

ACTION AND REACTION: A REGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE DISSOLUTION OF
THE ENGLISH MONASTERIES AND THE ENGLISH PEOPLE'S RESPONSES TO THE
DISMANTLING OF A TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION, 1535-1540

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This is dedicated to my husband Adam
and to my family for all of their encouragement
and support throughout this project.

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ABSTRACT

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The dissolution of the English monasteries was an important event during the English Reformation, but one that has been neglected in recent historiography. This thesis presents a new interpretation of the event, arguing that the dissolution occurred in two distinct phases and demonstrating that reactions to it varied widely across England. My interest in this topic was sparked by a monograph on the English Reformation that came out in 2003. In one chapter of *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, historian Ethan Shagan told the story of the dissolution of Hailes Abbey in England and used it to support his overarching argument of the book, that the English Reformation would not have been successful without the collaboration of many ordinary English people. Nevertheless, Shagan only looked at this one abbey, which left a need for a study investigating what happened at other abbeys and monasteries.

My evidence for this thesis comes mainly from *State Papers Online*, an online database of governmental documents from the reign of Henry VIII. Over 350 documents in this collection were consulted for this study, and they helped to illuminate the actions and views of royal visitors, abbots, monks, and laypeople. Based on these sources, this thesis reconstructs the visitation process, analyzes the reforms implemented, and assesses the closure pattern of various monasteries throughout England.

By comparing the evidence for other monasteries with that for Hailes Abbey, I argue that not all monasteries had the same process of dissolution and that the laity did not have a single, common reaction to the closures. Some people fought to keep monasteries open, while others

showed little concern for the monasteries and participated in the dismantling process. Ideally, this assessment will encourage more research into the processes, closures, and reactions to the dissolution of the monasteries throughout all regions of England.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1539, an anonymous author wrote “A Discourse against Treason,” which condemned both the teachings of the Catholic Church as well as an institution associated with it, the monasteries. The author, writing during the virulent time of the English Reformation, singled out one monastery in particular, Reading Abbey, by stating that the abbot and his brethren conspired, “with pestilent and cankered counsel to overthrow a prince most puissant...[they are] old rotten monks, rusty friars, and pockyd priests as seldom hath been heard of...”¹ This document, written near the end of the dissolution, reveals a negative view of one English monastery, but views such as these persisted against other monasteries as well throughout the entire dissolution.

Nevertheless, others documents reveal that many English people held more positive opinions about the monasteries and mourned their destruction.

What made a supposedly thriving English medieval institution collapse during the reign of Henry VIII? How did the dissolution progress in different regions in England? How long did it take, on average, to shut down a monastery? Did negative views of the monasteries proliferate among ordinary English people, or were there still people who defended the monasteries and traditional Catholic religion? Was there resistance to the dissolution, or were the English people active in helping with the dissolution? A more thorough and updated assessment of the dissolution of the English monasteries is necessary. In this thesis, a clearer picture of the actions and reactions of ordinary people in England will emerge by comparing the well-known example of Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire with the experiences of monasteries in other regions throughout England. A thorough examination of primary source documents will reveal that there

¹ A Discourse against Treason, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500639, Document Ref.: SP 1/155 f. 50.

were two distinct phases in the dissolution of the English monasteries, with one focused on reform and the other focused distinctly on closure, and that actions and reactions of the ordinary people were not consistent with Hailes Abbey but varied from county to county and monastery to monastery throughout England.

i.

The dissolution of the English monasteries was an important and controversial event that took place during the English Reformation. The controversy has lived on long after the event itself, with some historians arguing that it was inevitable after the decline of traditional Catholic religion and other historians denying, to varying degrees, that traditional religion was in decline at all, arguing that there had to be other factors leading to the dissolutions. Thus, the historiography of the English Reformation and the English monasteries has gone through many revisions through the years.

From roughly the 1900s to the late 1970s, historians mostly agreed that the English Reformation occurred violently and rapidly and that the Protestant religion fully replaced traditional Catholic religion. The disappearance of the monasteries was just one aspect of this rapid change. Early twentieth century historiography on the dissolution of the monasteries revolved around the work of David Knowles and referenced his work on any topic that discussed monasteries or the dissolution.² Historians during the late twentieth and early twenty-first

² Joan Greatrex, "After Knowles: Recent Perspectives in Monastic History," in *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, ed. James Clark (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002), 35. Greatrex gives details on how many of Knowles's conclusions on the monasteries are still relevant. Only the availability of new sources, not known to Knowles at the time, have enhanced his conclusions or altered them to some degrees. For brief notes on Knowles's contribution to later historians, see Joyce Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd, 1971). A.G. Dickens relates that Knowles did such thorough research and description on the reasons for dissolution that it would be redundant to explore them again in his work; A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), 140. In G.W.O Woodward's bibliographical notes, Woodward separates Knowles's work from his other entries, explaining that it is the authoritative text on the dissolution of the

century continuously referred to Knowles's three volume monograph, *The Religious Orders in England*, which traced the history of monastic foundation through the dissolution of the monasteries. In Knowles's final volume, *The Tudor Age*, he explained that the accession of the Tudors brought a change from medieval to modern that previous historians glossed over.

Knowles continued by stating,

in consequence, the dissolution of the monasteries has almost invariably been treated, both in outline histories and in monographs, by those primarily interested in the age of the Reformation, and their approach to it has been by way of a backward glance at the circumstances and tendencies that made, or seemed to make, the disappearance of the monasteries either inevitable or at least desirable.³

The word "inevitability" often appeared in connection to the pre-1980s texts on the dissolution, with historians arguing that England's change from Catholicism to Protestantism was unavoidable. Knowles's primary complaint with this assessment was that these historians looked at the results of the dissolution and assumed that the events leading up to the dissolution ensured the monasteries' demise.⁴ As Knowles pointed out, the word "inevitable" becomes vague when applied haphazardly. From what point does an event become "inevitable"? The problem with stating an event is "historically inevitable" or simply "inevitable" is that the date of inevitability can vary, from early monastic foundation through the dissolution of the monasteries. Knowles and many subsequent historians reversed this trend by addressing how the dissolution of the monasteries was not inevitable.

monasteries. He lists articles that supplement Knowles's text, but do not supersede it; G.W.O. Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (New York: Walker and Company, 1966), 174.

³ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), ix.

⁴ In Knowles's preface to *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, he names specific historians who he believes subscribe to the notion that the dissolution was inevitable and that people wanted it to occur. He takes issue with these historians not doing more research on the time between the fall of the Plantagenets and the fall of Cardinal Wolsey in Henry VII's reign. Knowles states that their views on inevitability come from a lack of research into this time, which was immediately prior to the dissolution of the monasteries during Henry VIII's reign. Knowles specifically names J. A. Froude, H. A. L. Fisher, Gairdner, F. A. Gasquet, G. Baskerville, G. Constant, and P. Hughes as the primary historians associated with the dissolution's inevitable end.

Current historian Joan Greatrex states that “Knowles saw clearly that the Dissolution was not historically inevitable, that the years between 1485 and 1535 were not a period of ‘decline and decay in an institution doomed to extinction through its own weaknesses and its failure to keep abreast of the times.’”⁵ Knowles did not see the dissolution as historically inevitable, but he hinted that there was a decline in religious morals. Knowles also asserted that King Henry VIII and his advisor Thomas Cromwell’s primary motive was financial gain, not religious change. He stated that “we can...say with some confidence that financial, and not religious motives were uppermost in the minds of both king and minister; less confidently, but still with fair certainty, that both proceeded resolutely but as it were experimentally...”⁶ Knowles’s differing opinion on historical inevitability came from his view on the motives for the dissolution itself. If the King and Cromwell acted on purely financial motives, there would have been a chance that monasteries could have survived the change from a medieval to a modern society. While Knowles urged against the dissolution being inevitable, he conceded that “it is possible that the Dissolution would have taken place less violently and less rapidly had another than Cromwell been in power.”⁷ Knowles admitted that the dissolution might have happened no matter who was in power, but the results would have come about in a less destructive and slower manner.

Historians writing after Knowles followed in his footsteps and revised the notion of inevitability. In his monograph, *The English Reformation*, A.G. Dickens stated, “Certainly they [monastic houses] were not dissolved because of any dangerous devotion to the Papacy; anyone who believed this of any save an exiguous minority of English monks must have been highly

⁵ Joan Greatrex, “After Knowles: Recent Perspectives in Monastic History,” in *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, ed. James Clark (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002), 36. Greatrex partially quotes the work of another historian within her assessment. See H.O. Evenett, “The Last Stages of Medieval Monasticism in England,” *Studia Monastica* 2 (1960): 387-419 at 388.

⁶ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 203.

⁷ Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age*, 205.

prejudiced or foolish.”⁸ Dickens concurred with Knowles that the primary reason for the dissolution was the financial motivations of those in power, and like Knowles, Dickens saw Thomas Cromwell, not Henry VIII, as the main instigator. Dickens continued in the same vein as Knowles, stating that the dissolution of the monasteries “had only indirect connections with the rise of Protestantism.”⁹ However, Dickens proceeded to state that because the King still followed traditional religion, “there remained only one basis upon which a general dissolution could publicly be recommended – that of bad discipline and general inefficiency.”¹⁰ Religion became the pretense for the dissolution, covering up financial motivations.

G.W.O. Woodward’s 1966 work, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, furthered the argument for financial motivations by suggesting two motives for the dissolution. Like Knowles and Dickens, he believed that financial motivation was the primary reason for the dissolution and stated that religious pretense, in the form relics, pilgrimages, and money that was associated with the aspects of traditional Catholic religion, only sped up the dissolution process.¹¹ In her 1971 study, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, Joyce Youings elaborated on the financial motives of the dissolution, wholly dismissing religious motivations. She wrote: “It is true that the Dissolution had very substantial religious, as well as social and economic, consequences, but its inspiration and execution owed little to religious considerations.”¹² Youings argued that the dissolution occurred because monasteries were landowners and others within the realm desired their land. She speculated that the dissolution would have taken place whether or not Protestantism permeated the English country.¹³ Youings addressed economics more than

⁸ A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), 139.

⁹ Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 141.

¹⁰ Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 141.

¹¹ G.W.O Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (New York: Walker and Company, 1966), 50-52.

¹² Joyce Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd, 1971), 13.

¹³ Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, 14.

Knowles, and unlike Knowles, she contended it was inevitable that the dissolution occurred. Thus, David Knowles's assessment of monastic life and the dissolution of the English monasteries set the stage for further investigation. Pre-1980s historians built on his assessment and actively addressed what they felt was correct and what needed revision. However, research into the dissolution came to a virtual halt in the 1980s to the late 1990s.

In the 1980s through the late 1990s, historians no longer wrote monograph-sized studies on monastic life or the dissolution of the English monasteries. Monasteries appeared in single chapters or footnotes to larger studies on the English Reformation. Revisionist historians updated the general historiography of the English Reformation. They dismissed the idea that it occurred rapidly and violently and argued that it occurred slowly and over a longer period of time.¹⁴ As J.J. Scarisbrick stated in his 1982 Ford Lectures, which were later compiled into the book, *The Reformation and the English People*, "...on the whole, English men and women did not want the Reformation and most of them were slow to accept it when it came."¹⁵ Scarisbrick and other historians maintained that the Reformation occurred "from above," not "from below," signifying that the Reformation did not occur from popular support but from the workings of the English government and high ranking officials.¹⁶

While historians prior to the revisionists implicated the English government in the dissolutions, they also asserted that the population no longer felt that monasteries were relevant in an emerging Protestant nation. Revisionist historians argued that there was no such sentiment from the English people and that many people resisted the government's actions. Christopher

¹⁴ Three major revisionist historians feature in this historiographical analysis because of their major contributions to the revisionist movement. See J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, 1984), Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

¹⁵ J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, 1984), 1.

