not seen as appropriate behaviour for a widow, calling into question the authenticity of the mourning for her first husband. In the case of Elizabeth Percy, however, Lyttleton went on to report that potential suitors were welcomed almost immediately following the end of her mourning period, stating:

---

[128] Letter to Christopher Hatton from Sir Charles Lyttelton, October 1681, Edward Maunde Thompson (ed.), *Correspondence of The Family of Hatton: Being chiefly letters addressed to Christopher First Viscount Hatton* (Printed for the Camden Society: 1878), p. 8.
[129] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling*, p. 223.
[130] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 224.

> Ye next day sheele open her doores to all pretenders; tho' I think it is scarce to be doubted but she has entertained Mr Thin's addresses by 3[d] hands, and is farr to ingaged to him to receive any other.[131]

As with her first match, Elizabeth was an attractive prospect for any potential husband, being a very wealthy heiress with good family connections. This report implies that many gentlemen at this time were entertaining ideas of pursuing the young widow, however it is clear that Tom Thynne was the frontrunner for her hand. Lyttleton's account also highlights the involvement of others within the organisation of the match, suggesting that Elizabeth herself had only received information via third parties. Negotiations carried out in this way were not necessarily about denying personal agency, but also served to keep financial aspects separate from the individuals to be married, thus protecting their reputations. This was particularly important if the proposed match did not come to fruition. In this case, the efforts of these unnamed individuals were evidently successful and Thynne and Elizabeth were married in July of 1681, less than a year after the death of her first husband.[132]

The marriage, however, did not prove to be a happy one with Elizabeth fleeing the country without her husband mere months after the wedding. Slipping away whilst under her grandmother's care, she went to Holland under the protection of Lady Temple, wife to the ambassador there.[133] The precise reasons for this departure are unknown, however, some sources suggest it was due to a duplicity regarding the arrangement of the marriage itself. Lyttelton wrote to Hatton stating:

> The King sayd she had bine unworthily and basely betrayd by her friends. They say she raild much at them of late to some she durst trust, in that they have abused her in making her beeleve he had 20,000 a yeare, was of a better family, and but 23 yeares old.[134]

Such reports suggest more than merely a lack of agency afforded to Elizabeth within this match, implying that she was deceived by those close to her into accepting Thynne. The ways in which

---

[131] Letter to Christopher Hatton from Sir Charles Lyttelton, October 1681, *Correspondence of The Family of Hatton*, p. 8.
[132] Marshall, 'Thomas Thynne'.
[133] Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* p. 129.
[134] Letter to Christopher Hatton from Sir Charles Lyttelton, October 1681, *Correspondence of The Family of Hatton*, pp. 8-9.

Elizabeth was misinformed also outline the potential motivating factors in this match, namely financial considerations, and an equality of age. Suggestions that Elizabeth had been deceived regarding Thynne's wealth highlights the economic importance of the match on both sides, with a lack of finances serving as a potential factor for her desertion. An equality of age was also evidently of some degree of importance in this case. Born in 1647, Thynne was forty-four on the occasion of their marriage, thirty years older than Elizabeth.[135] Whilst the validity of claims that he lied about his age cannot be proven, the very suggestion of this deceit emphasises both the importance of equality in age and of moral character, both of which were also seen within the discussion of first marriages.

There were additionally concerns that he was not free to marry Elizabeth at all, with rumours circulating that he was previously contracted to marry the daughter of Lady Trevor.[136] It is reported that Elizabeth attempted to have the marriage annulled on account of it having not been consummated prior to her departure to Holland.[137] Indeed, Lyttleton reported that Thynne had 'never layn wth her since he was married, not so much as spoken to her, nay, scarce seen her, and says she never will'.[138] The unhappy state of the marriage was well known, even coming to the attention of the court, with the Earl of Anglesey directly addressing the young heiress in January of 1682 regarding the abandonment of her husband. Elizabeth responded to these objections in a manner beyond her years stating, 'there may be more sin and shame in people's living together than parting'.[139] The marriage was not annulled as wished for by Elizabeth, instead ending abruptly on the 12th of February of the same year when Thynne was murdered in London. The blame for this event was widely attributed to Count Koningsmark, who on meeting Elizabeth in Holland was supposedly

---

[135] Marshall, 'Thomas Thynne'.
[136] Letter to Christopher Hatton from Sir Charles Lyttelton, October 1681, *Correspondence of The Family of Hatton*, pp. 8-9.
[137] John Reresby, *The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, Bart., M.P For York, &c. 1634-1689 written by himself, edited from the original manuscript By James J. Cartwright* (Longmans, Green, and Co: London, 1875), 2 January 1682, p. 230.
[138] Letter to Christopher Hatton from Sir Charles Lyttelton, October 1681, *Correspondence of The Family of Hatton*, p. 9.
[139] Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles II, January 1682, Originally published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, (London: 1932), accessed at https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/chas2/1682/pp1-51, [accessed 03/04/2021].

determined to marry the heiress himself and thus sent men to dispatch Thynne.[140] Three men were hanged for his murder, however, Count Koningsmark himself escaped punishment with diarist John Evelyn suggesting he was 'aquitted by a corrupt jury'.[141]

Despite the notoriety of these affairs, it appears that the reputation of Elizabeth was not irrevocably tarnished. Now widowed for the second time at the age of just fifteen, a third and final match was organised to Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset. Interestingly as with her first match to Henry Cavendish, it was again stipulated that upon their marriage Somerset would take her name of Percy. However, after reaching the age of twenty-one Elizabeth agreed to rescind the earlier agreement, taking her husband's name.[142] Aged twenty upon their marriage in 1682, Somerset had inherited the dukedom in 1675 following the death of his brother, thus bringing both rank and position to the marriage, which combined with Elizabeth's great wealth set the couple up for prominence.[143] Despite the clear advantages to such a match on both sides, the marriage was widely known to be an unhappy one. Accounts such as the *Bishop Burnet's History of his own Time* recounted how Elizabeth's immense wealth had 'occasioned great misfortunes to herself and other people…concluding in her being married to the Duke of Somerset, who treated her with little gratitude or affection, though he owed all he had, except an empty title to her'.[144] Nevertheless, the marriage was long lived with the couple having at least seven children before Elizabeth's death in 1722. Somerset remarried four years later at the age of sixty-three, to the fourteen-year-old Lady Charlotte Finch, having a further two children.[145]

---

[140] Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle*, p. 129; Reresby, *Memoirs of John Reresby,* pp. 259-261.
[141] Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles II, January 1682; John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn: Volume 3,* Austin Dobson (ed.) (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2015), p. 81.
[142] Arthur Collins, *The Peerage of England; Containing A Genealogical and Historical Account of all the Peers of England- Vol. IV* (London: 1755), p. 192.
[143] R.O Bucholz, 'Charles Seymour, sixth duke of Somerset', *ODNB,* (May 2008).
[144] Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of his own time: with the supressed passages of the first volume: Volume VI* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press: 1823), pp. 31-32.
[145] Bucholz, 'Charles Seymour'.

The remarriages of Elizabeth Percy highlight that despite being a widow, she did not enjoy the freedoms described by prescriptive authors. This was likely due to her young age during the arrangement of all her matches, entering her final marriage before she had even reached her sixteenth birthday. As such, both her second and third matches were organised largely by others with little input from Elizabeth herself. Within her second marriage, however, it is clear that Elizabeth endeavoured to make her feelings known through both her escape to Holland and her attempts at annulment. Her response to objections raised at court additionally demonstrates a certain level of independence and autonomy over her own affairs. The importance of wealth and status, and in particular the lure of an heiress, is also shown in her remarriages. As with her first match to Henry Cavendish, she was an attractive prospect to suitors, with even the scandal attached to the death of her second husband not serving to hinder a further remarriage. Wealth was evidently also of importance to Elizabeth and her family when selecting a prospective husband, with the reported lies surrounding Thynne's fortune perhaps serving as part of the reason for her retreat to Holland. The gossip surrounding the marriages of Elizabeth, in particular statements suggesting that she moved on too quickly following the death of her first husband, highlights that although permitted, the remarriage of elite widows at this time could be subject to scrutiny.

Motivations for remarriage

It has been shown that there were multiple motivations for elite individuals upon first marriages, which could be condensed into a general wish to advance themselves and their family. The importance of equality in a match has additionally been emphasised, with regards to factors such as rank, age, and wealth. Such concerns can also be seen within the remarriages of individuals within the Cavendish family network. Allestree, in his discussion on the "cautions" that must be observed

in remarriage, similarly outlined the importance of equality within the match.[146] 'Marriage is so close a link', suggests Allestree, that 'to have it easy 'tis good to have the parties as even proportion'd as may be'.[147] However, as with first marriages, it was not always equality that motivated a match, but a hope of advancing one's own position, with rank and making good connections also being of great importance when selecting a prospective spouse for remarriage. A useful example of this is found in the remarriage arrangements for Charles Spencer, husband to the duke and duchess's youngest daughter Arabella Cavendish. Married for just three years prior to Arabella's death in 1698, the couple had one surviving daughter, Frances Spencer. His first marriage to Arabella had provided him with useful connections as well as wealth, and these considerations were evidently of similar importance upon remarriage.

A match was organised between Charles and Lady Anne Churchill, the daughter of John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough.[148] Charles was a politically ambitious man, entering the House of Commons in 1695 with a strong loyalty to the Whig party.[149] John Churchill was a figure of importance within both court and government, being appointed to privy council and made a cabinet minister in 1698.[150] Anne's mother Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, was similarly well connected, being a close confidante of the future Queen Anne.[151] The benefits of such a match are evident, and as with his marriage to Arabella this was organised largely by his parents, with his mother and father both taking active roles in the process. The following letter from Charles's father, the 2nd Earl of Sunderland to his sister Mrs Boscawen, who was also involved in the proceedings, outlines the motivations behind the match:

---

146 Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 223.
147 Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 224.
148 Henry L. Snyder, 'Charles Spencer, third earl of Sunderland', *ODNB,* (May 2006).
149 Snyder, 'Charles Spencer'.
150 John. B. Hattendorf, 'John Churchill, first duke of Marlborough', *ODNB,* (May 2014).
151 James Falkner, 'Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough', *ODNB,* (Jan 2008).

> If I see him so settled, I shall desire nothing more in this world but to die in peace, if it please God. I must add this, that if he can be thus happy, he will be governed in every thing public and private by lord Marlborough. I have particularly talked to him of that, and he is sensible how advantageous it will be to him to be so.[152]

As with first matches, there are wishes for future happiness within the marriage, suggesting that this continued to be of importance for parents and other family members upon remarriage. The importance of close ties with one's new in-laws is also emphasised here. It is evident that the advantageous nature of a link with Churchill through a marriage between his daughter and Charles is of importance to Sunderland. The benefits of such a connection were seemingly intimated to Charles himself, highlighting that whilst not at the centre of these negotiations, his approval was sought. At the time of Arabella's death Charles was aged twenty-three, and as such theoretically able to be afforded more freedom in his own decisions.[153] Nevertheless, it is clear that despite being consulted, this marriage was organised largely by his parents.

However, despite the clear benefits of the match on the part of the Spencer family, Anne's parents were initially unconvinced and it is reported that they voiced some objections, the chief of these being the supposed 'coldness and indifference' of Charles to their daughter.[154] Within the memoirs of Anne's mother, the Duchess of Marlborough, it is suggested that Spencer was still mourning the death of Arabella, whom he 'idolised' with 'all the depth of feeling, and tenacity of a man of strong passions, and reserved nature'.[155] The duchess was said to have been uneasy at the prospect of her daughter marrying someone who did not love her and who still felt such affection for his first wife.[156] As previously demonstrated, Charles displayed a great deal of affection for Arabella in his letters to her family members both prior to and during their marriage. Indeed, during

---

[152] Lord Sunderland to Mrs Boscawen, 31 December n.y., Marlborough papers, found in William Coxe, *Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough, Volume 1* (London: 1818), p. 74.
[153] Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power,* p. 75.
[154] A. Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, Volume II* (London: 1839), p. 288.
[155] Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, p. 288.
[156] Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, p. 289.

her pregnancy he suggested that if she fell ill, he would be the 'miserablest man in ye world'.[157] It seems that this affection continued following her death to the extent that it was noted by the parents of his second wife, nearly serving as a hindrance to the match taking place. Not only does this further emphasise the depth of feeling Charles had for Arabella, but it also suggests that Anne's parents hoped that their daughter would marry someone who loved her, further highlighting the importance of non-economic factors for parents when securing a match for their child.