¹⁶ Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People*, 1.

Haigh stated in his monograph, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors*, that the dissolution of the monasteries and other acts against traditional Catholic religion “...did not come in swift and orderly sequence, as consecutive steps of a pre-planned programme or a protest movement: they came (and went again) as the accidents of everyday politics and the consequences of power struggles.”¹⁷ Revisionist historians emphasized politics and powerful people making decisions on the dissolution and did not see the Catholic religion in disrepair. Traditional religion still was strong, but they argued that the English government gradually attacked it. Scarisbrick and Haigh utilized sources relatively neglected by previous historians. They analyzed churchwardens’ accounts and wills to get a better idea of how ordinary people viewed traditional religion. From these accounts, they concluded that traditional religion permeated the lives of ordinary people in England.

While Scarisbrick and Haigh emphasized traditional Catholic religion, Eamon Duffy significantly improved research on the extent to which ordinary people embraced traditional Catholic religion and its practices. However, focused as it was on the laity, Duffy did not include much about the monasteries in his work. He specifically stated that he focused on “...the parish setting, saying almost nothing about the important and widespread influence of the religious orders.”¹⁸ While there were scattered references to monasteries, especially in the second half of his monograph, they mainly referred to how the government viewed superstition within this institution.

¹⁷ Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 13. This monograph expands upon his previous works, see Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975) and Christopher Haigh, ed, *The English Reformation Revised* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987). His recent views are the most relevant to the continual expanding historiography of the English Reformation.

¹⁸ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 6. Duffy referenced Scarisbrick and Haigh by name, saying that he wanted to approach the English Reformation not through the perspective of Protestants or Lollards but through remaining Catholics.

Thus, many revisionist accounts of the English Reformation neglected to explain where the dissolution of the monasteries fit into their “from above” argument of the Reformation. Revisionist historians briefly stated that the government was instrumental in dissolving the monasteries, but that assessment did not explain why ordinary people did not fight against their closure. Specifically, if traditional religion was not in decline and if the English Reformation occurred slowly, then what explained the dissolution and monasteries’ relatively rapid decline?

In the twenty-first century, post-revisionist scholars began pointing out the flaws in revisionist views. James Clark commented that “...it seems there is no place in this revised picture for the older religious orders themselves.”¹⁹ Clark continued by stating that, “Apparently, the communities of monks, friars and nuns had long since been edged into the margins and their active contributions to social and spiritual life was minimal.”²⁰ Ethan Shagan also remarked on the absence of the monasteries from revisionist historiography by stating that, “Within the ‘revisionist’ interpretation of Henry VIII’s reign, then, the dissolution of the monasteries has been almost wholly divorced from the Reformation as a spiritual process, since it was apparently so easily assimilable by traditionalist Catholics.”²¹ Revisionist scholars focused more on the parish setting and the personal religious lives of the people; local studies on smaller religious institutions replaced studies on the religious orders. However, monasteries were prevalent in English society and would not have gone unnoticed during this turbulent time. At the turn of the twenty-first century, historians started to reassess the historiography of the English Reformation,

¹⁹ James Clark, ed., *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002), 4.

²⁰ Clark, ed., *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, 4; Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 5; and Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 28-29.

²¹ Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 163.

and some of these historians put the monasteries back in the context of English Reformation historiography.

Post-revisionist scholars' assessments of the English Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries combined the pre-revisionist and revisionist views.²² Ethan Shagan's *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* highlighted the post-revisionist view precisely by stating that "...while there were few conversions to Protestantism, there were none the less enormous changes in how English people imagined the Church, the relationship between Church and state, and the meanings of their own religious practices."²³ Significantly, post-revisionists' reassessment of the English Reformation also included the dissolution of the monasteries. Shagan's chapter entitled "Selling the sacred: Reformation and the dissolution at the Abbey of Hailes" addressed the previous absence of the dissolution of the monasteries from revisionist scholarship. He dismantled the previously held "from above" view of the English Reformation by stating that, "It would seem that such a massive and outrageously sacrilegious project as the destruction of abbeys could not have been undertaken without some degree of popular support."²⁴ He addressed the blatant omissions from revisionist historians on the dissolution of the monasteries by stating, "...we have the odd spectacle that the two great histories of the English Reformation written in the 1990s, Eamon Duffy's *Stripping of the Altars* and Christopher Haigh's *English Reformations*, both almost entirely omit one of the English Reformation's central themes."²⁵

²² Peter Marshall, "(Re)defining the English Reformation," *Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 3 (2009): 565-566. This article consists of the changing historiography of the English Reformation. The pages listed above are specific to general descriptions of revisionism and post-revisionism in the context of the English Reformation.

²³ Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 23.

²⁴ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 163.

²⁵ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 163.

Further, Shagan posed a significant question for the study of the dissolution of the monasteries. He asked “what did it mean for ostensible followers of Eamon Duffy’s ‘traditional religion’ to participate in the wholesale destruction of a central pillar of Catholic religiosity?”²⁶ He answered this question through analyzing the dissolution of Hailes Abbey and the destruction of the Blood of Hailes, the holy relic kept within the confines of the abbey. Shagan concluded that there was participation and collaboration from people of all religious leanings, from evangelicals to staunch Catholics, in the dismantling of this monastery. There were different reasons for these actions; these reasons included a desire to tear down an idolatrous reminder of Catholicism, selling items out of greed for money, taking items so the Crown and government would not obtain them, or keeping items in hope of a day when Catholicism would become the dominant religion in England again. Shagan used sources previously neglected by other historians, such as the State Papers. The State Papers are governmental documents, including letters from governmental officials, official acts and proclamations, and any other action taken by the government on English affairs. They provide useful insight into the reactions of the ordinary people to the dissolution of the monasteries.

Shagan based his assessment on one monastery in one region of England. While this was quite helpful in advancing the historiography on the dissolution of the monasteries, it did not address what occurred at other monasteries throughout England. The dissolution of Hailes Abbey occurred in 1539, which begs the question of whether the process to dissolve it can be adequately compared to visitations, injunctions, and closures from 1535-1537. In fact, there were two distinct phases in the dissolution of the monasteries, something no previous study of the dissolution has made clear. The first phase, from 1535 to early 1537, reveals initial attitudes

²⁶ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 164.

toward the monasteries, from the visitors' thoughts on their physical and religious state to the monks and abbots' replies to visitations, injunctions, reform, and possible closure. The second phase, from late 1537 to roughly 1540, shows some similarities to the first phase of the dissolution but also has some distinct differences. While there are still letters from visitors, monks, and abbots, the focus of the letters changed from reforming the monasteries to the closure, even for the remaining larger, wealthier monastic houses. Starting in 1537, monasteries were no longer only closed for being poor or being in decay; they closed because they were a threat to the new Protestant religion. The ordinary peoples' actions and reactions appear in both phases of the dissolution. While there are not many letters directly from ordinary people to Cromwell and other high ranking officials, visitors, monks, and abbots reference the laity's actions and reactions throughout their letters.

This assessment seeks to answer many questions only briefly touched on in the historiography of the dissolution of the English monasteries. Was the dissolution of the monasteries consistent throughout all regions of England? What happened on the grounds of the monasteries between 1535 and 1540? How were dissolutions carried out precisely? What specifically occurred in the two phases of the dissolution to make them distinct from each other? Were the people's actions and reactions the same as at Hailes Abbey, or did they vary from region to region? By using *State Papers Online*, the digitized sources version of the State Papers, and other collections of letters, this paper investigates the process of the dissolution of the monasteries throughout England, while placing emphasis on the officials involved in this two-phase process, as well as the ordinary peoples' reactions to reform and closure in both phases. From an analysis of *State Papers Online*, it is clear that there were two distinct phases in the

dissolution of the English monasteries and that the actions and reactions of the ordinary people varied from county to county and monastery to monastery throughout England.

ii.

Chapter two will begin with an examination of the visitation process during the first phase of the dissolution from 1535 to early 1537; this chapter emphasizes that the royal government did not initiate closure right away, but rather to implement reforms. Chapter three illustrates the shift in royal policy toward the monasteries, from reform to immediate closure in the second phase of the dissolution. Finally, chapter four reveals the English people's reactions in both phases to the royal government's actions against monasteries.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST PHASE OF THE DISSOLUTION

When writing about the first years of the dissolution of the English monasteries, which occurred from 1535 to early 1537, twentieth-century historian David Knowles stated that, “There is no clear evidence that either minister or king had decided upon total or even partial suppression before the visitation began, whereas there is some slight indication that a drastic reform was intended.”²⁷

During these early years, Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell appointed royal visitors (also referred to as royal commissioners) to execute extensive visitations of the monasteries and implement religious and moral reforms to delinquent houses. While there were some closures of smaller religious houses during this first phase of the dissolution, there is little indication that total dissolution was the initial intent. An analysis of letters and governmental documents primarily from *State Papers Online* will show that it is clear that the visitors, abbots, and monks did not see the royal visitations as an inevitable end to monastic religious practices and way of life. The visitation process, the injunctions implemented, and the smaller closures reveal the intent of the first phase of the dissolution of the monasteries, which primarily was to assess the state of the English monasteries, reform their religious practices, and close those monasteries which were in debt and in disrepair.

Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell chose men from relatively upper-class backgrounds to complete the royal visitations. Knowles mentions four of these royal visitors -- Thomas Legh, Richard Layton, John Ap Rice, and John Tregonwell -- who constantly wrote to Cromwell

²⁷ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 270.

expressing their observations of monastic houses throughout England.²⁸ Knowles describes these men as “...all men of intelligence who made for themselves careers of some distinction and considerable profit quite apart from their connection with the monasteries...All were either canonists, civilians or common lawyers, and were used, after the fashion of Henry’s servants, for every kind of business, administrative, judicial, and diplomatic.”²⁹ From looking at the letters written during 1535 to early 1537, they reveal that Cromwell appointed additional men in specific geographical regions to carry out visitations in lieu of the primary visitors. These included Thomas Bedyll; Thomas Howard, the Duke of Norfolk; Richard Pollard; Richard Southwell; Piers Dutton; and Richard Strete.³⁰ While some of these men carried out visitations by themselves, others completed brief surveys of a house while waiting for other visitors to arrive and complete more extensive surveys.

The surviving royal visitors’ letters offer a detailed picture of the royal visitations. It was the visitor’s job to report any misdoings within the monastic walls, from moral indiscretions to squandering monastic funds. Historian Eamon Duffy describes the royal visitors as sending “mocking reports and inventories of the contents of the monastic reliquaries, to convict the monks of superstition and pious racketeering.”³¹ Another historian, G.W. Bernard, declares that the monastic visitors’ “skepticism about monasticism is only too evident,” but he also states that some documents indicate no monastic transgressions and therefore deserve attention rather than

²⁸ Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age*, 270-274.

²⁹ Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age*, 270. For more on the specific descriptions of each royal visitor, See David Knowles, Chapter XXII: The Visitation of 1535-1536.

³⁰ David Knowles mentions a main group of five visitors, but the other visitors listed had just as many documents on their visitations. Each had a specific region in which they more frequently visited: Bedyll was in the East; The Duke of Norfolk was mostly in the North and the East; Pollard and Southwell appeared in all regions; and Dutton and Strete surveyed the West. Christopher Haigh also asserts that in Lancashire, local commissioners carried out visitations on the monasteries in that region: Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 118.

³¹ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 384.

dismissal.³² By examining the royal visitors' reports alongside the letters of abbots and monks, a clearer and less biased account of the royal visitations of 1535-1536 unfolds.