Whilst grief upon the death of a spouse was expected during this period, men were advised to temper and control their emotions. As such, the behaviour of Charles on this occasion raised concerns for his future marriage prospects. Such objections also highlight the potential for comparisons with one's first spouse. It is clear that Anne's parents were wary of their daughter having to compete with the affection Charles had for his first wife Arabella. Their objections appear to have been short lived, however, with Charles reported to have 'yielded to the loveliness and youthful graces of the Lady Anne' coming to 'not only tolerate but cherish, the idea of a second marriage'.[158] Subsequently, after a series of negotiations reported to have lasted eighteen months, the pair were married in January 1700.[159] The couple were married for sixteen years, having three sons and two daughters between them, thus providing Charles with a male heir. Upon the death of Anne in 1716 Charles married one final time to Judith Tichborne with whom he had a further three children, though none lived past the age of two.[160] Nevertheless, through his marriage with Anne, Charles had safeguarded his family line, and his titles were subsequently passed to their son Robert Spencer, 4th Earl of Sunderland.

[157] BL, Add MS 70500, fol. 325, Charles Spencer to John Holles, September 24 1695.
[158] Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, p. 289.
[159] Coxe, *Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough*, p. 76.
[160] Snyder, 'Charles Spencer'.

The continuation of the male line was indeed a motivating factor for both men and women within the Cavendish family network when considering remarriage. If an individual's first marriage had not resulted in a male heir, remarriage provided another opportunity to secure the lineage. The importance of producing an heir as a motivation for remarriage has been discussed by Pollock who recounts the calls of Charles Hatton that his brother Christopher remarry so that, 'several branches will spring forth from your loin which will give sap and verdure to the ancient though decayed stock of our family'.[161] Such concerns for the continuation of the family line are also seen within this study, with the Duke of Newcastle reported to have 'desired his daughter the Duchess of Albemarle after the death of her late husband the Duke of Albemarle to marry again that she might have children'.[162] Her first marriage with Christopher Monck had not resulted in any surviving children and the duke was at this point in time without a male heir. As such a potential remarriage for Elizabeth would potentially benefit not only herself, but also her wider family.

Upon the death of his wife Frances Cavendish, John Campbell was similarly left widowed without a child at the age of twenty-nine. At this point he was himself the sole heir to his father's title and estate, thus the birth of a son to inherit would have been of utmost importance to both him and other family members. The death of Frances mere months prior to her father, the Duke of Newcastle, had also deprived Campbell and his father, the Earl of Breadalbane and Holland, of any potential fortune she would have inherited. Although as discussed, the estate was to go to Margaret as sole heir, the Campbells would have still felt the financial blow of being denied any of Frances's inheritance. At this point the finances of the family were in peril, with ruin avoided only through large scale sales of land, known as the 'Caithness bargains'.[163] Thus an advantageous match for

---

[161] Linda Pollock, 'Review: 'An Action Like a Stratagem' Courtship and Marriage from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century', *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 30, No.2 (June, 1987), p. 495.
[162] NA, DD/4P/35/95, Deposition of Sir Henry Monson of Burton re: contestation of the late duke's will, n.d
[163] See NRS, GD112/39/153/25; GD112/39/154/1; GD112/39/154/4; GD112/39/154/8; GD112/39/154/10-11, GD112/39/154/15; GD112/39/154/19-20; GD112/39/155/8-9, 26 September 1691- 14 November 1691.

Campbell would have been of great importance to both him and his family at this time. As with his marriage to Frances, Campbell's second match was organised largely by his father. The following letter from the earl to a family member referred to as Carwhin in March of 1692 provides the first indications of potential arrangements, as well as outlining some of the factors deemed of importance:

> I had yesterday a proposal made by a relation of his a person of qualitie, for a match to him wt a young comly widow Lady Labry 1200 a year whereof 600 is in her name.[164]

As suggested, it is likely that a match was at least in part hoped to improve the financial situation of the family, and this is supported by the discussion of what Lady Labry was able to bring to the marriage. The woman in question is also widowed, further emphasising that, at least for elite individuals, the contemporary rhetoric surrounding the dangers of marrying widows did not overshadow other factors, such as wealth and rank. As well as outlining her financial situation, the earl also describes the woman in question as a 'person of qualitie' and 'comly', further suggesting that, as found in the examination of first matches, factors other than economic standing were of note when choosing a potential spouse for remarriage. However, the earl did have some concerns regarding this potential match, writing:

> My scrouple at this is (supposing all satiscfaction to parties) that it will not answer my designe of Money to clear off the remaining incumbrances & particularly yt of ye provision, for ther is ane other match in prospect of one Earls daughter a maid wt 8 thousand if not ten shee is a near cusine to the last & of 26 years of Age.[165]

Evidently, the financial situation of the lady in question was not deemed good enough to suit the earl's specific purposes, leading him to suggest an alternative match that was more beneficial in terms of both rank and wealth. This letter also adds weight to previous suggestions that maids were in general preferred over widows, however, this appears to be simply one aspect working in her

[164] NRS, GD112/39/159/4, Earl of Breadalbane to Carwhin, 5 March 1692.
[165] NRS, GD112/39/159/4, Earl of Breadalbane to Carwhin, 5 March 1692.

favour rather than the deciding factor. As previously highlighted, widowed status was not deemed a barrier by the earl, with other factors such as wealth arguably holding more weight. Neither of these proposed matches came to fruition, however, and in 1695, four years after the death of Frances, John was married to Henrietta Villiers, daughter of Sir Edward Villiers. Despite being lower in rank than his first wife, this was a prudent match with Henrietta providing an £8000 portion and important court connections through her father.[166] The marriage resulted in three children, including a son who would go on to inherit the title, becoming the 3rd Earl of Breadalbane and Holland.[167]

For both Charles Spencer and John Campbell, remarriage was seen as a necessity, both to secure a male heir as well as to advance their own positions or finances. Both men, despite being above the age of being deemed capable of making their own decisions, had their second matches organised largely by their parents or other family members. However, when compared to Elizabeth Percy, arguably more agency was given to Charles, who was evidently included in the discussions regarding his match. Whilst, as suggested within the conduct literature, there were differences regarding the ideals of how much independence from one's parents was afforded to women following marriage as opposed to men, on this occasion the difference is likely to stem from Elizabeth's young age at the time of her marriages. Nevertheless, both Charles and John were guided by their parents in their second matches. The motivations for their marriages are similar to those upon their first matches, determined by concerns of rank, fortune and family position. For John these concerns were heavily influenced by the needs and wants of his father who was key in arranging his match. The Earl of Breadalbane required money to prop up a failing estate and thus the financial position of any prospective bride for his son was of utmost importance. Whilst

[166] Paul Hopkins, 'John Campbell, first earl of Breadalbane and Holland', *ODNB,* (Jan 2008). See NRS GD112/3/83 for marriage contract and memoranda regarding Harriet's portion, c. 1695.
[167] T.F Henderson, revised by Janey Sorensen, 'John Campbell, third earl of Breadalbane and Holland', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004).

Charles's father, the 2nd Earl of Sunderland, was undoubtedly keen to make an advantageous match for his son, Charles himself was also very politically ambitious and as such would have similarly wished for a match which provided such useful links.

Wealthy widows and fortune hunters

As highlighted in the remarriages of both Elizabeth and John, a wealthy widow was seen as an attractive prospect for men and their families. During this period, however, there were fears regarding wealthy widows being taken advantage of by unscrupulous men wishing to take control of their fortune. Allestree warned his readers of this, stating:

> There have bin many examples of Lords, who have used rich, but inferior, widows like spunges, squeeze'd them to fill themselves again only with the air of a big name.[168]

However, the blame for this was not solely placed on the men pursuing wealthy widows, but also the women who were taken in by them. Closely linked to the unflattering portrayals of the remarrying widow in general, women were warned against being lured in by younger men who were only interested in their wealth. Such matches would render them, as Collins has suggested, not only immodest, but ludicrous.[169] *The Ladies Dictionary* emphasised the dangers of this in comparison with men who married women much younger than themselves:

> Widdows who for the most part are at their own discretion to chuse, rarely make such Elections, commonly the inequality falling on the other side; they to satisfy their Desires, Allure young Men to them with their Riches, yet soon see their Folly in doing it, and are punished.[170]

The remarriage of wealthy widows was thus evidently a cause of concern for contemporaries, with the potential to reflect poorly on the morality of both the woman in question and any man who

[168] Allestree, *The Ladies Calling,* p. 225.
[169] Collins, 'A Lawful Kind of Adultery', p. 38.
[170] N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary,* p. 486.

aimed to take advantage of her fortune. Within these warnings is an overriding theme of questionable judgement on the part of the widow, especially if she was acting independently without the involvement of her parents.

One example of the potential for foul play in pursuit of a wealthy widow is found in the remarriage of Elizabeth Cavendish, daughter to the 2nd Duke and Duchess of Newcastle. She had reportedly suffered with mental instability throughout her adult life, with John Reresby writing as early as 1683 that he had heard of the 'sad news that the Duchess of Albemarle was gone distracted'.[171] Following the death of her husband Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle in 1688, Elizabeth's mental state reportedly deteriorated further. Known to society at this time as the 'mad duchess' she supposedly declared that her next match would be to a monarch.[172] Her marriage to Albemarle had left her a very wealthy woman, and thus an attractive prospect to any fortune seekers, such as Sir Ralph Montagu. Previously married to the widowed Countess of Northumberland, mother to Elizabeth Percy, Montagu himself was widowed when his wife died in childbirth in 1690.[173] Unlike Charles Spencer and John Campbell, Montagu's first marriage had provided him with a male heir, thus the continuation of his lineage was not the main driving factor in his plans to remarry. Despite increasing his wealth upon his first marriage, Montagu was in need of extra funds, with plans at this time to rebuild his mansion in Bloomsbury which had been destroyed by a fire in 1686, causing an estimated £40,000 worth of damage.[174] Setting his sights on Elizabeth, Montagu was reported to have taken advantage of her diminished mental capacity at this time to secure the match. Multiple sources state that in order to woo the 'mad duchess', he appeared before her in the

[171] Reresby, *Memoirs of John Reresby,* 13 December 1682, p. 265.
[172] Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, p. 11.
[173] Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* p. 129.
[174] George Agar Ellis, *The Ellis Correspondence: Letters written during the years 1686, 1687, 1688* (London: 1829), pp. 25-26.

guise of the Emperor of China, thus fulfilling her requirements for a husband of royal status.[175] There are also variations on this story such as George Agar Ellis in his notes accompanying the Ellis Correspondence published in 1829, in which he claimed that Elizabeth was 'determined to marry none but the Grand Turk' and that it was in Turkish dress that Montagu successfully wooed the duchess.[176] Regardless of the exact truth of these accounts, Montagu was indeed successful in his attempts, marrying Elizabeth in September of 1692.[177]

Unlike the remarriages examined thus far, it appears that in the case of Elizabeth's match to Montagu she did not receive familial support or advice. Whilst widows were thought to have more agency in second marriages, the complete lack of intervention from her family is surprising, especially given her known mental instability at the time. Following her first marriage, her family were still an importance presence in her life, providing her and her husband with both emotional and practical support on multiple occasions. As such, the lack of interference in the dubious circumstances leading to her second match appear at odds to the previous behaviour of the family. However, in her mid-thirties, upon the death of her first husband, Elizabeth was far above the age of supposed independence and as such could have been deemed as needing less familial interference. It is also of note that the arrangements for this match would have been taking place at a similar time to the contestation of the duke's will, with much of Elizabeth's family being heavily involved in this. Thus, in addition to being without her father who had seemingly taken a great interest in her affairs in her first marriage, Elizabeth's mother was preoccupied, with other matters taking up a great deal of her time and efforts. It is also possible that her family was not made fully aware of the connection

---

175 Edward Charles Metzger 'Ralph Montagu, first duke of Montagu', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004); Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle*, p. 344-345; Francis Bickley, *The Cavendish Family* (London: 1911), p. 141; Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, p. 11.
176 Ellis, *Ellis Correspondence,* pp. 294-295.
177 Metzger 'Ralph Montagu'.

between Elizabeth and Montagu before it was too late. Indeed, the following letter from the Earl of Thanet, Elizabeth's brother-in-law, to Montagu suggests that he was largely ignorant of the situation:

> The news of your Lordship's marriage was not more surprising than pleasing to me since I am certaine it will on all accounts bee extreamely to the satisfaction of my Lady Duchesse and all her relations that wishe her prosperitye and mee in particular who shall desire on all occations to expresse myself your Lordships most humble servant.[178]

Despite his apparent surprise, Thanet appears to suggest that Elizabeth's family would be well pleased with the match. However, as the marriage had already been formalised, these sentiments may well have been a matter of convention and a wish to utilise the new links formed with Montagu.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given its dubious beginnings, the marriage was not reported to have been a happy one, with multiple sources suggesting that Elizabeth was kept inside by her new husband, even leading to rumours of her death due to not being seen in public for such a long time.[179] Some accounts even go as far as to suggest that the charade by which the match was secured was continued throughout the marriage, with the duchess refusing to be served by any who was not on bended knee as befitting her purported status of Empress.[180] Whilst such reports are likely to be over exaggerated gossip, they do suggest that there was an air of mystery surrounding Elizabeth, as well as a widespread knowledge of her mental instability at this time.

Interestingly, despite the apparent lack of familial involvement during the occasion of her second marriage, Elizabeth's affairs once again became the concern of her relations in 1709 just a month after the death of Montagu. An examination of witnesses by the Lunacy Commissioners found that she was a 'lunatic', who was 'not capable of the Government of herself or her estate'.[181] Her brothers-in-law, John Holles, Thomas Earl of Thanet, and Charles Spencer joined forces to

---

[178] Montagu House MSS, found in Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* p. 345.
[179] Bickley, *The Cavendish family,* p. 142; Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* p. 347.
[180] Thompson, *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough,* pp. 11-12.
[181] Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* p. 350.

draft an instrument relating to her supposed lunacy at this time.[182] They successfully petitioned to be her guardians, removing both her, and perhaps more importantly her finances, from the control of her stepson John Montagu. The motives for this renewed interest are most likely related to the income that would be provided for any guardian, as well as the prospect of control over the fortune of the widowed duchess. Indeed, even John Campbell, widowed husband of Frances Cavendish, threw his hat in the ring for the position of guardianship, likely hoping to benefit financially.[183] It is of interest that Charles Spencer, although no longer connected to the family by marriage since the death of his first wife, Arabella, was involved in the successful petition. Unlike John Campbell, however, Charles had a child by Arabella, his daughter Frances. As such he had a closer link to the Cavendish family as well as a vested interest in Elizabeth's affairs. Frances was named as one of her late aunt's beneficiaries, reportedly receiving more than £20000 upon her death.[184]

Elizabeth outlived Montagu by nearly twenty-five years, passing away in 1734 at the age of eighty. With no surviving issue of her own, her personal estate of more than £120,000 was split between the children of her sisters.[185] Upon her death she was buried alongside her first husband in the Monck family vault.[186] Becker has highlighted that whilst a widow's burial in a plot beside her late husband was fairly commonplace, requests to be buried alongside one's first husband, despite remarrying, were striking. By requesting burial next to her first husband, Becker suggests, a woman implicitly reinforced the idea that 'a second marriage represented no more than the 'loan' of a woman to her second husband'.[187] Elizabeth displayed a great deal of affection for her first husband during their marriage through her letters to him in his absence. Her burial with him as opposed to

[182] UNMASC, Pw2/638, Draft instrument relating to the lunacy of Elizabeth Cavendish, 21 April 1709.
[183] Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* p. 350.
[184] Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* pp. 351-352.
[185] Welbeck MSS, July 1, 1735 found in Ward, *Christopher Monck Duke of Albemarle,* p. 352.
[186] Ward, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle,* p. 353.
[187] Becker, *Death and the Early Modern Englishwoman*, p. 136.

her second husband, whom it is not suggested she had any great connection with, is therefore unsurprising. The preferred location of burial can thus provide useful insight into a marriage, whether this be the second or the first. Margaret Cavendish, for example, in her will, requested not to be buried with her late husband John Holles in Westminster Abbey but alongside her parents at Bolsover.[188] The requests of both women provide useful insight into the relationships they had with their first husbands, and for Elizabeth, the comparison of this match to her second marriage.

Whilst the validity of claims surrounding the dubious methods by which the match with Montagu was procured are hard to affirm, Elizabeth's remarriage does demonstrate the supposed dangers for elite women who were thought likely to be able to be taken in by suitors merely after their fortune. Unlike the cautions within advice literature, which focused on older widows being pursued by younger men, Montagu was not dissimilar in age to Elizabeth. There was, however, a clear disparity in understanding due to Elizabeth's mental state at this time, and the presence of an economic motivation is clear. The lack of familial involvement in this match is also of interest. Despite being of an age where she would have been deemed able to make her own decisions, it appears that her family were unaware that the match had even taken place. This could be in part due to her age and her distance from her familial home, as well as a preoccupation with the disputed will of her father at the same time. Her second marriage also does not appear to have been motivated by any great affection on either side, further emphasising that this was perhaps not a key motivating factor for this particular match, at least on the side of Montagu, with economic advancement instead being his key inducement.

[188] NA, DD/4P/39/53, Probate will of Margaret Cavendish, 6 June 1717.

Those who never remarried

Whilst many individuals who were widowed did indeed remarry, this was not always the case. In addition to extolling the virtues of marriage, some contemporaries also voiced qualms about remarrying, particularly with regards to women. The age at which a woman was widowed was a key factor in any potential disapproval, with older widows being strongly discouraged from remarriage. There was a strong emphasis on the importance of children within a marriage during this period, with procreation outlined as one of the main duties.[189] For women who were no longer of childbearing age, the choice to remarry was thus viewed with suspicion and Hufton has suggested that following the menopause, when there was little chance of children, women did not generally remarry.[190] In addition to concerns from contemporaries regarding the potential of a marriage with no possibility of children, there may have also been practical reasons why a woman would wish to remain unmarried. As discussed, widows could possess greater influence and independence than their married counterparts, able to make their own legal decisions and control their own money. For elite widows who were able to support themselves on their jointure and dower portions, remarriage thus may not have always been the most enticing option, with some conduct writers such as Allestree outlining the potential benefits of widowhood.

Hufton has highlighted that the older a woman was upon being widowed, the less chance she had for remarriage, with numbers becoming almost negligible after the age of fifty.[191] Indeed, the eldest example of a widow remarrying within this study is Elizabeth Cavendish, who was thirty-eight years of age when she made her second match. Most women in the Cavendish family who were widowed at more advanced ages remained unmarried. For example, the 2nd Duchess of Newcastle was sixty-one years of age on the death of her husband the duke in 1691. She did not remarry, nor is

[189] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties,* p. 106.
[190] Hufton, *The Prospect Before her,* p. 222.
[191] Hufton, *The Prospect Before her,* p. 222.

there any indication within personal correspondence that this was something she sought. It has been outlined how the duchess enjoyed a great deal of influence within her family following the duke's death and subsequent contestation of his will. As discussed, some contemporaries discouraged remarriage utilising the argument that women would have to relinquish their newfound freedoms. Following the death of her husband, the duchess's children were all adults with all but one being already married. Her daughter Margaret's husband, John Holles, had also by this point taken on many of the duties of the male head of the family, such as helping to organise a match for Arabella. As such, the duchess would have had very few reasons for remarrying, needing neither to provide an heir nor a new head of the household. Margaret Holles also remained single following the death of her husband John, the Earl of Clare in 1711. The marriage had resulted in one surviving child, Henrietta Holles, who was married in 1713 following lengthy arrangements started by the earl prior to his death and completed by Margaret. As discussed, Margaret continued to have certain responsibilities as dowager duchess, however, by this point Henrietta's husband had also begun to take a position of responsibility within the estate following Clare's death.[192] As such, like her mother, there was seemingly little reason for Margaret to consider remarriage.

Whilst widows above the age of childbearing were encouraged not to remarry, the same advice was not extended to men. Able to sire children at more advanced ages, widowers were not bound by the same constraints. Within this study men did indeed remarry much later than women, with Charles Cheyne, husband to Jane Cavendish, and the Duke of Somerset, third husband to Elizabeth Percy, both securing their second matches at the age of sixty-three.[193] Nevertheless, not all widowed men remarried, such as the Earl of Thanet upon the death of his wife Katherine

[192] UNMASC, Pl C 2/2, Ralph Gowland to Margaret Cavendish, 27 April 1714; UNMASC, Pw2/539, Ralph Gowland to Margaret Cavendish 17 April 1716; UNMASC Pl C 1, Correspondence relating to the Harley estates based at Wimpole and Welbeck.
[193] John Broad, 'Charles Cheyne, first Viscount Newhaven', *ODNB,* (January 2008); Bucholz, 'Charles Seymour'.

Cavendish. Despite being nearly twenty-one years her senior, Thanet was predeceased by Katherine who died in 1712 at the age of forty-seven. Following her death Thanet did not remarry, remaining single until his death in 1729.[194] The couple had enjoyed a lengthy marriage of nearly thirty years, with Thanet aged over sixty when Katherine died. Despite having no surviving male issue, the couple had five surviving daughters two of whom were married at this point with children, therefore reducing worries regarding the line of succession. As such there was little reason for Thanet to remarry. His memorial at Rainham provides further reasoning for his wish to remain single after her death, stating:

> Here lieth the body of Thomas, Earl of Thanet… Married to Catherine Cavendish… Who believed no woman upon earth would have made him so happy as she did.[195]

Within this extract there is once again a suggestion of the importance of happiness within marriage. It has been highlighted throughout this thesis that Thanet portrayed a great deal of affection for his wife, choosing her over Margaret even in the face of economic gain as well as expressing his anxiety about being separated from her in the early stages of their marriage. This inscription suggests that this affection continued throughout the marriage, serving as his reasoning against procuring a second match.

Conclusions

This chapter has examined the ideals and experience of grief and widowhood for elite individuals. Both the experience and portrayal of mourning during this period were widely discussed by contemporaries, serving as emotional standards for widowed individuals. It has been found that

---

[194] G. E. Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct or Dormant*, *Volume III* (London: 1889), pp. 293-294.
[195] Robert Pocock, *Memorials of the Family of Tufton, Earls of Thanet; deduced from various sources of authentic information* (Gravesend: 1800), p. 136.

although excessive grief was discouraged, a controlled form of mourning over one's spouse was accepted, and even expected. Such advice was strongly gendered, with men expected to exercise a greater amount of self-control than women who were deemed generally more prone to violent outbursts of emotion. A lack of depth of mourning by a widow was thus viewed with suspicion and could be deemed as an affront to the memory of their late husband. Nevertheless, both men and women have been shown to have willingly displayed their grief to others, both through private correspondence and more public forms such as elegies. This was achieved in a variety of ways, including recounting the joy and love felt within the marriage as a direct antithesis to their emotional state following the death of their spouse.

The performative nature of public memorialisation has also been examined. Extravagant funeral processions and expensive monuments both reflected the high-ranking position of the individual and their family, as well as serving to publicise their grief. Despite concerns regarding elite men being in control of their emotions during grief, the examples of individuals within the identified emotional community of the Cavendish family network portray not a fear of being perceived as unrestrained, but rather a wish to broadcast their sorrow and by doing so exhibit the relative success of their marriage. This is also found in the personal correspondence between widows and widowers and their in-laws. In particular the letters sent to John Campbell following the death of his first wife Frances Cavendish emphasise the expectation of grief, both to legitimise the affection within a marriage and also to avoid accusations of poor moral character. These letters have also been shown to highlight the importance of continued links with family members from a first marriage. It is evident that the continuation of the ties formed through marriage was both hoped for upon the death of one of the couple, and utilised when deemed necessary. Campbell's involvement in the disputed will of the Duke of Newcastle as well as the role played by Charles Spencer in the

guardianship of Elizbeth Cavendish both emphasise the endurance of continued ties between families following the death of a spouse, as well as how these links could be utilised and exploited.

The new position of women following the death of their husband has also been examined, testing claims from scholars that this was the stage in the life cycle of a woman in which she enjoyed the most agency, having greater financial and legal freedom than her married counterparts. The widows examined within this study do indeed appear to have possessed a certain level of authority over their own lives and the lives of others in their family following widowhood. An examination of the events surrounding the Duke of Newcastle's contested will in particular has demonstrated the influence that could be wielded by elite widows, both in terms of practical concerns and their role in governing their family. However, the extent to which this period in life constituted a substantial increase in agency and influence for the women in this study has been questioned. An examination of the role of widows in the marriage arrangements of their children as well as their involvement in the running of estates has found that for some women their influence may have decreased, being conditional on the freedoms afforded to her by the new head of the family, such as her son or son-in-law. As such, whilst widowhood in general could afford women greater agency, it can be argued that, as with responsibilities during marriage, this was to a certain extent dependent on both the opinion and authority of the male head of the family.

Remarriage has also been examined with a particular focus on the agency of those to be married. As found in Chapter Two, the agency of elite individuals to make their own choice, although theoretically allowed, was never absolute and was subject to many different factors. In remarriage, despite both widows and widowers being theoretically freer to make their own decisions, the distribution of responsibility within matches appears to be governed by many of the same factors. For younger widows such as Elizabeth Percy, similar levels of family involvement in remarriage decisions are unsurprising due to her age. Despite this, however, it does appear that she

was more able to express her views on her second match, going as far as to leave the country in protest. Nevertheless, she was largely guided and managed by relatives in both her second and third matches. Conversely, Elizabeth Cavendish, aged thirty-four upon the death of her first husband, appeared to have received very little input from her natal family on her second match, with some relations seemingly unaware that the marriage had even taken place until after the fact. However, age does not appear to have been the singular factor for determining parental involvement. Both Charles Spencer and John Campbell were over the age of twenty-one on their second marriages, thus at a stage in their lives when they would have been deemed capable of being independent. Nevertheless, the parents of both men were heavily involved in the arrangement of their second matches. It has been argued that this was likely due to the importance attributed to these matches, with both John and Charles still requiring a male heir following the death of their first wives. Additionally, the families of both men were ambitious, with Campbell's father in need of financial reinforcements and Sunderland acutely aware of the advantages an alliance with the Churchills could bring. Thus, as with first matches, the involvement of others in remarriage was not a one size fits all approach but was instead dependent on a variety of factors.