The first phase of the dissolution of the English monasteries occurred from 1535 to early 1537. From the letters of the visitors, abbots, and monks, we can piece together the structure of the typical visitation process.³³ This chapter offers a breakdown of that process, along with the occurrences after the visitations. First, it reveals that there were distinct patterns in the visitation process that appear from monastery to monastery and from region to region. Visitors arrived at the monasteries, made assessments of what they viewed as needing reform, and wrote a report to Cromwell laying out views of the religious practices and personal culture of the religious residents. The visitations stressed reform of the monasteries, with most visitors only reporting on the indiscretions at each house and not suggesting closure as a main avenue to reform religion in England. Secondly, this chapter touches on the injunctions enacted at each monastic house following the visitations. The injunctions were rules enacted to curb any indiscretions taking place at the monasteries. This section also explores whether monastic men followed or ignored these new rules. Finally, this chapter explores the infrequency of monastic closure and why monasteries closed in the first phase of the dissolution.

iii.

The visitors frequently wrote to Thomas Cromwell, as can be seen by the numerous amounts of letters clustered around 1535-1536. Knowles states that the visitors had “a list of

³² G.W. Bernard, “The Dissolution of the Monasteries,” *History: The Journal of the Historical Association* 96, no. 324 (September, 2011): 396-398.

³³ Descriptions below reveal mostly visitations before the 1536 act dissolving the smaller monasteries. Around the time of the 1536 act, there was a document that gave a step by step process on how the remaining visitations should take place, mostly likely emulating the procedures already done by the visitors in 1535 and early 1536: Suppression of the Monasteries, 24 April 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800749, Document Ref.: SP 5/4 f. 145.

instructions” for when they travelled through the monasteries and “a set of injunctions to be issued at the end of the visitation.”³⁴ John Ap Rice indicated in a letter to Cromwell that the visitors sent Cromwell and the King daily reports of the places they visited and the activities and conditions of each monastic houses.³⁵ These numerous updates reveal the visitors’ views on subjects ranging from a general visitation to the injunctions they implemented to reform monastic houses. Most accounts touched on the physical condition of the monastic house, the religious and moral lives of the abbots and monks, an inventory of monastic goods, and suggestions about what to reform.

Richard Southwell, a visitor to monasteries in multiple regions of England, wrote an excellent description of a typical visitation when he visited a monastery called Hoxon. First, he wrote about the men within the house, who he felt were “far out of order, and none meet to take the charge of it.”³⁶ He continued by explaining the value of everything within the house, which he felt was not worth much value in this case.³⁷ John Tregonwell wrote remarks about ten or more monasteries in one letter to Cromwell. His letter explained his views on multiple houses he visited in eastern England. He stated that the abbot of Chacombe was “well-learned in Holy Scripture,” while the monks at Ensham had committed “all sorts of offences amongst them.”³⁸ Richard Strete, a local royal commissioner in western England, gave a cursory but informed view of the general visitation process. He stated that he went to Calwich Abbey, took an inventory of the goods in the house, and gave the monastery and monastic lands to the neighboring abbot of

³⁴ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 274.

³⁵ John Ap Rice to Cromwell, 22 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700668, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 48.

³⁶ Ric. Southwell to Cromwell, 11 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800083, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 58.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ John Tregonwell to Cromwell, 27 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700464, Document Ref.: SP 1/97 f. 28.

Rochester Abbey. Strete continued his letter by giving a breakdown of the value of the inventory and thoughts on who should get the land for this monastery.³⁹

Southwell, Tregonwell, and Strete's assessments followed the most typical format for visitation accounts. Southwell wrote on a common aspect of visitation accounts, which was describing life within the monastic house and the religious men's personal and moral attributes. Tregonwell's letter revealed how many visitors wrote about more than one monastery in their daily reports to Cromwell. Tregonwell also wrote both positive and negative assessments on the personal attributes of the men in religious houses. Strete touched on a common aspect of monastic visitations by giving the condition of the house with the inventory and dispersing any reforms that were need. In the case of Calwich, another abbot obtained the monastery's land, but the reforms could be anything from implementing a religious change to monitoring the monetary intake of the monastery. From these three visitation accounts, one can glean how the typical visitation took place and how the visitors reported their findings back to Cromwell.

Documents indicate that the visitors looked at all conditions of the monastery, commenting on both the physical condition of the monastic house as well as the lives of the men who lived within its walls. These assessments mirror each other in many ways and give more examples of what the visitors were looking for at the monasteries. Richard Layton visited Dunford Abbey in Sussex and stated that "it might better be called Dirtford, the poorest abbey I have seen...far in debt and in great decay."⁴⁰ However, he wrote that the abbot, "for his time,

³⁹ Ric. Strete to Cromwell, 12 May 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800888, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 283.

⁴⁰ Richard Layton to Cromwell, 26 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700451, Document Ref.: SP 1/97 f. 15. Layton also had similar comments about St. Andrew's, Northampton, stating that the abbot was a fine individual, but his house was greatly in debt: Richard Layton to Cromwell, 22 December 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701016, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 162.

had done well,” even though the monastery was in debt.⁴¹ The visitors viewed the abbot of Bath Abbey as virtuous but his monks as corrupt and sinful.⁴² Layton also commented that the prior of St. Andrew’s in Northampton was “a bachelor of divinity, a great husband, and a good clerk, and pity it is that ever he came there,” even though he had negative comments on the monastery itself.⁴³ While Layton’s remarks on Dunford, Bath, and St. Andrew’s exhibited both positive and negative qualities about the general condition of the monasteries, he did not always relay both positives and negatives in all descriptions.

Some accounts were purely negative in all remarks. Layton and Thomas Legh gave a scathing account of Fountains Abbey, where the house was “dilapidate[d],” the woods spoiled, and lewd women regularly frequented the monastery.⁴⁴ This last account echoed other visitation accounts from various parts of England. Visitors in southeastern England commented on the conditions of the abbot of Langdon and his monastic house by stating that the house was “in decay, the abbot unthrifty, and his convent ignored.”⁴⁵ They used the same format for describing Folkestone, by stating that it was “a little house, well repaired, and the prior a good husband and beloved by his neighbors.”⁴⁶ Many visitation accounts mixed the physical condition of the monastery with the men living within it. However, there were also accounts strictly on the attitudes and demeanors of the abbots and monks.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Richard Layton to Cromwell, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700046, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 38.

⁴³ Richard Layton to Cromwell, 22 December 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701016, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 162.

⁴⁴ Ric. Layton and Thos. Legh to Cromwell, 20 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800141, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 136.

⁴⁵ Thos. Bedyll, Hen. Polsted, and John Anthony to Cromwell, 16 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700838, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 258; Richard Layton to Cromwell, 23 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700676, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 54.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Various visitors commented on the way the abbots and monks acted during and after the visitations. Most accounts commented on the negative reactions the visitors received from the abbots and monks. Legh indicated that at Coventry and Stafford he found the religious men “very tractable, lacking only good instruction.”⁴⁷ Legh also thought the abbot of Bruton was very “haulte” and did not appreciate how the abbot treated him.⁴⁸ The visitors even interrogated some abbots and monks concerning their allegiance to the King. John Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester, stated that the prior of the Black Friars of Norwich would not obey any regulations within his friary.⁴⁹ Archbishop Edward Lee of York stated that when Legh and Layton visited with him and the monasteries in his diocese, they inquired as to whether his diocese followed the royal supremacy. He stated that “The priors of Hull and Mount Grace were sore bent rather to die than to yield to this your royal style, but I have persuaded both to change their opinion.”⁵⁰ Rather than become the enemy of both Cromwell and the King, Archbishop Lee attempted to convince them that he was reforming the men within his diocese.

An atypically generous account toward the visitors appears in a letter from Thomas Legh to Cromwell addressing his visit to Durham Abbey. Legh relayed to Cromwell how the bishop of Durham met him and his company “three or four miles from his house with a great company of his servants, and on our leaving him conducting us from Auckland, more than half the way to Durham Abbey.”⁵¹ He continues in this respectful tone by stating that the bishops gave him and

⁴⁷ Thomas Legh, LLD, to Cromwell, 11 August 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900284, Document Ref.: N/A.

⁴⁸ Dr. Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 24 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700173, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 155.

⁴⁹ John [Hilsey] Bishop of Rochester to Cromwell, July 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900198, Document Ref.: SP 1/105 f. 199.

⁵⁰ Archbishop Lee to Henry VIII, 14 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800103, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/VI f. 238.

⁵¹ Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 26 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800186, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 153.

his company many gifts and that the abbots in the bishop's diocese should take notice and replicate his actions.⁵² While small amounts of kindness from abbots or monks was not unheard of during the visitations, this amount of generosity far outdid any other gesture described in the visitors' reports examined for this study.

One of the first concrete reforms taken by visitors was often to replace men deemed a better fit to run a monastery.⁵³ This happened at Fountains Abbey, where Layton and Legh suggested that a man named Marmaduke Bradley replace the current abbot who Layton and Legh found to be obstinate and rebellious.⁵⁴ However, some abbots and monks, especially in northern England, did not approve of the royal government appointing abbots and monks to their monasteries. John Green, a monk of Furness Abbey, expressed that "the king should make no more abbots there, but they would choose them themselves."⁵⁵ While the north consistently appeared in letters as hostile toward the royal government and visitors, it is telling that the removal of abbots and monks appeared in all regions, with some religious men not commenting on its effects on their monasteries, and others openly complained against the King and Cromwell.

Many visitors mentioned relics in their assessments of monastic houses, citing superstition as a reason for reporting and subsequently removing these objects from their respective houses. Legh wrote a whole section of a letter on "superstition" and told of all of the

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Visitation accounts throughout England show this trend of the visitors and Thomas Cromwell suggesting who should or should not be abbots at certain monastic houses. A list of some of these documents includes: John [Maxey] Bp. of Elphin, Commendatory of Welbeck, to Cromwell, 2 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700754, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV; Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 7 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800054, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 35.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Further letters also tell of Marmaduke Bradley and his appointment as the abbot of Fountains: Marmaduke Abbot of Fountains to Cromwell, 6 March 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800433, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 148; Marmaduke Abbot of Fountains to Cromwell, 21 March 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800524, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 208.

⁵⁵ Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 112.

relics at Chertsey Abbey in Surrey, from “the arm bone of St. Blasius to an image of St. Faith.”⁵⁶ Layton wrote that Lewes Priory had a relic of St. Peter, which women could use at the time when they delivered a baby. He described this relic as “a very mockery and abuse that the prior should carry it...in a silver basin in process, and every monk kiss it after the Gospel with great solemnity...”⁵⁷ Layton also sent “Mary Magdalene’s comb, and St. Dorothy’s, and St. Margaret’s combs” to Cromwell and said that the monastery did not know how they came to have these relics, but nonetheless, they should not have them any longer.⁵⁸ Suspicious religious activity, such as keeping relics, was one of many aspects of monasteries examined during the visitation years.

In a few cases, monasteries reformed their religious practices in accordance with the visitors’ concerns. The monks of Christchurch, Canterbury stated that “it is not true that the worship of God is diminished,” in their house, since after the visitation, more men attended the correct number of masses than ever before.⁵⁹ At Lewes Priory, Layton stated that he found “corruption...and, what is worse, treason, for the subprior has confessed to me treason in his preaching.”⁶⁰ Layton chastised him while the subprior was “all the time kneeling and making intercession unto me not to utter to you the premises for his undoing.”⁶¹ One monk even expressed concern after the visitors left as to what the visitors said about them and their

⁵⁶ Thos. Legh to Cromwell, 29 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700479, Document Ref.: SP 1/97 f. 47. The visitors found that other monasteries held “superstitious” beliefs and carried relics within their walls: John ap Rice to Cromwell, 5 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700781, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 145.