Motivations for remarriage have also been examined within this chapter, ranging from personal qualities to financial considerations. The supposed issues regarding marrying a widow do not appear to have influenced the individuals within this study, for whom other considerations such as wealth and rank seemingly took precedence. Whilst many of the driving factors for remarriage have been shown to be similar to those examined within first matches, the starkest difference is seemingly a lack of conflict over the relative importance of these factors. Whilst in first matches it has been shown that there was the potential for conflicting motivations between parent and child, within the examples of remarriage discussed in this chapter there are few instances of such conflict, with the notable exception of Elizabeth Percy fleeing to Holland in protest of her marriage to

Thynne. One explanation for this could be that individuals perhaps had more say over their second match, and as such their parents had less input. However, as highlighted, parents were likely to remain involved in the remarriages of their children. Therefore, a more probable explanation is that following their first marriage, individuals were more likely to have similar motivations to that of their parents, thus removing the cause of such conflict.

The death of a spouse signified a turning point in the lives of elite individuals, marking a transformation from a married identity to that of widow or widower. By remarrying, both men and women once again transformed their position in society. As with first matches, both changes arguably had the most impact on women. Nevertheless, the advice aimed towards men upon both grief and remarrying is suggestive that such changes were deemed of importance to both sexes by contemporaries, thus emphasising the impact they could have on the lives of elite individuals. By focusing on one family network in detail across the life-cycle of marriage, this chapter has compared the differences in both behaviour and expectations between first matches and remarriage, charting changes and points of similarity, thus providing a useful addition to the current scholarship.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the experience of marriage in an elite family network, arguing for a greater synthesis between practical goals and emotional concerns throughout the life cycle of marriage than has previously been considered, both for the couples themselves and their families. Focusing on a network of individuals connected through the Cavendish family, it has demonstrated the multifaceted nature of elite marriage practices, charting this from the arrangement of matches to widowhood or remarriage.

This study has addressed underexplored areas within the historiography of early modern marriage. Whilst there have been notable case studies of gentry families in recent years, there have been very few focusing on the peerage or aristocracy. By focusing on this group, therefore, this thesis has added to the understanding of elite marriage practices as a whole, highlighting the differences in experiences between the gentry and the peerage. For example, it has been shown that in contrast to gentry families of the period, individuals within the peerage did not marry within county borders as a rule, instead looking further afield for the most advantageous matches, thus emphasising their role as multi-county figures.[1] The Cavendishes, whilst living largely at Welbeck, also owned estates in other counties and had vested interests in these places through their political roles. The need to marry outside of county borders is additionally closely linked with the desire to marry within one's own rank. Whilst there might be many Baronets and Knights in any given county, dukes, earls, marquises, and viscounts were not as numerous, thus necessitating a wider net if one were to marry endogamously. By and large the individuals in this thesis married within their own rank or very close to it, thus corresponding with Kimberly Schutte's conclusions that

[1] See: Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680,* (Routledge: Oxon, 2003), p. 95; James M. Rosenheim, *The Emergence of a Ruling Order: English Landed Society 1650-1750,* (Wesley Longman Limited: Essex, 1998), p. 24.

aristocratic women tended to marry endogamously, showing that the same is also true of the men examined.[2] Whilst similarities between this study and studies of gentry families have been identified, such as the significance of economic and social advancement in creating matches, overall the experience of marriage within the peerage is shown to have differed greatly with regards to the relative importance attributed to it as well as its insular nature due to a much smaller pool of suitable prospective spouses.

Despite a great deal of scholarly output regarding certain members of the Cavendish family, such as William Cavendish and his wife Margaret, the 2nd duke and his children have been largely overlooked, nor have there been any in-depth studies on the marriage practices of the family. This thesis has addressed these gaps in the literature, examining the marriages of the 2nd duke and his children, highlighting both the wealth of personal source material pertaining to these individuals, as well as arguing for the importance of these matches on a national level due the continued social, cultural and political significance of the family. Indeed, the king himself has been shown to have taken a keen interest in more than one of the Cavendish family matches. Additionally, the connections made by these individuals served to link some of the most powerful and important families of the period. Thus whilst the Cavendish family have been central to this thesis, they have not been the sole focus, instead acting as a focal point through which a network of connected individuals has been identified. Such an approach has allowed for an exploration of the links made through marriage, as well as facilitating comparisons between different individuals within the same network, providing an important addition to the field of studies regarding elite early modern marriage. By examining individuals within the same network, this study has emphasised the insular nature of connections made through elite marriages at this time, with many of the families identified

[2] Kimberly Schutte, *Women, Rank, and Marriage in the British Aristocracy, 1485-2000 An Open Elite?* (Palgrave Macmillan: UK, 2014).

also connected to each other independently of the Cavendishes. The identified network has also been viewed through the framework of emotional communities, highlighting the similarities within this group with regards to standards of emotional expression. These shared behaviours and practices have been demonstrated through the close reading of personal correspondence, with individuals adapting their modes of expression depending on their recipient, moving between overlapping emotional communities within the identified network.

This thesis has also emphasised the importance of the ties made through marriage. This has been demonstrated both in terms of practical advantages such as economic or political advancement, as well as the potential for such links to become avenues for support and advice, as shown in the 2nd duke's correspondence with the Earl of Breadalbane regarding his marital discontent. The connections made through marriage could also bring with them further connections, with in-laws able to organise introductions for subsequent potential matches, such as the Duke of Albemarle recommending suitors for his sister-in-law Frances Cavendish. It has been shown that these ties could be maintained even when the original link had been severed, as demonstrated by the continued involvement of both John Campbell and Charles Spencer in Cavendish family affairs after the decease of their wives, further emphasising the importance of these connections.

Whilst this study does not claim that the trends and patterns detected in this network are representative of the peerage as a whole, this approach has allowed for the detection of both similarities and outliers in the experience of marriage across multiple counties in England and Scotland. For example, whilst the ruling of the 2nd Duke and Duchess of Newcastle that their daughters were not to write to suitors was found to be particular to that family, the importance attributed to rank as well as calls for happiness in marriage were shown to be consistent across the network. It can also be assumed that many of the challenges faced by the individuals examined would have also been of concern to others within the peerage. Fears surrounding the continuation

of the male line, which governed the decisions of many individuals within this study, for example, would have similarly been the preoccupation of many families who were unable to produce an heir. Overall, this study argues for the value of a network approach, suggesting that future scholarship should be more alert to its benefits in the study of early modern marriage, particularly with regards to the examination of emotional standards and practices, with the network acting as a form of emotional community.

This thesis has also examined prescriptive literature of the period, exploring contemporary ideals as well as how far these were reflective of or impacted the behaviour of elite individuals. It has been argued that the outpouring of marital advice during this period was indicative of contemporary concerns regarding the institution at this time. Multiple examples have been highlighted in which the conduct writers themselves suggested that their work was necessary due to widespread non-adherence to the prescribed ideals. In particular there were concerns regarding the love a husband ought to have for his wife, with many men supposedly being found wanting in this duty. Indeed, the advice within prescriptive literature regarding many aspects of marriage has been shown to be highly gendered, reflective of both the patriarchal nature of society and pervading religious and scientific theories of the time. The vows of love, honour and obedience as outlined within the marriage service at this time have been examined, finding that contemporary writers did not view these duties as oppositional but instead dependant on one another. Wifely obedience, for example, was not only the duty of women, fuelled by the honour and respect she was to have for her husband, but was also regarded as being contingent on the love of both parties. Upholding these duties was seen as the responsibility of both husband and wife, and this thesis has argued that when these ideals of behaviour were not met, that this created the perfect breeding ground for marital conflict. A key example of this is found in the actions of the Duchess of Newcastle making her opinion known regarding both the matches of her daughters, and her husband's plans for disposing of his estate. In

both instances the duchess was perceived as meddling in affairs which were not deemed her concern, thus acting outside of her prescribed duties as a wife. Behaviour such as this was also viewed unfavourably by family members and others such as friends and kin. Thus, it is argued that although the elite individuals within this study did not always adhere to the contemporary advice, they were as a group subject to many of the expectations espoused by conduct writers.

Another key focus of this thesis has been an exploration of the reaches of patriarchal ideals as espoused within conduct literature, building on and testing claims by scholars such as Wrightson that such ideals were adhered to in public but that there was a softening of this in private.[3] Within the elite network examined in this study, however, it has been found that individuals did not always display public observance of these ideals. Behaviour such as the refusal of the duke's daughters to marry his choice of suitor, the duchess's refusal to obey his commands regarding visiting Katherine, and the sharing of marital particulars with others in spite of both the prescriptive advice and clear disapproval of her husband, all indicate that the women within the Cavendish family network were indeed able to act outside of the constraints of patriarchal authority. Whilst such actions did garner attention from others, as in the case of the duke and duchess's disagreement where individuals such as Sir John Reresby and the Earl of Feversham voiced their concerns and disapproval, there were seemingly few long-term repercussions for actions that might be viewed as oppositional to the patriarchal ideal. As such, it is argued that there were limitations to patriarchal authority within the Cavendish family network, reflective of the fears found within prescriptive literature of the time.

The ways in which the reach of patriarchal authority could change over a woman's lifetime has also been explored, building upon suggestions that both entering into a union and leaving it

[3] Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (Routledge: Oxon, 2003), p. 92.

through the death of one's spouse had a greater impact on women.[4] Despite noting many key changes in responsibilities such as aiding husbands in the running of an estate and household following marriage, or having greater freedoms in widowhood, this study has posited that many of these changes could also be dependent on the specific circumstances of the woman in question. The Duchess of Newcastle, for example, was arguably afforded greater agency during her marriage to the duke in terms of her involvement in the marriage arrangements of her children than she was by her son-in-law John Holles as a widow. It is thus suggested that as, with marriage and the topic of 'deputy husbands', the scope of women to act in roles of responsibility and influence as widows was once again largely dependent on the opinion and authority of the male head of the family. If this was weak or non-existent, as in the case of the Dowager Countess of Northumberland in the marriage arrangements for her granddaughter Elizabeth Percy, there was indeed the potential for a great deal of influence as a matriarch. For Frances, however, under the new patriarchal headship of Holles, there was little scope for increased responsibilities. Nevertheless, it has been shown that there was indeed a change in situation for elite widows even in instances such as this, with the duchess being afforded additional legal freedoms in the contestation of her late husband's will, as well as clearly exercising her influence over family members in order to navigate the conflict.

Through close reading of prescriptive literature this study has also identified ideals regarding emotional behaviour, utilising the theories and methodologies of emotionology to uncover emotional standards of the period, as well as identifying how far these ideals can be observed within the Cavendish family network. In particular the importance of happiness in marriage has been emphasised. Such an outcome was advised by conduct literature, wished for in the arrangement of matches, publicised throughout marriage, and recalled in grief. This study has explored two differing

[4] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), p. 129; Anne Laurence, *Women in England, 1500-1760: A social history* (Weidenfeld and Nicholson: London,1995), p. 41.

explanations for such a focus on this particular emotion. The first is that it was an epistolary convention of the period, suggestive of an absorption of the ideals as found within conduct literature, which emphasised the potential for either happiness or misery within marriage.[5] A further explanation is that both the couple themselves and their family members were aware that happiness in marriage was the best chance of a successful match. Avenues by which to leave marriage were costly and difficult to procure, thus conflict was to be avoided if possible. As such, the individuals within the Cavendish family network were keen that any matches made be a success, or at least be viewed as such. It has thus been argued that the portrayal of happiness could sometimes be performative in nature, particularly when this was expressed or indicated towards family members or those with a vested interest in the success of the match. It has been suggested that portrayals of happiness or affection within a marriage were expected by family members on certain occasions such as the birth of a child. There were similar expectations regarding the portrayal of grief upon the death of a spouse. In spite of excessive grief being discouraged, especially for men who were perceived as being more able to regulate their emotions, it has been found that portrayal of grief was also to a certain extent both expected and encouraged. Through emphasising grief, and by extension one's happiness in marriage, individuals within the Cavendish family network were able to assure others of their affection for the deceased as well as once again emphasising the success of their match. Calls for happiness within marriage are thus viewed within this study as neither entirely sentimental nor practical, but instead as interlinked motivations.