⁵⁷ Richard Layton to Cromwell, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700046, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 38.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ The Monks of Christchurch, Canterbury to Cromwell, 25 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700889, Document Ref.: SP 1/99 f. 85.

⁶⁰ Richard Layton to Cromwell, October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700639, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 22.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

monastery. William Fordham, monk of Worcester, wrote that he hoped the visitors found that “I have lived religiously.”⁶²

There were a few cases in which the visitors viewed monasteries as in good order. Thomas Bedyll visited Ramsey Abbey and gave positive remarks on the religious men and the physical condition of the monastic house. He stated that the abbot and his brethren were as “true to the King as any religious folks in the realm” and that he prayed to “...God I may find other houses in no worse condition.”⁶³ Legh indicated that one monastery only had “but the prior, and an aged monk” as its attendants but still led a “proper house.”⁶⁴ Legh also expressed his pleasure at visiting the monasteries in Norfolk, explaining that “there are many pretty houses here in Norfolk, both of monks and canons, which have only a prior and one with him. I desire to know your (Cromwell) pleasure touching them.”⁶⁵ He did not find anything wrong with the houses in Norfolk but interestingly enough, he still asked Cromwell what action to take with these smaller houses.

iv.

After the visitors sent the initial assessments and completed many of their visitations, they began implementing sets of injunctions during 1535-1536, which were specific to each monastery’s infractions.⁶⁶ These injunctions differed from the 1536 and 1538 religious injunctions implemented by Cromwell. Visitation injunctions aimed specifically at and

⁶² William Fordham, Monk of Worcester, to Cromwell, 1 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700010, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 8.

⁶³ Thos. Bedyll to Cromwell, 15 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800107, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 234.

⁶⁴ Thos. Legh to Cromwell, 1 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700744, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 272.

⁶⁵ Dr. Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 19 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700858, Document Ref.: SP 1/99 f. 60.

⁶⁶ A list of the general injunctions given in the monasteries are found in: “The Visitors’ Injunctions, 1535,” in *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, ed. Joyce Youings (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971), 149.

hearkened back to the rules established at their foundations, while the later injunctions reformed general religious practices among secular clergy and the laity.⁶⁷ Knowles indicates that the injunctions “...began by reminding the abbot and community of the two oaths they had recently taken in respect of the Acts of Succession and Supremacy...” and reminded the abbot and his monks that they needed to follow “laws and instructions relating to these two great issues...”⁶⁸ Other rules, such as “that no monk of this monastery by any means go forth of the precincts of the same” and “that women...be utterly excluded [from monasteries],” were implemented, much to the dislike of the monastic brethren.⁶⁹ These, as well as numerous other injunctions, appear in letters to Cromwell and the visitors, which reveals the amount of questions and complaints they received about the new rules. Some men accepted these injunctions, while others disliked them and appealed to Cromwell and the visitors to have them repealed. The injunction process was specific to the first phase of the dissolution, with its emphasis on reform within monastic houses and not an attitude of complete closure.

⁶⁷ G.R. Elton, ed., *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 381.

⁶⁸ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 275.

⁶⁹ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 275-276. A brief list of visitation injunctions is listed below. These are just a sampling of the injunctions implemented in Southwest England. After an initial visitation, monasteries received instructions on how to behave, with many abbots and monks appealing these new rules. *State Papers Online* chronicles many of these sources: John Ap Rice to Cromwell, 20 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700145, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 121; Sir John FitzJames to Cromwell, 2 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700260, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV; Ric. Phelypps to Cromwell, 2 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700263, Document Ref.: SP 1/96 f. 64; Richard Abbot of Winchcombe to Cromwell, 9 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700321, Document Ref.: SP 1/96 f. 107; Thomas Abbot of Ford to Cromwell, 11 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700597, Document Ref.: SP 1/97 f. 130; Richard Abbot of Glastonbury to Cromwell, 26 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700692, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 63; Richard Abbot of Winchcombe to Cromwell, 7 December 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700944, Document Ref.: SP 1/99 f. 113; The Abbot of Abbotsbury, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701104, Document Ref.: SP 1/100 f. 11; Winchcombe Abbey, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701187, Document Ref.: SP 1/100 f. 118.

The number and types of injunctions varied from monastery to monastery. The visitors only implemented the reforms which they felt were necessary at each specific monastery. Many letters from abbots and monks revealed concern over one or two injunctions, and they often asked to get these injunctions repealed. However, a letter from Sir John FitzJames to Cromwell indicates that it was not uncommon for monastic houses to desire to have up to four injunctions repealed. FitzJames's letter tells of his meeting with Richard Whiting, the abbot of Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset. Whiting expressed displeasure with four major injunctions implemented at his monastic house: that all of his monks must eat together, that all of the monks must sleep in the same area, that the abbot was not allowed to lease out land without the consent of the other monks, and that any monk who sees another breaking any of these rules must report it to Cromwell or to one of the visitors.⁷⁰ Whiting gave reasons for wanting all of these injunctions repealed, from not wanting to restrict those who needed to attend on him by making them sleep in separate quarters to feeling that getting the consent of all for leases would take up too much time.⁷¹ Glastonbury Abbey was not the only monastery to experience a large list of injunctions. As late as March 1537, royal visitors implemented injunctions at Wigmore Abbey in Herefordshire. The injunctions included: excluding women from monastic walls, not selling or wasting monastic land, remaining chaste, and not engaging in fights or other lewd behavior.⁷² The document continues by stating all of the injunctions that the abbot had not observed prior to the visitation, such as keeping women in the monastery, lying about the amount of money the

⁷⁰ Sir John FitzJames to Cromwell, 2 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700260, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 47.

⁷¹ Ibid. Another letter that expresses Richard Whiting's discontent with the injunctions and his diminishing amount of "spiritual jurisdiction" is: Richard Abbot of Glastonbury, 26 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700692, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 63;

⁷² Wigmore Abbey, 26 March 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000763, Document Ref.: SP 1/117 f. 139.

monastery earned, and being harsh to the monks.⁷³ While many monasteries experienced more than one or two injunctions implemented at a time, these two sources indicate that it was not uncommon for abbots and monks to appeal any and all injunctions that they found unfair or disruptive to their way of life.

One of the main injunctions employed was the restriction on travelling outside of the monastic walls. The injunction sought to go back to the days when monks were cloistered from the outside world. However, many abbots and monks wrote to Cromwell and the visitors that this injunction was incompatible with how monasteries had evolved since the medieval times. Some abbots tried to follow through with the cloistering injunction, but it was rarely successful. For example, the abbot of St. Werburg's, Chester, stated that he followed this cloistering injunction and closed the gate to the monastery. However, the gate was "thrown down by Rob. Challenger of Chester, merchant, and certain others, who came into the monastery at their pleasure."⁷⁴ While the abbot tried to follow the visitors' injunctions, the townspeople kept him from completely complying with the visitors' wishes.

Other abbots wanted the travelling and cloistering injunction removed completely. Many abbots wanted this injunction removed so they could travel within their lands and the neighboring lands. At Athelney Abbey in Somerset, the abbot pleaded with Cromwell to lessen the restriction on not going outside of monastic walls. His reasoning was that his monastery was poor and that the restriction would keep it from obtaining funds to keep it functioning.⁷⁵ At Ford Abbey in Dorset, the abbot expressed the same misgivings about the travel injunction, feeling as

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ John Abbot of St. Werburg's, Chester, to Cromwell, 24 May 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800980, Document Ref.: SP 1/104 f. 47.

⁷⁵ Robert Abbot of Athelney to Cromwell, 4 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700772, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 174.

if being able to travel was “indispensable to the weal of [the] monastery; otherwise it would cause us great loss and hindrance.”⁷⁶ The abbot of Oseney echoed the concern of Athelney and Ford by stating that the injunction on cloistering and travelling meant that he could not even visit his tenants to obtain their rents. He wrote Cromwell that he did not think that his tenants would be so courteous as to travel to him to pay their rents and that he must travel to them in order to earn money for his monastery.⁷⁷ Similarly, the abbot of Abingdon in Oxfordshire politely requested that Cromwell let him and his monks leave the monastic walls only at the times that they needed to check on the adjoining land that they rented out to tenants.⁷⁸ Richard Phelypps wrote to Cromwell on behalf of the abbot of Cerne, stating that Cerne Abbey would also fall into ruin if the abbot or the monks were not able to leave the monastery, due to them selling their corn and cattle to the surrounding public.⁷⁹ Some monasteries wanted the travelling injunction lifted so their abbot could travel overseas to obtain funds. At Bury St. Edmund’s in Suffolk, the abbot appealed to Cromwell to let him travel abroad. He indicated in his letter, as did others that need to travel abroad, that he is going on “the business of the monastery” and also asked to take “a chaplain or two” to accompany him.⁸⁰ A recurring complaint on the travel and cloister injunction was that the abbots and monks could not sustain their monasteries from inside the monastic walls. They relied on the public for funds, from rent on monastic land to the sales of products to the population.

⁷⁶ Thomas Abbot of Ford to Cromwell, 11 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700597, Document Ref.: SP 1/97 f. 130.

⁷⁷ John Abbot of Oseney to Cromwell, 15 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700382, Document Ref.: SP 1/96 f. 163.

⁷⁸ Thomas Abbot of Abingdon to Cromwell, 27 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700462, Document Ref.: SP 1/97 f. 26.

⁷⁹ Ric. Phelypps, 2 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700263, Document Ref.: SP 1/96 f. 64.

⁸⁰ John Abbot of Bury to Cromwell, 6 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700790, Document Ref.: SP 1/99 f. 1.

The travelling and cloistering injunctions not only made the abbots and monks leery of the governmental reforms, but they also caused discontent with the religious houses themselves. In Bedfordshire, the abbot of Warden felt the need to resign his position, because his monks blamed him for the multitude of injunctions implemented by the visitors. Their biggest concern was with being enclosed and unable to venture outside of the monastic walls. The abbot stated that the monks believed that they were forced to live a cloistered life, so that the abbot “might do what he would, and they not know it.”⁸¹ The monks distrusted the abbot and believed that he had a motive behind keeping them cloistered. Whether this is true or not is hard to surmise from this document, but nevertheless, it shows a major concern of monks with their new injunctions and how the injunctions caused tensions within religious communities.

Royal visitors often enacted an injunction against women within the monastic walls, hoping to bring abbots and monks back to chaste ways of life. Many times, the visitors alluded to women being present within monastic walls before their visitations. Layton commented on Farley, a cell of Lewes Priory, and said that “unnatural crimes” took place there, especially fornication with women.⁸² However, some documents specifically state an injunction given to a few monasteries about keeping women outside of their walls. At Bury St. Edmund’s, John Ap Rice stated that the monastery had frequent female visitors and stated that “in no place were there more women resorting to the monastery.”⁸³ Some religious men took particular offense to accusations of having women within monastic walls. William, abbot of York, felt hurt that others

⁸¹ Abbey of Warden, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701184, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 199.

⁸² Richard Layton to Cromwell, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700046, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 38. He also mentions these same “unnatural crimes” at Battle Abbey: Richard Layton to Cromwell, October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700639, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 22.

⁸³ John Ap Rice to Cromwell, 5 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700781, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 145.

would accuse him of keeping a woman named Isabella Robinson within the monastic walls.⁸⁴

The abbot never admitted whether or not these accusations were true, but wrote to Cromwell stating that “whether this injunction was given out of zeal, or at the suggestion of mine enemies, I intend to obey.”⁸⁵ Whether a woman was in his monastery or not, the abbot planned to follow the injunction and forbid women from being within monastic walls.

After a visitation, abbots and monks were required to report any rule breaking within their respective monasteries. There are indications that some monks followed this protocol. For example, at Abbotsbury Abbey, a monk named William Grey reported an array of rule breaking, from the illegal selling of monastic jewels and plate to the keeping of women within the boundaries.⁸⁶ Religious men at St. Alban’s Abbey spoke against each other in regard to the injunctions at their monastery as well. One man even stated that he overheard the prior speaking negatively about the injunctions, specifically the injunction that required all monks to eat the same meals in the same room. The prior stated that those “who made those injunctions were a sort of light persons and heretics.”⁸⁷ It was not always monks who reported indiscretions back to Cromwell. The abbot of Winchcombe in Gloucestershire reported that two of his monks “ate flesh,” which was against the injunctions put in place by the visitors. Those monks also refused to do penance for their sins.⁸⁸ Thomas Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury, expressed to Cromwell that the monks of Christchurch in Canterbury did not follow their set of injunctions. The abbot of Christchurch told Cranmer that he had a dispensation from the injunctions

⁸⁴ Will. Abbot of York to Cromwell, 23 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700164, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 144.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ The Abbot of Abbotsbury, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701104, Document Ref.: SP 1/100 f. 11.

⁸⁷ In St. Alban’s Abbey, 24 August 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900365, Document Ref.: N/A.

⁸⁸ Richard, Abbot of Winchcombe, 7 December 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700944, Document Ref.: SP 1/99 f. 113.

implemented by the visitors, so he ignored any injunctions initially implemented. Cranmer told Cromwell that he was “uncertain whether he really has a dispensation.”⁸⁹ Abbots and monks reported each other for various indiscretions, with many trying escape from the injunctions put in place by the royal visitors.

Some letters stated that abbots and monks wanted injunctions removed or relaxed. Robert, abbot of St. Alban’s in Hertfordshire, appealed to Cromwell to relax some of the injunctions against his monastery. He did not list the specific injunctions, but his letter indicated that he wanted more than one removed from his monastery.⁹⁰ Most letters were unlike the abbot of St. Alban’s letter and specifically stated the injunction upsetting the monastery and its brethren, but there were cases in which abbots expressed general disapproval of all injunctions put in place. Legh obtained Cromwell’s approval to relax injunctions “at [his] discretion” and to let the heads of monastic houses travel on business for their monastery at certain monasteries of his choosing.⁹¹ Although rare, some letters indicate that a few monasteries had their injunctions removed completely. For example, a letter to St. Mary’s Abbey indicates that there was “the relaxation of certain particulars of the injunctions given of late in the Monastery of St. Mary of York, by the visitors for the King’s highness there.”⁹² The letter does not indicate reasons for repealing the injunctions at St. Mary’s, but it does show that the injunctions were not always permanent. During the visitation years of 1535-1536, the visitors implemented reforms and

⁸⁹ Cranmer to Cromwell, 16 February 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000457, Document Ref.: SP 1/116 f. 42.

⁹⁰ Robert, Abbot of St. Alban’s, to Cromwell, 22 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800156, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 113.

⁹¹ Thos. Legh to Cromwell, 3 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700272, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 69.

⁹² St. Mary’s Abbey, York, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800223, Document Ref.: N/A.

injunctions to improve the religious and moral lives within monastic walls, indicating that immediate dissolution was not apparent at this time.

At the same time they were implementing injunctions, the royal commissioners and other men acting in the King's name took valuable monastic goods out of the monasteries and placed them in the hands of the King. Letters indicate how often this took place and some of the reactions of the abbots and monks to this behavior. Sir Piers Dutton wrote to Sir Thomas Audeley and indicated that the King's men had all of the jewels and plate of Norton Abbey ready to depart when the abbot assembled "a company of 200 or 300 persons" and the commissioners were unable to leave.⁹³ Dutton explained that these rebels were subsequently arrested, but the abbot's resistance clearly caused a disruption in a typical dissolution process. In Lincolnshire, William Parre appealed to the people living around Kirkstead Abbey and Barlings Abbey to bring any money or plate belonging to those houses to the King's men, or else they would be hanged for their crimes.⁹⁴ There are also indications that abbots and monks sold the valuable goods of their houses prior to visitations or immediately after them. Some of the monks of Whalley testified that the abbot "continually diminished the plate of the house," while other monks never saw the abbot engage in this behavior.⁹⁵ At Chertsey Abbey, the monks complained that the abbot sold wood and plate from the monastery after the visitation took place.⁹⁶ Looking at the well-documented example of Hailes Abbey, it appears as though Abbot Stephen Sagar's

⁹³ Sir Piers Dutton to Sir Thomas Audeley, 12 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900694, Document Ref.: SP 1/108 f. 14.

⁹⁴ Sir Wm. Parre to Cromwell, 22 March 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000721, Document Ref.: SP 1/117 f. 84.

⁹⁵ The Monks of Whalley, 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000642, Document Ref.: SP 1/116 f. 242.

⁹⁶ The Monks of Chertsey to Secretary Cromwell, 1 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700745, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 145.

actions mirrored some of the other abbots around England when he decided to cut his losses and get as much money from his abbey as he could before dissolution.⁹⁷

Documents show that the royal visitors varied on how they implemented injunctions and how they presented themselves to the abbots and monks. For example, Richard Layton felt that Durham Abbey was a well-ordered monastery and argued that the “injunctions have no effect in Durham Abbey in some things; for there was never yet women in the abbey further than the church, nor they (the monks) never come within the town.”⁹⁸ One historian has noted that Layton was kind toward Glastonbury, Leicester, and Waverly, where “he found nothing to report.”⁹⁹ While this was not always the case in Layton’s reports, it is telling that he did not find fault with all monasteries, which indicates that the dissolution was not inevitable. Layton probably would not have been so lenient with these particular monasteries if dissolution was imminent. Along with their implementation of injunctions, the visitors had motivations of their own. While these particular motivations are not always present in the early visitation years, some filter through their letters from time to time. Layton’s motivations appear to have leaned towards him maintaining a business-like attitude toward reform and not asking for any favors in return. This would change in the second phase of the dissolution, as the visitors and others recognized that all of the monasteries were about to be closed and the land dispersed.

The visitors’ differing approaches to the visitations and their different motivations are apparent in an exchange of letters between John Ap Rice, Thomas Legh, and Thomas Cromwell. John Ap Rice thought that fellow visitor Thomas Legh was too harsh with the injunctions he put

⁹⁷ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 172-174; Latimer to Cromwell, 25 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300194, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f.226; Abbot of Hailes to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200354, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f.94.

⁹⁸ Richard Layton to Cromwell, 26 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800187, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 154.

⁹⁹ Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 47.

in place. Ap Rice took the most issue with the travel restriction and shutting the monks off from the outside world. He indicated in 1535 that he found these specific injunctions negatively affected numerous monasteries throughout England and that Legh implemented these injunctions unnecessarily. He thought that in some cases, the abbots should get some leniency with these injunctions and should be able to venture outside of the monastic walls for the benefit of his monastery.¹⁰⁰

Later that year, Ap Rice wrote to Cromwell a second time about Legh and his approach to the visitations. He stated that he had wanted the information about Legh to “come from others, and not me,” but he ultimately reported on what he disliked about Legh’s behavior.¹⁰¹ Ap Rice revealed that Legh was selfish, took too much money from the monasteries for himself as a reward, frightened the abbots and monks, and had “twelve men waiting on him in livery, besides his own brother, all of whom must be rewarded.”¹⁰² With many of the monasteries of the initial visitations being relatively poor, giving a gift or reward to a visitor and his company could be taxing on these monasteries. Legh replied to Ap Rice’s accusations by writing to Cromwell and explaining the misunderstanding, stating that he wished “that all who serve you intended reformation as heartily as I do.”¹⁰³

The visitors had different ideas of how to approach the visitations and implementation of injunctions, and John Ap Rice took obvious dislike to Thomas Legh’s strict and pompous methods. However, while Ap Rice may not have approved of Legh’s methods, they tacitly reveal motivations for the visitors. These motivations ranged from wanting to serve the King and

¹⁰⁰ John Ap Rice to Cromwell, 20 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700145, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 121.

¹⁰¹ John Ap Rice to Cromwell, 16 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700629, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 16.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 16 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700628, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 14.

Cromwell and, as Legh alluded to in his letter about his reputation, wanting to implement reformation in a respectful way. Legh's was also most likely motivated by a desire to obtain generous gifts from the monasteries which he visited, but there are no hints of land acquisition yet, as in letters from later closure years. In short, it is evident that each commissioner had a different approach to the visitations, with some being harsher than others when implementing religious reforms.¹⁰⁴

Even though sources indicate that the visitations were primarily to implement reforms within the monastic community, there were early closings from 1535 to early 1537. Sir William Fitzwilliam wrote that he gave orders to the justices of the peace near London to "seize the small religious houses as you (Cromwell) direct."¹⁰⁵ Some men within small religious houses did not resist the closures and asked for a reprieve from their religious commitments. Thomas Solmes, canon of St. Osyth's, wrote directly to Cromwell and asked for a release from his religious vows, stating that he "would rather die than live any longer such a miserable life."¹⁰⁶ After the closure of numerous smaller houses, some abbots and monks wanting to maintain their religious life travelled to larger monasteries and lived among a new group of monks at these larger houses.¹⁰⁷ Historian Richard Rex has indicated that even though the government initially intended to

¹⁰⁴ David Knowles also touches on visitors' different approaches to the visitations, with Layton and Legh being slightly more forceful and strict in their visitations than Ap Rice. For more on the visitor's visitation approaches, see David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 281-285.

¹⁰⁵ Sir Will. Fitzwilliam to Cromwell, 8 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700054, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 46.

¹⁰⁶ Thos. Solmes, Canon of St. Osyth's, to Cromwell, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701174, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 26. This was not an uncommon occurrence as other abbots and monks throughout England asked to be released from their vows. A few other examples include: John Ap Rice to Cromwell, 22 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700668, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 48; Thos. Legh to Cromwell, 1 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: 4301700744, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 272; Dr. Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 19 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700858, Document Ref.: SP 1/99 f. 60.

¹⁰⁷ John Hare, "Recycling the Monastic Buildings: The Dissolution in Southern England," *The Historian*, no. 79 (2003): 22-23.

dissolve houses with an annual income of £200, many of these houses appealed and obtained a reprieve from the King and Cromwell.¹⁰⁸

In 1536, after most of the early visitations had occurred, Henry VIII and his Parliament administered the *First Act for the Dissolution of the Monasteries*. The King gave general reasons for these closings by stating that,

forasmuch as manifest sin, vicious, carnal and abominable living, is daily used and committed amongst the little and small abbeys, priories and other religious houses...whereby the governors of such religious houses...spoil, destroy, consume and utterly waste as well their churches...so that without such small houses be utterly suppressed and the religious persons therein committed to great and honourable monasteries of religion in this realm, where they may be compelled to live religious for reformation of their lives...considering also that divers and great solemn monasteries this realm wherein, thanks be to God, religion is right well kept and observed...¹⁰⁹

The King and royal government stated the type of houses they wanted dissolved, which primarily were delinquent houses and houses with an income under £200 dissolved immediately.¹¹⁰ The number of houses actually suppressed under this statute was some “two hundred odd houses.”¹¹¹ The visitors dissolved some houses quietly, while other monasteries heavily resisted. One example of a quiet dissolution occurred when John Ap Rice visited Walden Abbey, and the abbot agreed to hand over the monastery as long as the elder monks found new monastic homes.¹¹² However, some of the more violent closures occurred in northeastern

¹⁰⁸ Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 47.