The presence and portrayal of love and affection has also been explored within this thesis. Whilst love was much espoused as an ideal within conduct literature, it has been shown that this was not often directly articulated by the individuals within this study. Due to the rules of the Cavendish

[5] William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (London: 1705), p. 34; George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, *The Lady's New-Years gift, or Advice to a Daughter* (London: 1688), p. 24.

family that their daughters were not to write to any suitors, it is difficult to ascertain how far this affection was present prior to marriage. Nevertheless, the attempts of Spencer to bypass these rules and Thanet's refusal to marry Margaret for greater financial gain suggest that at least a certain amount of affection was present in some of the matches examined. Prescriptive literature also emphasised the importance of maintaining love and affection throughout a marriage. Within the Cavendish family network, instances of affection have been explored through interrogation of personal source material such as letters. In particular, examples of emotive language and terms of endearment have been highlighted, such as those utilised by Elizabeth Cavendish in order to both portray her affection for her husband, the Duke of Albemarle, as well as to hasten his return home. Affection has also been shown in other ways, such as through financial provision, or Thanet's wish to carry a portrait of his wife with him during their separation. In addition to displaying affection to each other, the individuals within this study also portrayed this to others within the identified network, often the parents or siblings of one's spouse. Such displays were found to be particularly prevalent at times of anxiety such as illness or childbirth. As with the calls for happiness, however, the portrayal of affection in such a manner has similarly been examined through the lens of performativity. By emphasising anxiety or fear for a spouse or child, individuals thus highlighted their affection and by extension the relative success of the match, as well as adhering to the standards of emotional expression within the emotional communities of their family and kin network. Additionally, it has been suggested that the concerns espoused during childbirth may have been in part due to the value attached to the survival of a male heir. Whilst this has indeed been outlined as a concern for many of the men within this study, fears regarding the survival of daughters as well as sons are suggestive of more than just practicality, instead serving to emphasise the affection for both wife and child.

Another key focus of this thesis has been the agency of elite individuals in marriage during this period. Whilst past scholarship often took two opposing viewpoints of either complete parental control or the triumph of individualism, this study has emphasised the flexible nature of agency in marriage arrangements. There was a strong importance attached to agreement between parent and child within the conduct literature of the period, and it has been demonstrated that this accord was similarly desired by the individuals within this network, largely in order to avoid conflict which was feared to have an impact on an individual's future prospects. Indeed, when disagreement did occur it has been shown to have caused great upset within the family, even serving to prevent matches from taking place at all. It has been argued that there were a variety of factors impacting agency. Most of the individuals examined were under the age of twenty-one upon their first match, deemed as legally unable to make their own decisions and thus were subject to parental guidance, having little input at all. Heirs and heiresses have additionally been shown to have had less choice over their future spouse due to the value attached to their marriage arrangements. The roles of men and women in making matches has also been explored, finding that this was to a certain extent gendered, with men dealing with legal particulars whilst women were more concerned with creating and maintaining good links with the families of prospective matches. Whilst this gendering of responsibilities was not found to be explicitly designated within conduct literature, the reaction of individuals when the bounds of these roles were breached suggests that there was a contemporary understanding regarding the appropriate duties for both men and women in creating matches.

Despite the apparent necessity of parental involvement, however, it has been shown that individuals could on occasion be afforded a certain level of agency in their matches. This was demonstrated most starkly in the proposed matches of Frances and Margaret Cavendish, which ultimately failed largely due to their inability to agree with their parents. Such examples highlight the limits of parental authority in marriage arrangements, further emphasising the importance of

agreement among all parties. Nevertheless, despite both women being able to voice their opinions freely, such behaviour was evidently viewed with distaste, demonstrated by both the ideals as set out in prescriptive literature and the reaction of their family and other interested parties. Despite this, however, their behaviour appears to have gone largely unpunished, suggesting that whilst it went against the ideals, it did not, as earlier scholars posited, pose a risk of spinsterhood, with other factors evidently being deemed of greater importance.

Agency in remarriage has also been explored, finding that whilst conduct literature espoused a greater degree of agency for widows and widowers, individuals were largely subject to similar pressures as in their first match. This was especially pertinent if the individual in question was under the age of twenty-one, as in the case of Elizabeth Percy and her two remarriages, which were seemingly organised with little input from the heiress herself. Nevertheless, even when individuals were over this age, such as Spencer and Campbell, it has been shown that there was still a great deal of parental involvement, influenced by what was deemed most necessary in the match, both for the individuals themselves and their wider family. As such, this study contends that whilst age was an important factor in agency for both initial marriages and remarriage, other considerations such as the relative importance of the match in terms of economic and social advancement also had an impact on the distribution of responsibility.

In addition to exploring the role of parents and other family members in making matches, this study has also examined the endurance of familial support throughout the life-cycle of elite marriage, building upon and testing the work of scholars such as Foyster and Ben-Amos.[6] It has been found that parental involvement did indeed continue to be of importance to the individuals within the

[6] Elizabeth Foyster, 'Parenting Was for Life, Not just for Childhood: The Roles of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England', *History*, Vol. 86, No. 283, (July 2001), pp. 313-327; Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, 'Reciprocal Bonding: Parents and their offspring in Early Modern England', *Journal of Family History*, (July 2000), pp. 291-312.

Cavendish family network, with both practical and emotional support offered. This thesis suggests that parental involvement was neither entirely sentimental or practical, instead being driven by both a wish for a successful match as well as affection for their children. In particular the assistance provided for Elizabeth Cavendish by her mother and father during her marriage to the Duke of Albemarle has been shown to have demonstrated the intersection between these two motivations, serving to both preserve the couple's public image, and by extension that of the family as a whole, as well as provide emotional support to their daughter. Other family members, kin, and family friends have been shown to have been of importance not only in creating matches but also in supporting couples throughout their marriage. This has been examined largely through the epistolary networks utilised by individuals to both seek and share advice. In particular the 2nd duke has been shown to have utilised correspondence with close family, extended kin, and friends in order to navigate the conflict between himself and his wife. This thesis has viewed these networks as 'emotional communities', spaces in which individuals were able to share their emotions and seek advice, tailoring their language depending on the recipient and the relationship they shared.[7]

Overall, this study has emphasised that whilst there were indeed varying experiences within the identified network, many of the individuals examined had similar motivations and concerns, bound by shared experiences and the insular nature of elite marriage at this time. For individuals within the selected network, the work put in to arrange matches, support provided by family and kin, and efforts to avoid conflict are all reflective of the great importance attached to elite marriage. Both the motivations for success in marriage and the ways in which this was achieved highlight not a binary of either practicality or sentiment, but instead emphasise the interweaving of these

[7] Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 3 (June 2002), p. 842; Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Cornell University Press: New York, 2006), p. 2; Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context: Journal of the History and Philosophy of the Emotions,* Vol. 1, No. 1 (2010), p. 11.

throughout the life cycle of elite marriage, and by extension the multifaceted nature of this 'honourable estate'.

Bibliography

Manuscript Sources

British Library

Vol. D (29/236). Cavendish Papers; 1661-1695 (Add MS 70500)

National Records of Scotland

Papers of the Campbell Family, Earls of Breadalbane (GD112)

Nottinghamshire Archives

Portland of Welbeck: Deeds and Papers (DD/4P/35); (DD/4P/39)

University of Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections

Correspondence in the Portland (London) Collection (Pl C)

The Portland (London) Collection, being Legal, Financial and Estate Papers of the Dukes of Portland, 1304-1940 (Pl F3)

Portland (Welbeck) Collection, papers of the Cavendish Family 1563-1707 (Pw1)

Portland (Welbeck) Collection, papers of the Holles Family 1571-1728 (Pw2)

Literary Manuscripts in the Portland (Welbeck) Collection, 16th-19th Centuries (Pw V)

Estate and Official Papers of the Newcastle family of Clumber Park, Nottinghamshire, 1200-1942 (NeD); (NeL)

Printed Primary Sources

'An Act for Confirmation of Marriages', (1660) at: https://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/p296, [accessed 03/04/2021].

'An Act for the Uniformity of Publique Prayers and Administracion of Sacraments & other Rites & Ceremonies and for establishing the Form of making ordaining and consecrating Bishops Priests and Deacons in the Church of England' at https://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/pp364-370#h3-0027, [accessed 03/04/20201]

'An Act touching Marriages and the Registring thereof; and also touching Births and Burials', (August 1653) at https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/acts-ordinances-interregnum/pp715-718, [accessed 03/04/2021].

Allestree, Richard, *The Government of the Thoughts: A prefatory discourse to the Government of the Tongue* (London: 1694).

Allestree, Richard, *The Ladies Calling in two parts* (Oxford:1673).

Astell, Mary, *Reflections upon Marriage, The Third Edition* (London: 1706).

Baxter, Richard, *A Christian Directory: Or, A summ O Practical theologie and cases of conscience* (London, 1673).

Bolton, Robert, *Instructions for a Right Comforting Afflicted Consciences with Speciall Antidotes Against Some Grievous Temptations* (1631).

Burnet, Gilbert, *Bishop Burnet's History of his own time: with the supressed passages of the first volume: Volume VI* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press: 1823).

Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles II, January 1682, Originally published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, (London: 1932), at https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/chas2/1682/pp1-51, [accessed 03/04/2021]

Card of Courtship or The Language of Love (London: 1653).

Care, Henry, *The Female Secretarie* (London: 1671).

Carter, Thomas, *Carters Christian Commonwealth; or Domesticall Dutyes dechiphered* (Purfoot: London, 1627).

Cavendish, Margaret, *The Life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, to which is Added the True Relation of My Birth, Breeding and Life* (London: 1886).

Cavendish, Margaret, *The Life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, to which is Added the True Relation of My Birth, Breeding and Life* (London: 1886).

Cavendish, William, *A New Method and Extraordinary Invention to Dress Horses and Work them according to Nature* (London: 1667).

Cavendish, William, *Méthode et invention nouvelle de dresser les chevaux* (1658).

Chudleigh, Lady Mary, *The Ladies Defence: OR, The Bride-Woman's Counsellor Answered: A Poem in a Dialogue between Sir John Brute, Sir Wm. Loveall, Melissa, and a Parson* (Printed by D.L for Bernard Lintott at the Middle Temple Gate in Fleet-street: London, 1709)

Cokayne, G. E. *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct or Dormant*, *Volume III* (London: 1889).

Collins, Arthur, *The Peerage of England; Containing A Genealogical and Historical Account of all the Peers of England- Vol. IV* (London: 1755).

Coxe, William, *Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough*, *Volume 1* (London: 1818).

Coxe, William, *Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough*, *Volume 1* (London: 1818).

David, Henry (ed.), *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle* (London: Feb 1755).

Dod, John and Cleaver, Robert, *A Godlie Forme of Householde Government: For the Ordering of Private Families, according to direction of Gods word* (London: 1598).

Edmund Lodge, *Portraits of Illustrious Personages of Great Britain: Vol X,* 'Charles Seymour: Sixth Duke of Somerset' (London: 1835).

Ellis, George Agar, *The Ellis Correspondence: Letters written during the years 1686, 1687, 1688* (London: 1829).

Evelyn, John, *The Diary of John Evelyn: Volume 3,* Austin Dobson (ed.), (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2015).

Fleetwood, William, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (London: 1705).

Foxcroft, H.C, *The life and letters of Sir George Savile, Bart, First Marquis of Halifax* (Longmans, Green, and Co.: London, 1898).

Fuller, Thomas, *The Holy State* (Cambridge: 1642).

Gataker, Thomas, *Marriage Duties Briefely Couched Together* (London: 1620).

Gouge, William, *Of Domesticall Duties Eight Treatises* (London, 1622).

Grymeston, Elizabeth, *Miscelanea, Meditations, Memoratives* (London: 1604)
Heydon, John, *Advice to a Daughter. In opposition to the Advice to a Sonne. OR Directions for your better Conduct through the various and most important Encounters of this life* (London: 1658).
Historical Manuscripts Commission: The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland preserved at Welbeck Abbey, Volume 2 (London: 1893)
Historical Manuscripts Commission: The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland preserved at Welbeck Abbey, Volume 5 (London, 1899).
Johnson, Robert, *Praxis medicinæ reformata* (London: 1700).
Leigh, Dorothy, *The Mother's Blessing* (London: 1616).
Littleton, Adam, *A Sermon at the funeral of the Right Honourable the Lady Jane eldest daughter to His Grace, William, Duke of Newcastle, and wife to the Honourable Charles Cheyne* (London: 1669).
London, William, *A Catalogue of the most vendible books in England orderly and alphabetically digested… all to be sold by the author at his shop in New-Castle* (London: 1657).
Mackenzie, George, *The laws and customes of Scotland, in matters criminal wherein is to be seen how the civil law, and the laws and customs of other nations do agree with, and supply ours* (Edinburgh, 1678).
Manton, Thomas, *A fourth volume containing one hundred and fifty sermons on several texts of Scripture in two parts* (London: 1693).
More, John, *The Lawes resolutions of womens right: or, the lawes provision for woemen* (London: 1632).
N.H, *The Ladies Dictionary; Being a General Entertainment For the Fair-Sex*, (Printed for John Dunton: London 1694).
Nicholles, Alexander, *A Discourse of Marriage and Wiving* (London: 1615).
Osborne, Francis, *Advice to a son* (Printed by H. Hall: London, 1656).
Pepys, Samuel, *Diary of Samuel Pepys,* at https://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1665/12/25/ [accessed 03/04/2021].
Pocock, Robert, *Memorials of the Family of Tufton, Earls of Thanet; deduced from various sources of authentic information* (Gravesend: 1800).
Reresby, John, *The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, Bart., M.P For York, &c. 1634-1689 written by himself, edited from the original manuscript By James J. Cartwright* (Longmans, Green, and Co: London, 1875).
Richardson, Elizabeth, *The Ladies Legacy* (1645).
Rogers, Daniel, *Matrimoniall Honour or The mutall Crowne and comfort of godly, loyall, and chaste Marriage* (London: 1642).