¹⁰⁹ G.R. Elton, ed., *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 383-384.

¹¹⁰ John Whalley to Cromwell, 17 March 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800501, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 195.

¹¹¹ Joyce Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd, 1971), 51; A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), 143.

¹¹² John Ap Rice to Cromwell, 22 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700668, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 48. List of early visitation accounts and closures include: Nich. [Austen], Abbot of Rewley to Cromwell, 3 July 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301601004, Document Ref.: SP 1/85 f. 26; Dissolution of the Monasteries, 24 June 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301801233, Document Number: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 336; Dissolution of the Monasteries, July 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901530, Document Ref.: SP 5/3 f. 108; Sir Gilbert Talbot and John Russell to Cromwell, 5 September 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900420,

England, from the monastic houses involved in the Pilgrimage of Grace. Mostly in northeastern England after initial visitations occurred, the Pilgrimage of Grace exhibited the population's displeasure toward the religious changes in England and fueled the people's need to save the monasteries in this region.¹¹³ As Christopher Haigh states about the Pilgrimage of Grace, it was "not a general movement of peasants against landlords, but a demonstration against royal policies and in defence of the monasteries."¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, with its failure came the closing of both large and small monasteries in the northern and eastern regions of England. What initially was a way for the King to put "into the heads of the rude people in the North to show them that the King intends reformation and correction of religion" turned into the closure of their monastic houses.¹¹⁵

Some of these early closures included: Bridlington in East Yorkshire, Jervaulx in North Yorkshire, Kirkstead Abbey in Lincolnshire, and Barlings Abbey in Lincolnshire. After the initial visitation, the prior of Bridlington sent the necessary documents of the monastery's foundation to Cromwell and stated that he was "begging you (Cromwell) to be a good master unto us."¹¹⁶ The Duke of Norfolk expressed concern at dissolving Bridlington and Jervaulx, stating that "the neighboring country is populous and the houses greatly beloved by the people."¹¹⁷ He felt he had to be present in order for the dissolution to happen smoothly or else

Document Ref.: SP 1/106 f. 137; List of Monasteries in England of a less yearly value than 200l, with the yearly value of each, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301801281, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 347; John Russell to Cromwell, 27 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001325, Document Ref.: SP 1/120 f. 211.

¹¹³ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 200.

¹¹⁴ Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 119.

¹¹⁵ Ric. Layton to Cromwell, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301600979, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 56.

¹¹⁶ William Prior of Bridlington to Cromwell, 19 March 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800511, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 199.

¹¹⁷ The Duke of Norfolk to Henry VIII, 10 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001200, Document Ref.: SP 1/120 f. 26.

that area around Yorkshire might revolt.¹¹⁸ Sir Arthur Darcy called Jervaulx “one of the fairest churches I have seen, fair meadows and the river running by it and a great demesne” and echoed Norfolk’s concern about the northern people by stating that the north “was never in a more dreadful and true obeisance.”¹¹⁹

When it came time to dismantle the monasteries, men assessed what to do with the items inside and outside of the monastery. The need to get everything out of the monasteries quickly was a frequent concern in northeastern England. Norfolk asserted that there was much valuable lead at both Bridlington and Jervaulx and expressed the need to get to the lead quickly before the locals stole it.¹²⁰ Norfolk also addressed the gold shrine at Bridlington and the silver plate, both of which should depart to the King.¹²¹ One of the royal visitors, Richard Pollard, visited Bridlington after the Duke of Norfolk and removed the remaining valuables from the monastery, except for some which were stolen “by the poor people before his coming.”¹²² Pollard also monitored the removal of lead at Kirkstead and Barlings. He wrote to obtain the lead from those monasteries for the King, but also said to “deface nothing else” within the monasteries.¹²³ One familiar phrase Pollard used, as did other visitors in their accounts, was that the monastic houses

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Sir Arthur Darcy to Cromwell, 8 June 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100062, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 287.

¹²⁰ The Duke of Norfolk to Henry VIII, 10 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001200, Document Ref.: SP 1/120 f. 26. Edward Stanley, earl of Derby, also echoed this sentiment with other monasteries and their lead: E. earl of Derby to the Lord Admiral, 1536, *State Paper Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901132, Document Ref.: SP 1/111 f. 176.

¹²¹ The Duke of Norfolk to Henry VIII, 5 June 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100037, Document Ref.: SP 1/121 f. 53; Richard Pollard to Cromwell, 3 August 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100462, Document Ref.: SP 1/123 f. 195.

¹²² Richard Pollard to Cromwell, 14 June 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100098, Document Ref.: SP 1/121 f. 120.

¹²³ Richard Pollard to Mr. Hall, Receiver to the King in Lincolnshire, 18 March 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000697, Document Ref.: SP 1/117 f. 31. Pollard even sends reminders to Mr. Hall about specifically melting the lead: Richard Pollard to Mr. Hall of Huntingdon, 22 April 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001025, Document Ref.: SP 1/118 f. 243.

were “far in decay.”¹²⁴ While the visitor sought to dismantle this monastery because of its location and association with rebels, he also remarked on its crumbling structure.

Many individuals sought to obtain land from dissolved monasteries. This phenomenon in the first phase of the dissolution continued into the second phase, with significantly more land available to the local population. One example of early land acquisitions occurred when Sir William Gascoygne, the younger, wrote to Cromwell and asked for “preferment either of Bridlington abbey or of Jervax.”¹²⁵ Another example was in Lincolnshire, where the people of the surrounding lands appealed for the land belonging to Kirkstead and Barlings.¹²⁶ Land acquisitions occurred in late 1535 into early 1537 outside of the northeastern region of England as well. For example, Edward Bestney appealed for land of Byggyn, located near Fordham, because it “adjoineth to my land.”¹²⁷ Monastic land acquisition occurred throughout England, whether or not an area participated in any rebellions.

In northeastern England, the King contracted various men to systematically dismantle parts of the monasteries. One of those men, Tristram Teshe, wrote to Richard Pollard that he arrived at Bridlington with “the best mason and carpenters.”¹²⁸ From Teshe’s report, he alluded that the King wanted stone from the monastery to reinforce a decaying seawall, but the stones

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Sir Will. Gascoygne, the younger, to Cromwell, 5 June 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100039, Document Ref.: SP 1/121 f. 57.

¹²⁶ Sir Wm. Parre to Cromwell, 9 August 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100519, Document Ref.: SP 1/124 f. 9.

¹²⁷ Edward Bestney to Cromwell, 4 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700770, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 171. Men from areas outside of the North applied for land from dissolved monasteries: John Whalley to Cromwell, 17 March 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800501, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 195; Sir Henry Everyngham to Cromwell, 23 April 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800744, Document Ref.: SP 1/103 f. 158; John Vernon to Cromwell, 30 September 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900524, Document Ref.: SP 1/106 f. 226; John Russell to Cromwell, 27 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001325, Document Ref.: SP 1/120 f. 211.

¹²⁸ Tristram Teshe to Richard Pollard, 22 June 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303701237, Document Ref.: SP 1/241 f. 76.

were neither big enough nor strong enough to complete this project.¹²⁹ The stones on the outside of the monasteries were just as valuable as the inside jewels and plate removed during the visitation process. By completely removing monasteries in northeastern England, it removed a rebellious and unreformed aspect of the realm.

Executions of rebellious abbots and monks were rare during these early visitation years, except in the regions which supported the Pilgrimage of Grace. The Duke of Norfolk relayed to Henry VIII that three monks from Watton Abbey, as well as others involved in rebellion, travelled as prisoners to Hull Abbey and stayed there until they received further notice of their fates.¹³⁰ Thomas Audeley wrote to Cromwell that the abbot of Barlings and others were set for execution, with “the heads of these prisoners to be set up at London Bridge and at every gate...”¹³¹ After the executions, the King obtained the land from these monasteries. Even though only smaller monasteries were dissolved during this time in other regions, the monasteries dissolved after the Pilgrimage of Grace in northeastern England had a monetary intake of over £500, well over the intake of many smaller houses.¹³² The visitors took extreme measures at houses that had participated in the Pilgrimage of Grace, with some of the houses dissolving immediately and the heads of the houses executed for treason. Henry VIII himself even called for

¹²⁹ Ibid. A secondary source which gives a wealth of information about the use of monastic stone in the Southern monasteries compliments the primary source about the North, by showing the similarities between the dispersal of stone in both the North and the South: John Hare, “Recycling the Monastic Buildings: The Dissolution in Southern England,” *The Historian*, no. 79 (2003): 22-27.

¹³⁰ Duke of Norfolk to Henry VIII, 30 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000313, Document Ref.: SP 1/115 f. 130.

¹³¹ Lord Chancellor Audeley to Cromwell, 29 March 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000787, Document Ref.: Cotton Titus B/I f. 384. Edward Stanley, earl of Derby, and Robert Radcliffe, earl of Sussex wrote to the Duke of Norfolk to inform him of other executions taking place in Northern England: The Earls of Sussex and Derby to the Duke of Norfolk, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000653, Document Ref.: SP 1/116 f. 253.

¹³² Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 48.

some executions, as is evident in the case against Norton Priory.¹³³ Thus, during the early visitation years, executing delinquent abbots only occurred in connection with the Pilgrimage of Grace. However, in the second phase of the dissolution, abbots and monks unassociated with the Pilgrimage of Grace met their demise for various reasons and infractions.

While previous analysis in this chapter looked at the common visitation process, injunction implementation and closure process at many monasteries, it is also helpful to look at the first phase of the dissolution at one well-documented monastery. Some monasteries and abbots left behind many documents telling of the visitation process and of subsequent actions taken against their houses. Many letters from Glastonbury Abbey survived through the years, some which detailed the visitation process. The royal visitors found that they “doubt not that they [the monks at Glastonbury] will keep as good religion as any house in the kingdom.”¹³⁴ Richard Whiting, abbot of Glastonbury, initially expressed delight toward the visitations by stating to Cromwell in a letter from August 1535 that he “so thanks you [Cromwell] for all goodness gave before towards me and this monastery...”¹³⁵ Future letters displayed a gradual decline in Whiting’s cheerful sentiment. As previously stated, Sir John FitzJames expressed to Cromwell a week later that Whiting was displeased with myriad injunctions and wanted them amended, particularly one concerning the administration of Glastonbury land and lay tenants. The new

¹³³ Henry VIII to Sir Piers Dutton and Sir William Brereton, 19 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900801, Document Ref.: SP 1/108 f. 187; Sir Piers Dutton to Cromwell, 30 November 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901227, Document Ref.: SP 1/112 f. 47.

¹³⁴ G.W. Bernard, “The Dissolution of the Monasteries,” *History: The Journal of the Historical Association* 96, no. 324 (September, 2011): 399.

¹³⁵ Richard Abbot of Glastonbury to Cromwell, 26 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301780194, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 175.

process of obtaining majority consent on leasing out land seemed too “tedious” to Whiting, and he did not want interference in how he handled Glastonbury leases.¹³⁶

By October 1535, Whiting was thoroughly displeased with his waning influence in his monastery and the neighboring town. He wrote again to Cromwell, this time expressing grief that the King and council removed his “spiritual jurisdiction within the town.”¹³⁷ Glastonbury Abbey, as well as other larger monasteries, enjoyed an immense amount of influence within their towns; the removal of that influence negatively impacted how people viewed monasteries and their authority in later years. A letter from Katherine Dawbnaye to Cromwell stated that she thought the abbot of Glastonbury was an admirable religious man during the early visitation years.¹³⁸ Individual letters, such as Dawbnaye’s letter, offer a glimpse at what a member of the laity thought of Glastonbury at the time. Subsequent letters during the second phase of the dissolution process illustrated that Abbot Whiting’s concerns of losing influence were valid, both with the government and with the people within the town. The abbot’s power diminished so much that by the time of Glastonbury’s dissolution in 1539, people did not express remorse at the abbot’s eventual downfall.

Even royal emissaries heard about the general visitation process and tried to relay that information back to their home country. In 1536, Eustace Chapuys, Charles V’s royal

¹³⁶ Sir John FitzJames to Cromwell, 2 September 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700260, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 47. This letter also appears with its original spelling in Thomas Wright, ed., *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries* (London: Camden Society, 1843), 63-65. FitzJames listed four injunctions which Glastonbury received: “1. That all bretheren or monks of this monastery shall eat together on flesh days...; 2. That all bretheren, except the abbot, the sick, and those who are performing jubilee, shall sleep together in the dormitory in separate beds; 3. That the abbot shall make no waste of goods belonging to the monastery, nor let farms or reversions without the consent of the greater part of the convent; 4. Each person shall declare to the King, the visitor-general or his surrogate, any violation of these injunctions by the abbot or bretheren, and the abbot shall supply the informer with the necessaries for his journey.”

¹³⁷ Richard Abbot of Glastonbury to Cromwell, 26 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700692, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f.63.

¹³⁸ Katherine Dawbnaye to Cromwell, 10 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700584, Document Ref.: SP 1/97 f.120.

ambassador to England, wrote a letter to Charles V explaining religious and diplomatic debates in England. Within this letter, he wrote a description of the monastic visitations, stating that there were to be suppressed “a number above 300, and are expected to bring in revenue of 120,000 ducats. The silver plate, chalices, and reliquaries, the church ornaments, bells, lead from the roofs, cattle, and furniture belonging to them, which will come to the King, will be of inestimable amount.”¹³⁹ While the royal visitors’ accounts stress delinquent behavior and subsequent reforms, one specific foreign view, written by a Catholic diplomat, stresses closures and the multitude of items taken from the religious houses. Which assessment of the dissolution is correct: reform-minded visitors executing the King and Cromwell’s will toward bringing the monasteries back to their medieval state, or a King and his councilor wanting an immediate and predetermined dissolution? Through an analysis of the primary sources, it is clear that the visitors assessed the general conditions of monasteries throughout England with their minds not set on an inevitable end to the monasteries but on basic reforms within the religious realm of England.

v.

The years 1535 to early 1537 marked the beginning of a two-phase process of the dissolution of the English monasteries. Royal visitors conducted visitations in order to check on the physical and spiritual state of the monasteries and to reform anything that was amiss within these institutions. From the primary sources, it is clear that the visitation process proceeded similarly in all regions of England, with a bit more force in northeastern England due to the Pilgrimage of Grace. Visitors found indiscretions at many of the monastic houses in which they

¹³⁹ Chapuys to Charles V, 1 April 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800616, Document Ref.: N/A. From J. Gairdner’s annotated translation.

visited. However, it was not uncommon for the visitors to praise a monastery or an abbot if he felt it was fitting. Visitors, as well as abbots and monks, did not view the early visitations as a sign of an inevitable end to the monasteries. This was a time of religious reform for all of England, with the monasteries participating concurrently with other types of reforms. The second phase of the dissolution of the English monasteries would be very different from the first phase. From late 1537 to 1540, reform occurred less frequently and immediate closure became the rule for nearly all monasteries.

CHAPTER III

THE SECOND PHASE OF THE DISSOLUTION

Nicholas Wilson, a priest who swore the oath of royal supremacy but still was suspected of sympathies toward Catholicism, wrote to Thomas Cromwell in June 1540 and expressed his thoughts on the dissolution of the monasteries and their place in English society: “Monasteries were founded and endowed by the benefit and license of princes, [so when the time requires] they might be reformed and put to other uses by their successors.”¹⁴⁰

The words “reform” and “put to other uses,” are particularly appropriate when discussing the two-phase process of the dissolution of the monasteries. While chapter two touched on the first phase of the dissolution, which included the reforms of the royal visitations and injunctions, the second phase of the dissolution of the monasteries was more about putting institutions “to other uses,” with widespread closures- and only a few revitalizing efforts. From late 1537 to 1540, reform became less common, with full-scale closures happening at not only small monasteries but also at the larger, wealthier monastic houses.

Historians differ on exactly when there was a change from reform to complete dissolution, with many saying that it is too difficult to find the “precise moment” when dissolution became imminent.¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, starting around August of 1537, the documents

¹⁴⁰ Nicholas Wilson to Cromwell, 4 June 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600769, Document Ref.: SP 1/160 f. 117; Kenneth Carleton, “Wilson, Nicholas (d. 1548),” in *Oxford Directory of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29679> (accessed February 19, 2014); Richard Rex describes Wilson as a “prominent conservative who had spent three years in the Tower before accepting the royal supremacy”; Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 51. His time in the Tower of London is documented in letters from Sir Thomas More to him, documenting his initial reluctance and probably everlasting suspicion as an advocate of traditional Catholic religion: Thomas More to Dr. Nicholas Wilson, 1534, in *The Last Letters of Thomas More*, ed. Alvaro De Silva (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 90; Thomas More to Dr. Nicholas Wilson, 1534, in *The Last Letters of Thomas More*, ed. Alvaro De Silva (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 91-96.

¹⁴¹ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 350.

show a dramatic decrease in visitations and reforms and an increase in closures and dismantling. The letters of the royal visitors, abbots, and monks all demonstrate a change in tone. The visitors became more forceful, with greater indications in their words and actions that the dissolution of monasteries was imminent. Besides Thomas Legh, Richard Layton, John Tregonwell, and John Ap Rice, a multitude of other visitors appeared in these second visitation and closure accounts. Accounts by the visitors John London and Richard, Bishop of Dover, became more prevalent than the earlier visitors who conducted the 1535-1536 visitations. Knowles specifically singled out London as being slightly misrepresented by earlier historians as being connected with the early visitors, and he appears to have been correct.¹⁴² From an immense sample of early visitation accounts and later dissolution accounts, it is clear that London appeared after the initial visitations and conducts many closures and defacements, probably as many as the early visitors.

A full-scale closure of the friaries occurred during this period as well, mainly in 1538. Their closures give a distinct feel to this later dissolution period. Accounts on visitations and dissolutions of friaries are scarce in the early years of the dissolution of the monasteries. However, the closure of the friaries in 1538 brought a sense of anxiety to the greater monasteries. Their fates appear intertwined, with the same visitors conducting visitations and closings concurrently with the monasteries. The closure of the friaries should be examined alongside the monasteries to paint a full picture of male monastic closures.

Starting around 1537, abbots and monks appear to have sensed a final end to their religious way of life. The abbots and monks of the larger monasteries sent desperate pleas, resorted to asking others for help, and some even ended up on the executioner's block. Accounts of the second phase of the dissolution of the monasteries suggest a standard procedure

¹⁴² David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 354.

throughout England for visiting the houses, taking possession of them, and subsequently dissolving them. However, questions do arise about the similarities and differences between the first and second phases of the dissolution. What occurred after Henry VIII's dissolution of the smaller houses and his suggestion to send abbots and monks to the "great and honourable monasteries of religion in this realm"?¹⁴³ Why were the larger monasteries no longer referred to in those terms? How did this later process differ from the early visitation years? What specifically made this second phase of the dissolution of the English monasteries different from the first phase?

One specific example, Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire, reveals a complete record of the process of this second dissolution phase. A summary of Ethan Shagan's account of Hailes will provide a foundation for the later explanation in this thesis of the somewhat fragmentary evidence left by numerous monasteries throughout all regions of England. Hailes Abbey was home to an ancient relic of the blood of Jesus Christ, which made it a popular pilgrimage site in late-medieval England. The Protestant reformer Hugh Latimer reputedly said, "They come by flock out of the West Country to many images, but chiefly to the blood of Hailes."¹⁴⁴ When images and relics came into question, popular monastic houses and pilgrimage sites, such as Hailes, were the first to come under suspicion. Shagan traced suspicions about the relic from as early as the fourteenth century until the dissolution of the monasteries. However, there was still a considerable amount of popular support for Hailes at the time of the Reformation, which eventually led those against relics to investigate it further.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ G.R. Elton, ed., *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 383-384.

¹⁴⁴ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 165. Shagan stated that this quote came from John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (London, 1563), 1316.

¹⁴⁵ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 164-168. Shagan gave the background of where Hailes Abbey obtained the Blood of Hailes and how it came under debate over the years. He reveals that the blood had its

Hailes became a target of the reformers in 1538, when Henry VIII's government began a campaign against relics and images. On February 24, 1538, John Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester, spoke against the relic by stating that a woman told him in the privacy of the confessional that the blood of Hailes was duck blood.¹⁴⁶ A subsequent visitation and investigation by Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester; the prior of Worcester; Richard Tracy; and the abbot of Hailes probed for the truth behind the blood. Latimer wrote to Cromwell, "It hath a certain unctuous moistness and though it seem somewhat like blood while it is in the glass yet when any parcel of the same is taken out it turneth to a yellowness and is cleaving like glue."¹⁴⁷ This revelation had an even greater impact, because a multitude of people observed Latimer and others defile a sacred relic. As Shagan stated, it was more than just the government's impact on the debunking of a relic but "...was the fact that Latimer's performance at Hailes, like Hilsey's performance in London, was the sort of relentlessly public event at which the reformer were so adept" and that it included "ordinary people in the process of Reformation."¹⁴⁸

The dissolution of Hailes Abbey occurred in late December 1539.¹⁴⁹ From the State Papers and Ethan Shagan's assessment, it appears as though Abbot Stephen Sagar of Hailes cut

adversaries, and the popular support of this relic and pilgrimage site led those against traditional Catholic religion to investigate its legitimacy.

¹⁴⁶ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 171; Peter Marshall, "The Rood of Boxley, the Blood of Hailes and the Defence of the Henrician Church," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46, no. 4 (October, 1995): 690-691. Both Shagan and Marshall cite Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England during the reigns of the Tudors, A.D. 1485-1559*, ed. W.D. Hamilton. Marshall cites the edition from 1875-1877, while Shagan cites the edition from 1965.

¹⁴⁷ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 171; Latimer to Cromwell, 28 Oct 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300724, Document Ref: SP 1/138 f.39.

¹⁴⁸ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 172.

¹⁴⁹ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 174; One document shows the pensions given out to the abbot and monks only days later: Hayles Abbey, 31 December 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500805, Document Ref.: N/A.

his losses and got as much money as he could before dissolution.¹⁵⁰ The government confiscated and sold most of the monastery's land and goods, with the local population engaging in the monastery's destruction. The dissolution of Hailes Abbey occurred because of a defunct relic. After the revelation of a false relic, immediate and imminent dissolution occurred, with reform no longer being an option for many of the larger monasteries. Other English monasteries received the same fate as Hailes, albeit not always for the same reasons or motivations.