Savile, George, Marquis of Halifax, *The Lady's New-Years gift, or Advice to a Daughter* (London: 1688)

Sheppard, Samuel, *The Secretaries Studie* (London: 1652).

Skinner, Thomas, *The Life of General Monk: Duke of Albemarle* (London, 1724).

Smith, Henry, *A Preparative to Mariage* (London: 1591).

Sprint, John, *The Bride-Womans Counsellor: Being a Sermon Preach'd at a Wedding, May the 11th, 1699 at Sherbour, in Dorsetshire* (H. Hills in Blackfriars: London, 1709).

Swetnam, Joseph, *The arraignment of lewd, idle froward, and unconstant women* (London: 1617).

The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Church of England (Cambridge: 1662).

The New Academy of Complements (London: 1669).

The Second Tome of Homilies (London, 1563).

The Spectator, Issue CCCCLXXIX, (Tuesday September 9 1712), *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Newspapers Collection* [accessed 03/04/2021].

Thompson, A. *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, *Volume II* (London: 1839).

Thompson, Edward Maunde (ed.), *Correspondence of The Family of Hatton: Being chiefly letters addressed to Christopher First Viscount Hatton* (Printed for the Camden Society: 1878).

Whately, William, *A Bride Bush; or a direction for married persons, plainly describing the duties common to both, and peculiar to each of them, etc* (London: 1617).

Willis, Thomas, *Dr Willis's practice of physick* (London: 1684).

Secondary Sources

Adair, Richard, *Courtship, illegitimacy and marriage in early modern England* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1996).

Asch, Ronald G. and M. Birke, Adolf (eds.), *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, 1450-1650* (London: German Historical Institute London, 1991).

Addy, John, *Death, Money and the Vultures: Inheritance and Avarice 1660-1750* (Routledge: London, 1992).

Amussen, Susan Dwyer, ' "Being stirred to much unquietness": Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England', *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 6, No. 2, (Summer 1994), pp. 70-89.

Amussen, Susan Dwyer, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Columbia University Press, 1998).

Aughterson, Kate (ed.), *Renaissance Woman: A Sourcebook: Constructions of Femininity in England* (Routledge: London, 1995).

Baggerman, A., and Dekker, R., 'The Social World of a Dutch Boy. The Diary of Otto van Eck 1791–1796' in S. Broomhall (ed.), *Emotions in the Household 1200–1900* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2008), pp. 252- 268.

Bailey, Joanne and Giese, Loreen, 'Marital Cruelty: Reconsidering lay attitudes in England, c. 1580-1850', *The History of the Family,* Vol. 18, No. 3, (2013), pp. 289-305.

Bailey, Joanne, 'Paternal Power: the pleasures and perils of 'indulgent' fathering in Britain in the long eighteenth century', *The History of the Family,* Vol. 17, No. 3, (August 2012), pp. 326-342.

Bailey, Joanne, 'Pregnancy and childbirth' in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), pp. 211-214.

Bailey, Joanne, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660-1800* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003).

Barclay, Katie, *Caritas: Neighbourly Love & the Early Modern Self* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2021).

Barclay, Katie, *The History of Emotions: A Student Guide to Methods and Sources* (Macmillan Education Limited: UK, 2020).

Barclay, Katie, 'Intimacy and the life cycle in the Marital Relationships of the Scottish Elite during the Long Eighteenth Century', *Women's History Review,* 20:2, (2011), pp. 189-206.

Barclay, Katie, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2011).
Barclay, Katie, 'Marriage', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), pp. 217-220.
Barclay, Katie, 'Performance and Performativity', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), pp. 14-17.
Barclay, Katie, Meek, Jeffrey and Thomson, Andrea, 'Marriage and Emotion in Historical Context', in Katie Barclay, Jeffrey Meek and Andrea Thomson (eds.), *Courtship, Marriage and Marriage Breakdown: Approaches from the History of Emotion* (Routledge: New York, 2020), pp. 1-16.
Barker, G.F.R., revised by M.E Clayton, 'Evelyn Pierrepont, first duke of Kingston upon Hull', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Sept 2005).
Barnes, Diana, 'Emotional Debris in Early Modern Letters' in Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway, and Sarah Randles (eds.), *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions through History* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018), pp. 114-133.
Becker, Lucinda M, *Death and the Early Modern Englishwoman* (Routledge: London, 2003).
Begiato, Joanne, 'Bearing Grudges: Marital Conflict and the Intergenerational Family', in Janny DiPlacidi and Karl Leydecker (eds.), *After Marriage in the Long Eighteenth Century: Literature, Law and Society* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 41-64.
Begiato, Joanne, 'Family and Household', in Amanda Flather (ed.) *A Cultural History of the Home in the Renaissance, Volume 3* (Bloomsbury Academic, London: 2021), pp. 35-58.
Ben-Amos, Ilana Krausman, 'Reciprocal Bonding: Parents and their offspring in early modern England', *Journal of Family History*, (July 2000), pp. 291-312.
Bennett, Alexandra G. (ed.), *The Collected Works of Jane Cavendish* (Routledge, Oxon: 2018).
Bennett, Martyn (ed.), *Nottinghamshire village in War and Peace: The Accounts of the Constables of Upton, 1640-1666* (Thoroton Society: Nottingham, 1995).
Bennett, Martyn, *The English Civil War: 1640-1649* (Routledge: Oxon, 2013).
Bickley, Francis, *The Cavendish Family* (London: 1911).
Boddice, Rob *The History of emotions* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2018).
Bonfield, Lloyd, 'Review of Eileen Spring, *Law, Land, and Family: Aristocratic Inheritance in England, 1300-1800*', *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 100, No. 2 (April 1995), pp. 513-514.
Bonfield, Lloyd, *Devising, Dying and Dispute: Probate Litigation in Early Modern England* (Routledge: Oxon, 2016).

Bonfield, Lloyd, *Marriage Settlements, 1601-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1983).
Bossis, Mirielle, and McPherson, Karen, 'Methodological Journeys Through Correspondences', *Yale French Studies,* No. 71, (1986), pp. 63-75.
Bound, Fay, 'This "Modern Epidemic": Loneliness as an Emotion Cluster and a Neglected Subject in the History of Emotions', *Emotion Review*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (July 2018), pp. 242-254.
Bound, Fay, 'Writing the Self? Love and the Letter in England, c.1160-c. 1760', *Literature and History*, Vol. 11, Issue 1, (May 2002), pp. 1-19.
Bowerbank, Sylvia and Mendelson, Sara (eds.), *Paper Bodies: A Margaret Cavendish Reader* (Broadview literary texts: 2000).
Braddick, Michael J., & Innes, Joanna (ed.), *Suffering and Happiness in England 1500-1850* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2017).
Brady, Andrea, "A Share of Sorrows': Death in the Early Modern English Household', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Emotions in the Household 1200-1900* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2008), pp. 185-202.
Brennan, Michael G., 'Family Networks: The Sidneys, Dudleys, and Herberts', in Margaret P. Hannay, Michael G. Brennan, Mary Ellen Lamb (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to The Sidneys, 1500-1700, Volume 1: Lives* (Routledge: Oxon, 2015). pp. 3-22.
Broad, John, 'Charles Cheyne, first Viscount Newhaven', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Jan 2008)
Broad, John, 'Cheyne, Charles, first Viscount Newhaven', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (January 2008).
Broad, John, 'William Cheyne, second Viscount Newhaven', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Sept 2004)
Broad, John, *Transforming English Rural Society: The Verneys and the Claydons,1600-1820* (Cambridge, 2004).
Broomhall, Susan (ed.), *Emotions in the Household 1200-1900* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2008).
Broomhall, Susan, 'Renovating affections: Reconstructing the Atholl family in the mid eighteenth century' in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Spaces for feeling: Emotion and Sociabilities in Britain, 1650-1850* (Routledge: Oxon, 2015), pp. 52-79.
Broomhall, Susan and Van Gent, Jacqueline, 'Corresponding Affections: Emotional Exchange Among Siblings in the Nassau Family', *Journal of Family History,* Vol. 34, Issue. 2, (April 2009), pp. 143-165.

Broomhall, Susan and Van Gent, Jacqueline, 'Courting Nassau Affections: Performing Love in Orange-Nassau Marriage Negotiations', in Philippa Maddern, Joanne McEwan, and Anne M. Scott (eds.), *Performing Emotions in Early Europe* (Brepols Publishers: Belgium, 2018), pp. 133-168.

Brown, Mark N., 'George Savile, first Marquess of Halifax', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Sept 2004).

Brown, Mark, 'George Savile, first marquess of Halifax', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Sept 2004).

Bryson, Anna, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1998).

Bucholz, R.O, 'Seymour, Charles, sixth duke of Somerset', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (May 2008).

Butler, Judith, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999).

Cannon, John, *Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth- Century England* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1984).

Capp, Bernard, "Jesus Wept' But did the Englishman? Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, No.224 (August 2014), pp. 75-108.

Capp, Bernard, *The Ties that Bind: Siblings, Family, and Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018).

Capp, Bernard, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003).

Chalmers, Hero, "But not laughing': horsemanship and the idea of the cavalier in the writings of William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle', *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 32, Issue 4, (Oct. 2017), pp. 327-349.

Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism* (Verso: London, 2018).

Clifton, Robin, 'Christopher Monck, Second Duke of Albemarle', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (2008).

Clucas, Stephen, 'The Atomisation of the Cavendish Circle: A Reappraisal', *The Seventeenth Century,* Vol. 9, Issue 2, (1994), pp. 247-273.

Collins, Stephen, "A Kind of Lawful Adultery': English Attitudes to the Remarriage of Widows, 1550-1800', in Peter C. Jupp and Glennys Howart (eds.), *The Changing Face of Death: Historical Accounts of Death and Disposal* (Macmillan Press Ltd: London, 1997), pp. 34-47.

Collinson, Patrick, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Palgrave Macmillan: 1988).
Colwell, Tania M., 'Emotives and Emotional Regimes', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), pp. 7-10.
Coster, Will, *Family and Kinship in England, 1450-1800* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017).
Crangle, Sara, 'Epistolarity Audience, Selfhood: The Letters of Dorothy Osborne to William Temple', *Women's Writing,* Vol. 12, No. 3, (2005), pp. 433-452.
Craske, Matthew, *The Silent Rhetoric of the Body: A history of Monumental Sculpture and Commemorative Art in England, 1720-1770* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2007).
Cressy, David, 'Kinship and interaction in Early Modern England', *Past and Present,* Vol. 113, Issue. 1 (Nov, 1986), pp. 38-69.
Cressy, David, 'Response: Private Lives, Public Performance, and Rites of Passage', in Betty Travitsky and Adele F. Seeff (eds.), *Attending to Women in Early Modern England* (Associated University Presses: London, 1994), pp. 187-197.
Cressy, David, *Birth, Marriage and Death, Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999).
Dabhoiwala, Faramerz, 'The Construction of Honour, Reputation and Status in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol. 6 (1996), pp. 201-213.
Davies, Kathleen M., 'The Sacred Condition of Equality: How Original Were Puritan Doctrines of Marriage?', *Social History*, Vol. 2, No. 5 (May, 1977), pp. 563-580.
Davies, Kathleen M., 'Continuity and Change in Literary Advice on Marriage', in R.B Outhwaite (ed.), *Marriage and Society: studies in the social history of marriage* (St. Martin's Press: New York, 1981), pp. 58-81.
Daybell, James (ed.), *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700* (Palgrave: Hampshire, 2001).
Daybell, James, 'Material Meanings and the Social Signs of Manuscript Letters', *Literature Compass,* 6:3, (2009), pp. 647-667.
Daybell, James, 'Social Negotiations in Correspondence between Mothers and Daughter in Tudor and Early Stuart England', *Women's History Review,* Vol. 24, No. 4, (Mar 2015), pp. 502-527.
Daybell, James, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635* (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2012).

Dolan, Frances E., *Marriage and Violence: The Early Modern Legacy* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Pennsylvania, 2008).
Dolan, Frances E., *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth Century England* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 2013).
Downes, Stephanie, Holloway, Sally, Randles, Sarah, 'Introduction', in Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway, Sarah Randles (eds.), *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions through History* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018), pp. 1-8.
Durston, Chris, ' "Unhallowed Wedlocks": The regulation of marriage during the English Revolution', *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 31, No. 1, (March 1988), pp. 45-59.
Eales, Jacqueline, *Women in Early Modern England 1500-1700 (*Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005).
Elias, Norbert, *The Civilising Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations,* Eric Dunning, Johan Goudsblom, and Stephen Mennell (eds.), trans. Edward Jephcott, (Blackwell Rev: Oxford, 2000).
Erickson, Amy Louise, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (Routledge: New York, 1995).
Espinasse, Francis, revised by Louis A. Knafla, 'John Egerton, second earl of Bridgewater', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (May 2007).
Eustace, Nicole, ' "The cornerstone of a copius work": Love and power in eighteenth-century courtship', *Journal of Social History,* Spring 2001, Vol. 34, No. 3, (Spring 2001), pp. 517-546.
Ezell, Margaret J.M, 'Introduction' in Margaret J.M Ezell (ed.), *Women Writers in English 1350-1850: Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993), pp. xvii- xxxvi.
Ezell, Margaret J.M, 'Lady Mary Chudleigh', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (September 2004).
Ezell, Margaret J.M., "'To be your daughter in your pen": The Social Functions of Literature in the Writings of Lady Elizabeth Brackley and Lady Jane Cavendish', *The Huntington Library Quarterly,* Vol. 51, No. 4 (Autumn 1988), pp. 281-296.
Falkner, James, 'Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Jan 2008).
Febvre, Lucien, 'La Sensibilitié et l'histoire: Comment reconstiuer la vie affective d'autrefois?', *Annales d'histoire sociale,* Vol. 3, Issue 1-2, (June, 1941), pp. 5-20.
Febvre, Lucien, 'Sensibility and History: How to Reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past', in Peter Burke (ed.) K. Folca (trans.) *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre* (Harper & Row: New York, 1973), pp. 12-26.
Fine, Emily, "'The Law of thy Mother": Contesting Inheritance in Seventeenth-Century England', *English Literary Renaissance,* Vol. 51, No. 2, (Spring 2021), pp. 270-302.

Fletcher, Anthony, 'The protestant idea of marriage', in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (eds.), *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Honour of Patrick Collinson* (Cambridge University Press: 1994), pp. 161-181.

Fletcher, Anthony, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1995).

Foulds, Trevor, ' "Nothing less than a Duke": Henry 2nd Duke of Newcastle and the Marriages of his Daughters', in Richard A. Gaunt (ed.), *Church, Land and People: Essays Presented to John Beckett* (Thoroton Society: Nottingham, 2020), pp. 37-50.

Foyster, Elizabeth A. *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (Addison Wesley Longman Limited: Essex, 1999), p. 4.

Foyster, Elizabeth, 'Male honour, Social Control and Wife Beating in Late Stuart England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol. 6 (Jan 1996), pp. 215-224.

Foyster, Elizabeth, 'Parenting Was for Life, Not just for Childhood: The Roles of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England', *History*, Vol. 86, No. 283, (July 2001), pp. 313-327.

Friedman, Alice T., 'Portrait of a Marriage: The Willoughby Letters of 1585-1586', *Signs,* Vol. 11, No.3 (Spring 1986), pp. 542-555.

Gillis, John, *For Better, For Worse: British Marriage, 1600 to the Present* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1985).

Goffman, Erving, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959).

Goulding, Richard William, *The Welbeck Abbey Miniatures belonging to His Grace the Duke of Portland* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1916).

Gowing, Laura, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-century England* (Yale University Press: USA, 2003).

Gowing, Laura, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1996).

Gowing, Laura, *Gender Relations in Early Modern England* (Routledge: Oxon, 2014).

Grassby, Richard, 'Love, property and Kinship: The Courtship of Philip Williams, Levant Merchant, 1617-50', *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 113, No. 451 (Apr. 1998), pp. 335-350.

Grassby, Richard, *Kinship and Capitalism: Marriage, Family, and Business in the English- Speaking World, 1580-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001).

Gray, Catherine, 'Feeding on the Seed of the Woman: Dorothy Leigh and the Figure of Maternal Dissent', *ELH,* Vol. 68, No. 3, (Fall 2001), pp. 563-592.
Harris, Barbara, 'Marriage Sixteenth-Century Style: Elizabeth Stafford and the Third Duke of Norfolk', *Journal of Social History,* Vol. 15, No. 3 (Spring, 1982), pp. 371-382.
Harris, Barbara, 'Power, Profit, and Passion: Mary Tudor, Charles Brandon and the Arranged Marriage in Early Tudor England, *Feminist Studies,* Vol. 15, No. 1 (1989), pp. 59-88.
Hattendorf, John. B., 'John Churchill, first duke of Marlborough', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (May 2014).
Heal, Felicity and Holmes, Clive, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Macmillan Press: Hampshire, 1994).
Heertum, Cis van, 'Joseph Swetnam', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (September 2004).
Henderson, T.F, 'John Beaumont', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, (*Sept 2004).
Henderson, T.F, revised by Janey Sorensen, 'John Campbell, third earl of Breadalbane and Holland', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (September, 2004).
Hintz, Carrie, 'All People Seen and Known: Dorothy Osbourne, Privacy, and Seventeenth-Century Courtship', *Dalhousie Review*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (1998), pp .365-383.
Holloway, Sally, *The Game of Love in Georgian England: Courtship, Emotions and Material Culture* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2019).
Hopkins, Paul, 'John Campbell, first Earl of Breadalbane and Holland', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (January 2008).
Hochschild, A.R, 'Emotion work, feeling rules, and social structure', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 85, No. 3 (1979), pp. 551–75.
Houlbrooke, Ralph, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000).
Hufton, Olwen H., *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe* (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1996).
Huizinga, Johan, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages,* trans. Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch, (Chicago University Press: Chicago, 1997).
Hull, Suzanne W., *Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for women 1475-1640* (Huntington Library: San Marino, 1982).
Hulse, L., "'Apollo's Whirligig": William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle, and his music collection', *Seventeenth Century*, 9/2 (1994), pp. 213–46.

Hulse, Lynn, "'The King's Entertainment' by the Duke of Newcastle', *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Vol. 26, (1995), pp. 355-405.
Hulse, Lynn, 'William Cavendish, first duke of Newcastle upon Tyne', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Jan 2011).
Hultquist, Aleksondra, 'The Passions', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), pp. 71-73.
Hutton, Ronald, 'George Monck, first duke of Albemarle', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Oct 2012).
Ingram, Martin, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England 1570-1640* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1987).
Jean LeDrew Metcalfe (ed.), 'Introduction' in Elizabeth Joscelin, *The Mother's Legacy to her Unborn Childe,* (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2000), pp. 3-38.
Johnson, James T., 'The Covenant Idea and the Puritan View of Marriage', *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 32, No. 1 (Mar 1971), pp. 107-118.
Keeble, N.H (ed.), *The Cultural Identity of Seventeenth Century Woman: A Reader* (Routledge: London, 1994), p. 18.
Kelsey, Sean, 'Oliver St. John fifth Baron St John of Blesto', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (May 2008).
Kelsey, Sean, 'Oliver, first earl of Bolingbroke', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (January 2008).
Kennedy, Allan, 'Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Scotland: The secular Courts of Restoration Argyllshire 1660-1688', *International Review of Scottish Studies,* Vol. 41 (2016), pp. 1-36.
Kennedy, Gwynne, *Just Anger: Representing Women's Anger in Early Modern England* (Southern Illinois University Press: USA, 2000).
Kenyon, J.P, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland 1641-1702* (Greenwood Press: Westport, 1975).
Knafla, Louis A., 'John Egerton, first earl of Bridgewater', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (October 2009).
Kugler, Anne, 'Constructing Wifely Identity: Prescription and Practice in the Life of Lady Sarah Cowper', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 40, No. 3, (July 2001), pp. 291-323.
Laam, Kevin, 'James Howell, Cavalier nuptial literature, and the Marriage Act of 1653' *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (2020), pp. 213-236.
Larminie, Vivienne, 'Marriage and the Family: The example of the Seventeenth Century Newdigates', *Midland History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1984), pp. 1-22.

Laurence, Anne, *Women in England 1500-1760: A Social History* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson: London, 1994).

Leites, Edmund, 'The Duty to Desire: Love, Friendship, and Sexuality in Some Puritan Theories of Marriage', *Journal of Social History,* Vol. 15, No. 3 (Spring 1982), pp. 383-408.

Lemmings, David, 'Marriage and the Law in the Eighteenth Century: Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753', *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 39, No. 2, (Jun 1996), pp. 339-360.

Lerch-Davis, Genie S., 'Rebellion against Public Prose: The Letters of Dorothy Osborne to William Temple (1652-52)', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language,* Vol. 20, No. 3, (Fall 1978), pp. 386-415.

Levack, Brian P., 'The Prosecution of Sexual Crimes in Early Eighteenth-Century Scotland', *The Scottish Historical Review,* Vol. 89, No. 228, Part 2, (October 2010), pp. 172-193.

Llewellyn, Nigel, *Funerals and Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Llewellyn, Nigel, *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual, c.1500-1800* (Published in Association with the Victoria and Albert Museum by Reaktion Books: London, 1991).

MacDonald, Michael, *Madness, anxiety, and healing in seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge University Press, New York: 1981).

Macfarlane, Alan, 'Reviewed Work: The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800 by Lawrence Stone', *History and Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (Feb., 1979), pp. 103-126.

MacFarlane, Alan, *Marriage and Love in England 1300-1840* (Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, 1986).

Macfarlane, Alan, *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin, A Seventeenth Century Clergyman: An essay in Historical Anthropology* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1970).

Marion Wynne-Davies, ' "With such a Wife 'tis heaven on earth to dwell": Memorialising the Early Modern Englishwoman', *Journal of the Northern Renaissance* 2 (2010), accessed at https://northernrenaissance.org/with-such-a-wife-tis-heaven-on-earth-to-dwell-memorialising-early-modern-englishwomen/, [accessed 10/12/2020].

Marshall, Alan, 'Thomas Thynne', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (January 2008).

Matikkala, Antti, *The Orders of Knighthood and the Formation of the British Honours System 1660-1760* (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2008).

Matt, Susan J. and Stearns, Peter N., 'Introduction' in Susan J. Matt and Peter N. Stearns (ed.), *Doing Emotions History* (University of Illinois Press, 2014), pp. 1-13.

Matt, Susan J., 'Recovering the Invisible Methods for the historical study of the emotions' in Susan J. Matt and Peter N. Stearns (ed.), *Doing Emotions History* (University of Illinois Press, 2014), pp. 41-54.

McKittrick, David, 'Ovid with a Littleton: The cost of English Books in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society,* Vol. 11, No. 2 (1997), pp. 184-234.
McLaren, Dorothy, 'The Marriage Act of 1653: Its influence on the parish Registers', *Population Studies,* Vol. 28, Issue. 2, (1974), pp. 319-327.
McMahon, Darin, 'Finding Joy in the History of Emotions' in Susan J. Matt, Peter N. Stearns (eds.), *Doing Emotions History* (University of Illinois Press, 2014), pp. 103-119.
Mellors, Robert, 'Scrooby', (1920), at http://www.nottshistory.org.uk/articles/mellorsarticles/scrooby5.htm, [accessed 28/04/2021]
Mendelson, Sara, 'Debate: The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper-Gentry Family in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present,* Issue 85, (November 1979), pp. 126-135.
Mendelson, Sara, and Crawford, Patricia, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998).
Metzger, Edward Charles, 'Ralph Montagu, first duke of Montagu', *ODNB,* (Sept 2004).
Miller, Naomi J. and Yavneh, Naomi (ed.), *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World: Sisters, Brothers and Others* (Routledge: Oxon, 2016).
Mingay, G.E., *The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class* (Longman Group Limited: London, 1976).
Murphy, Jessica C., *Virtuous Necessity: Conduct Literature and the Making of the Virtuous Woman in Early Modern England* (University of Michigan Press: USA, 2015).
Newton, Russell, 'The Social Production of Gentility and Capital in Early Modern England: The Newtons of Lincolnshire' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Durham University, 2017).
Norton, Elizabeth, 'The Blount Family in the Long Sixteenth Century' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Kings College London, 2019).
O'Hara, Diana, 'Ruled by my friends': aspects of marriage in the diocese of Canterbury, c. 1540-1570, *Continuity and Change*, Vol. 6, No. 1, (1999), pp. 9-41.
O'Day, Rosemary, 'Tudor and Stuart Women: their Lives through their Letters', in James Daybell (ed), *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700* (Palgrave: Hampshire, 2001), pp. 127-142.
O'Day, Rosemary, *An Elite Family in Early Modern England: The Temples of Stowe and Burton Dassett, 1570-1656* (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2018).
O'Day, Rosemary, *The Family and Family Relationships, 1500-1900* (Macmillan Press Ltd, London: 1994).
O'Hara, Diana, *Courtship and Constraints: Rethinking the making of marriage in Tudor England* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2000).

Panek, Jennifer, *Women and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge University Press: 2004).
Peck, Linda Levy, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005).
Peck, Linda Levy, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (Routledge: London, 1993).

Peter Rushton, 'Property, Power and Family Networks: The Problem of Disputed Marriage in Early Modern England', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 11, No. 3, (1986), pp. 205-219.
Peters, Christine, *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003).
Plamper, Jan, Reddy, William, Rosenwein, Barbara and Stearns, Peter, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory,* Vol. 49, No. 2 (May 2010), pp. 237-265.
Pollock, Linda A, 'Anger and the negotiation of relationships in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 47, Issue 3 (2004), pp. 567-590.
Pollock, Linda A, 'Childbearing and Female Bonding in Early Modern England', *Social History*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (Oct., 1997), pp. 286-306.
Pollock, Linda A, 'Embarking on a rough passage: the experience of pregnancy in early-modern society', in Valerie Fildes (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (Routledge, Oxon: 2013), pp. 39-67.
Pollock, Linda A., *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1983).
Pollock, Linda, 'Honor, Gender, and Reconciliation in Elite Culture, 1570-1700', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 46, No. 1 (January 2007), pp. 3-29.
Pollock, Linda, 'Review: 'An Action Like a Stratagem' Courtship and Marriage from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century', *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 30, No. 2 (June, 1987), pp. 483-498.
Pollock, Linda, ' "Teach her to live under obedience": the making of women in the upper ranks of early modern England', *Continuity and Change,* Vol. 4, Issue 2, (August 1989), pp.231-258.
Poska, Allyson M., 'Upending Patriarchy: Rethinking Marriage and Family in Early modern Europe' in Allyson M. Poska, Jane Couchman and Katherine A. McIver (eds.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Routledge: Oxon, 2016), pp. 195-211.

Potkay, Adam, *The Passion for Happiness: Samuel Johnson and David Hume* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, 2000).

Powell, Chilton Latham, *English Domestic Relations 1487-1653* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1917).

Probert, Rebecca, *Marriage Law and Practice in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009).

Reddy, William M., *The Navigation of Feeling: A framework for the history of emotions* (Cambridge University Press: 2001).

Reddy, William, 'Against Constructivism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions', *Current Anthropology,* Vol. 38, No. 3 (June 1997), pp. 327-351.

Rickman, Johanna, 'He would never consent in his heart: child marriages in Early Modern England', *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth,* Vol. 6, Issue 2, (Spring 2013), pp. 293-314.

Roberts, S. Bryn, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness: The Ministry and Theology of Ralph Venning, c.1621–1674* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015).

Rosenheim, James M., *The Emergence of a Ruling Order: English Landed Society 1650-1750* (Wesley Longman Limited: Essex, 1998).

Rosenwein, Barbara H., 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 3 (June 2002), pp. 821-845.

Rosenwein, Barbara H., 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context,* No. 1, (2010), pp. 1-32.

Rosenwein, Barbara H., *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Cornell University Press: New York, 2006).

Rosenwein, Barbara H., *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600-1700* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2016).

Rosenwein, Barbara, 'Reviewed Work: The Navigation of Feeling: A framework for the History of Emotions William M. Reddy', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 4 (October 2002), pp. 1181-1182.

Roulston, Chris, 'Space and the representation of marriage in eighteenth-century advice literature', *The Eighteenth Century,* Vol. 49, No. 1, (Spring 2008), pp. 25-41.

Sarasohn, Lisa T., *The Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish: Reason and Fancy during the Scientific Revolution* (Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland: 2010).

Scheer, Monique, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Takes them have a History)? A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory,* Vol. 51, No. 2 (May 2012), pp. 193-220.

Schneider, Gary, 'Affecting Correspondences: Body, Behaviour, and the Textualization of Emotion in Early Modern English Letters', *Prose Studies,* 23:1, (2000), pp. 31-62.

Schneider, Gary, *The Culture of Epistolary: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500-1700,* (University of Delaware Press: Newark, 2005).

Schotte, Margaret, "Books for the Use of the Learned and Studious": William London's "Catalogue of Most Vendible Books", *Book History,* Vol. 11 (2008), pp. 33-57.

Schutte, Kimberly F., 'Marrying by the Numbers: Marriage Patterns of Aristocratic British Women, 1485-2000', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kansas, 2011).

Schutte, Kimberly F., *Women, Rank, and Marriage in the British Aristocracy, 1485-2000: An Open Elite* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2014).

Seddon, P.R, 'Henry Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Newcastle', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Sept 2004)

Seddon, P.R, 'John Holles, Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Sept 2004).

Seymour, Mark, *Emotional Arenas: Life, Love, and Death in 1870s Italy* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2020).

Sharpe, J.A, *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550-1760* (London: 1993).

Shepard, Alexandra, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006).

Sherlock, Peter, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Ashgate Publishing Limited: England, 2008).

Shorter, Edward, *The Making of the Modern Family* (Collins: London, 1976).

Simon-Martin, Meritxell, ' "Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon's Travel Letters" Performative identity-formation in epistolary narratives', *Women's History Review*, 22:2, (2013), pp. 225-238.

Slack, Paul, 'The Politics of Consumption and England's Happiness in the Later Seventeenth Century', *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 122, No. 497 (June 2007), pp. 609-631.

Slater, Miriam, 'The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper- Gentry Family in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present,* No. 72 (Aug., 1976), pp. 25-54.

Smith, Lisa Wynne, 'Resisting Silences: Gender and Family Trauma in Eighteenth-Century England', *Gender and History,* Vol. 32, No. 1, (March 2020), pp. 30-53.

Snyder, Henry L., 'Charles Spencer, third earl of Sunderland', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (May 2006).

Somerville, Margaret R., *Sex and Subjection: Attitudes to Women in Early- Modern Society* (Arnold: London, 1995).

Speck, W.A, 'Robert Harley', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oct 2007).

Speck, W.A., 'Robert Spencer, second earl of Sunderland', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Jan 2008).

Spring, Eileen, *Law, Land and Family: Aristocratic Inheritance in England 1300 to 1800* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill and London, 1993).

Stearns, Carol Zisowitz and Stearns, Peter N., *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1986).

Stearns, Peter N. and Stearns, Carol Z., 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 90, No. 4 (Oct., 1985), pp. 813-836.

Stearns, Peter N., 'Prescriptive literature', in Katie Barclay, Sharon Crozier-de Rosa and Peter N. Stearns (eds.), *Sources for the History of Emotions: A Guide* (Routledge: Oxon, 2021), pp. 53-65.

Stearns, Peter, 'The History of Happiness', *Harvard Business Review*, (January 1, 2012), at https://hbr.org/2012/01/the-history-of-happiness, [accessed 02/02/2021].

Stone, Lawrence and Stone, Jeanne C. Fawtier, *An Open Elite?: England 1540-1880* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1986).

Stone, Lawrence *The Crisis of Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford University Press: London, 1967).

Stone, Lawrence, *Broken Lives: Separation and Divorce in England, 1660-1857* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993).

Stone, Lawrence, *Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1990).

Stone, Lawrence, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Penguin Books: England, 1977).

Stone, Lawrence, *Uncertain Unions: Marriage in England 1660-1753* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1992).

Tadmor, Naomi, 'Early modern English kinship in the long run: reflections on continuity and change', *Continuity and Change*, Vol. 25, No. 1, (2010), pp. 15-48.

Tadmor, Naomi, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001).

Tague, Ingrid H., 'Love, Honor, and Obedience: Fashionable Women and Discourse of Marriage in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 40, No. 1 (Jan., 2001), pp. 76-106.
Thomas, Keith, 'The Double Standard', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Apr., 1959), pp. 195-216.
Thompson, A., *Memoirs of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, V*olume II* (London: 1839)
Todd, Barbara, 'The Remarrying Widow: A Stereotype reconsidered', in Mary Prior (ed.). *Women in English society 1500-1800* (Methuen & Co. Ltd: London, 1985), pp. 54-92.
Travitsky, Betty S, 'Elizabeth Egerton, countess of Bridgewater', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (September 2004).
Travitsky, Betty S. (ed.), *Subordination and authorship in early modern England : the case of Elizabeth Cavendish Egerton and her "loose papers"* (Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Arizona, 1999).
Travitsky, Betty S., 'Reconstructing the still, small voice: The Occasional journal of Elizabeth Egerton', *Women's Studies,* Vol. 19, Issue 2 (1991), pp. 193-200.
Trumbach, Randolph, 'Reviewed Work: The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800 by Lawrence Stone', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Autumn, 1979), pp. 136-143.
Trumbach, Randolph, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic kinship and domestic relations in Eighteenth Century England* (Academic Press: New York, 1978).
Turner, David, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660-1740* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2002).
Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England* (Vintage Books: New York, 1991).
Urban, Marsha, *Seventeenth- Century Mother's Advice Books* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2006).
Usher, Brett, 'William Gouge', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Jan, 2008).
Vaught, Jennifer, 'Introduction', in Jennifer Vaught with Lynne Dickson Bruckner (ed.), *Grief and Gender 700-1700* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2003).
Vickery, Amanda, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (Yale University Press: London, 2009).
Vickery, Amanda, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (Yale University Press: London, 1999).
Walker, Katharine Aygne, 'Seventeenth Century Northern Noble Widows: A comparative study', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Huddersfield, 2004).

Walters, Lisa, *Margaret Cavendish: Gender, Science and Politics* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2014).

Ward, E.F, *Christopher Monck, Duke of Albemarle* (London: J Murray, 1915)

Warner, Lyndan, 'Stepfamilies in Early Modern Europe: Paths of Historical Inquiry', *History Compass,* Vol. 14, Issue 10, (October 2010), pp. 480-492.

White, R.S, 'Language of Emotions', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* (Routledge: Oxon, 2017), pp. 33-36.

Whyman, Susan E., *Sociability and Power in Late-Stuart England: The Cultural World of the Verneys 1660-1720* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1999).

Wiesner, Merry E., *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press: New York, 1993).

Withington, Phil, 'The Invention of Happiness' in Michael J. Braddick and Joanna Innes, *Suffering and Happiness in England 1550-1850* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2017), pp. 45-64.

Worsley, Lucy and Addyman, Tom, 'Riding Houses and Horses: William Cavendish's Architecture for the Art of Horsemanship', *Architectural History,* Vol. 45, (2002) pp. 194-229.

Worsley, Lucy, 'Building a Family: William Cavendish, First Duke of Newcastle, and the Construction of Bolsover and Nottingham Castles', *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 19, Issue 2 (2004), pp. 233-259.

Worsley, Lucy, 'Henrietta Harley [neé Holles], *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Jan 2008).

Wrightson, Keith, *English Society 1580-1680* (Routledge: Oxon, 2003).

Smith, Lisa Wynne, 'Resisting Silences: Gender and Family Trauma in Eighteenth-Century England', *Gender and History,* Vol. 32, No. 1, (March 2020), pp. 30-53.

Yerby, George, 'William Pierrepont', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (May 2015).

Zimmerman, Cassandra J., 'Elites and Patronage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England' (unpublished doctoral thesis, West Illinois University, 2013).

Appendix.

Ages of husband and wife upon first marriage in the Cavendish family network. [1]

Date of marriage	Wife	Age	Husband	Age	Age Difference [Husband (-) wife]
1641	Elizbeth Cavendish	15	John Egerton	18	3
1652	Frances Pierrepont	22	Henry Cavendish	22	0
1654	Jane Cavendish	33	Charles Cheyne	29	-4
1669	Elizabeth Cavendish	15	Christopher Monck	16	1
1679	Elizabeth Percy	12	Henry Cavendish	16	4
1684	Katherine Cavendish	19	Thomas Tufton	40	21
1685	Frances Cavendish	25	John Campbell	23	-2
1690	Margaret Cavendish	29	John Holles	28	-1
1695	Arabella Cavendish	22	Charles Spencer	30	8
1713	Henrietta Cavendish	19	Edward Harley	24	5
		21.1		24.6	3.5

[1] This information has been collated through use of primary source material such as marriage contracts and letters (See: UNMASC, Portland Welbeck Collection; UNMASC, Estate and Official Papers of the Newcastle family; BL, Cavendish Papers, Add MS 70500; NRS, Papers of the Campbell family) as well as published biographical information found largely through the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.