Other monasteries throughout England received similar treatment. For many, a second visitation occurred between 1538 and 1539. Some of the visitors checked on whether the monasteries had complied with the earlier injunctions and also assessed the basic monetary value of these houses. For example, Thomas Moyle travelled to Reading Abbey in Berkshire and reported that everything from the original visitation inventory appeared still intact and in place.¹⁵¹ Robert Burgoyne, a local visitor in Herefordshire, wanted to appoint his son and his servant to survey the friaries in Herefordshire. He even gave step-by-step instructions for doing so, such as surveying the houses and surrounding land, taking an inventory of items, assessing the value of land and bells, and recording the friars' names.¹⁵² Similarly, a report from the monastery of Haughmond indicated that the condition of the house was so bad that the writer had no doubt that the abbot and monks would surrender it, sell goods to pay for its debt, and then receive their pensions.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 172-174; Latimer to Cromwell, 25 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300194, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f.226; Abbot of Hailes to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200354, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f.94.

¹⁵¹ Thomas Moyle to Cromwell, 8 September 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500142, Document Ref.: SP 1/153 f. 78.

¹⁵² Robt. Burgoyne to John Scudamore, 6 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201357, Document Ref.: N/A.

¹⁵³ Haughmond Monastery, 24 August 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500083, Document Ref.: N/A.

Second visitations did not always go smoothly. Richard, Bishop of Dover, conducted a visitation at Losenham and reported that it was a house that was “poor in building and no lead...and much of it ready to fall.”¹⁵⁴ He further reported on a multitude of other houses, particularly ones of Black Friars, Grey Friars, White Friars, and Austin Friars around the southern regions of England, and reported that the houses were in decay and that many friars sold items to pay their debts before he arrived.¹⁵⁵ John London also visited friaries in Oxfordshire and declared that many were “out of order and in such poverty” that they needed to resign their houses in order to keep living.¹⁵⁶ Delinquency and disrepair appear in most accounts of the English friaries, with accounts of their closures strewn between letters of secondary visitations and dismantling of the greater monasteries.

By 1538, rumors began to spread through all parts of England that reform was no longer the main goal and that the monasteries and friaries were in serious trouble. Richard Layton reported that when he arrived at Barnwell Priory, he heard rumors that the religious men thought Layton planned to “suppress wherever [he] came” and that “the King was determined to suppress all monasteries.”¹⁵⁷ Layton wanted these rumors stopped and accused the men and the town of disrespecting the King by spreading these rumors. He also warned them against selling any monastic goods before a decision was made on the state of their monastery, which may have conveyed more suspicion than assuaging their minds.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Ric. Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 25 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201482, Document Ref.: SP 1/134 f. 241.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Dr. John London to Wriothesley, 7 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201361, Document Ref.: SP 1/134 f. 114; Dr. John London to Cromwell, 8 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201368, Document Ref.: SP 1/134 f. 123.

¹⁵⁷ Richard Layton, priest, to Cromwell, 18 January 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200107, Document Ref.: SP 1/128 f. 87.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

When rumors turned to reality and dissolution clearly was imminent, some abbots and monks disposed of their monastery's goods. Sir William Penizon reported to Cromwell that the abbot of Reading sold his "sheep, corn, wood...to the disadvantage of the King."¹⁵⁹ A document indicated that the abbot of Peterborough sold land and woods "as to defraud the King."¹⁶⁰ At Woburn Abbey, William Petre wrote that the house was not in debt, but that he "would not have expected to find it so bare" or so devoid of plate and jewels.¹⁶¹ The selling of goods or renting of land as the King's men came to take the goods is telling of the motives of these men, two which later met untimely ends. For reasons not explicitly stated in the documents, these abbots and monks wanted to dispose of their monastic goods before the King and his men took them all. This reveals forethought and indicates that they had some inkling that the dissolution of their respective houses was coming.

Documents and letters indicate that several monasteries throughout England surrendered voluntarily. Unlike Hailes Abbey, a sizable number of abbots and monks handed over their monasteries, land, and goods to the royal commissioners without much problem. In the North, Sir George Lawson reported to Cromwell that he had "quietly taken the surrenders and dissolved the monasteries of Wyeresoppe, Monk Bretton, St. Andrew's of York, Byland, Ryvaille, Kyrkeham, and Ellerton, and the friaries of Tykhill, Doncaster, Pentefract, and York."¹⁶² However, not all northern monasteries were as agreeable. For example, William Blithman

¹⁵⁹ Sir William Penizon to Cromwell, 15 August 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500054, Document Ref.: SP 1/153 f. 25.

¹⁶⁰ The Abbot of Peterborough, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500901, Document Ref.: SP 1/156 f. 145.

¹⁶¹ Dr. William Petre to Wriothesley, 11 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200986, Document Ref.: SP 7/1 f. 22.

¹⁶² Sir George Lawson, and Others, to Cromwell, 15 December 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301083, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 291; The Commissioners of the North to Cromwell, 15 December 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 167-168.

indicated that “three priors in these North parts” were not willing to surrender their houses, but he specifically cited the abbot of Monk Bretton as appearing “tractable.”¹⁶³ A letter from the following year indicates that the Commissioners of the North had problems in other areas of northern England, such as Hampole, Saint Oswald’s, Pontefract, Fountains, St. Mary’s of York, Nonappleton, and Selby, saying “we could not make dispatch in part of the said places without some difficulties.”¹⁶⁴ One of the commissioners, Walter Hendle, relayed that he did not encounter difficulties at St. Mary’s of York, stating that its inhabitants obeyed visitors’ orders and that he found the abbot very “favorable” and “obedient.”¹⁶⁵

A visitor from the second phase of the dissolution, Richard, Bishop of Dover, told Cromwell that he received multiple abbeys and convents by voluntary surrender, such as “one in Bridgenorth, one in Atherston, and one in Lichfield...two in Stafford, one in Newcastle-under-Lyne, and two in Shrewsbury.”¹⁶⁶ However, according to the Bishop of Dover, he stated that he “always declared that [he] had no commission to suppress no house...yet if they gave their houses into the King’s hands for poverty, [he] received them.”¹⁶⁷ While there was no official act forcing the surrender of monastic houses at this point, the Bishop of Dover did his best to elicit voluntary surrenders if he could manage it. In a later letter, he specifically drew attention to one

¹⁶³ Sir William Blithman to Cromwell, 24 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300188, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f. 218.

¹⁶⁴ Walter Hendle, Ric. Layton, Thos. Legh, Ric. Bellassys, and Ric. Watkyns to Cromwell, 8 December 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500680, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 290; There seems to be a bit of a discrepancy on the year for this document, as *State Papers Online* has it listed 1539, while Wright has it listed at 1538. From further looking at when the monasteries mentioned closed, the year appears most likely to be 1539. Wright’s listing is still beneficial when looking at the original spelling of the letters: The Commissioners of the North to Cromwell, 8 December 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 166-167.

¹⁶⁵ Walter Hendle and Others to Cromwell, 19 December 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500733, Document Ref.: SP 1/155 f. 128.

¹⁶⁶ Richard, Bishop of Dover, to Cromwell, 13 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300098, Document Ref.: N/A; Richard Bishop of Dover to Cromwell, 31 August 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 203-206.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

house which did not voluntarily surrender, expressing that their disobedient behavior caused him much trouble at other houses because others followed their example.¹⁶⁸

Other visitors gave cursory accounts of voluntary surrenders throughout England and offered brief and differing reasons for the voluntary surrenders. Thomas Legh told Cromwell that Holme Abbey was “quietly dissolved” and that the monks decided to leave monastic life. The monks preferred a layman’s life and received pensions to enter the secular world.¹⁶⁹ Similarly, the prior of Monk Bretton Priory stated that he would surrender his monastery if he and his monks received decent pay to leave.¹⁷⁰ John Bouchier only relayed that he and other monks surrendered their house at Leicester and thanked Cromwell for giving them a pension.¹⁷¹ From these accounts, it is difficult to tell whether the abbots and monks wanted to be relieved from their religious life or whether some visitor accounts were true and the monasteries were in debt. In one account, the abbot of Evesham Abbey quietly surrendered his monastery, because he did not want it widely known by others that he surrendered it out of poverty.¹⁷² In another account, it is stated that the friars of Chester surrendered “without any counsel or constraining but very [much in] poverty.”¹⁷³ However, there are other accounts which indicate a substantial gain for

¹⁶⁸ Ric. Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 27 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300208, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 319; Richard Bishop of Dover to Cromwell, 27 August 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 210-213.

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Legh, LLD, to Cromwell, 18 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200556, Document Ref.: SP 1.130 f. 87.

¹⁷⁰ Sir John Nevyell to Dr. Lee, 3 June 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201145, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 199; They eventually voluntarily surrendered the house: Sir John Nevill to Cromwell, 23 November 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300918, Document Ref.: SP 1/139 f. 147.

¹⁷¹ John Bouchier, Priest, to Cromwell, 28 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300216, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f. 243.

¹⁷² Dr. Petre to Cromwell, 17 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200540, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 308; William Petre to Cromwell, 17 March 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 177-178.

¹⁷³ Friars of Chester, 15 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300102, Document Ref.: N/A.

the person or persons receiving dissolved monasteries. As stated in a document about Butley Priory, the surrender occurred “very quietly,” and it was “the best leaded house” that the visitor had ever witnessed.¹⁷⁴ While the abbot and monks are not specifically mentioned in this account, it can be inferred from other voluntary surrenders that they received pensions, and the King and his men received a house worth much in lead.

Not all monasteries surrendered so easily. Some abbots and monks wanted to hear their orders from the King or Cromwell. John Hilsey, bishop of Rochester, stated that at Babewell, a house of Grey Friars, the men would surrender if asked by the King or Cromwell more directly.¹⁷⁵ This also occurred at Vale Royal, where the abbot stated that he had “never consented to surrender,” but would surrender if the King wished it.¹⁷⁶ The abbot of Combermere wrote directly to Cromwell after receiving a request from the royal government to voluntarily surrender his monastery. He indicated a slight reluctance to surrender voluntarily but asked if he and his monks could still live in the monastery if a surrender should occur.¹⁷⁷ The abbot of Combermere also had help in trying to save his monastery or to obtain a good pension if need arose, with Bishop Roland Lee advocating on his behalf and asking Cromwell to be good to this particular abbot, for he is a friend.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Wm. Petre to [Unknown], 1 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200401, Document Ref.: Cotton Vespasian F/XIII f. 264.

¹⁷⁵ John [Hilsey], Bishop of Rochester, to Cromwell, 27 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300448, Document Ref.: SP 1/137 f. 33.

¹⁷⁶ John, Abbot of Vale Royal, to Cromwell, 9 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300323, Document Ref.: N/A; The Abbot of Vale Royal to Cromwell, 9 September 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 244-245.

¹⁷⁷ John, Abbot of Combermere, to Cromwell, 10 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200982, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 67.

¹⁷⁸ Bishop Roland Lee to Cromwell, 27 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201102, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 157.

After a visitor received the surrender of a monastery by the men of the house or by force, he normally sent a report to Cromwell about the contents inside the monastic house.¹⁷⁹ Initial visitations from 1535-1536 documented some of this inventory, but this mostly included items deemed superstitious or suspicious, such as relics or items championing the Pope. These early accounts mostly dealt with items for the sake of reform, by assessing whether they exhibited cause against the King's royal supremacy. In contrast, the visitors from 1538-1540 were very specific about the amount of money in the monasteries and the particular uses for monastic items after dissolution. The money amount came from movable goods, gold and silver from shrines and relics, and lead on the outside of the building. This noticeable change in the content of visitation accounts confirms an important difference between the first phase and the second phase of the dissolution.

Reports varied on the final destination for monastic goods. Some reports showed the systematic removal of goods, such as ones from Christchurch, Canterbury, and Rochester. These reports indicated that these monasteries no longer were beneficial to the town, with the suggestion to sell the movable goods and livestock, to remove the abbots and monks from the premises, and remove any other valuables and take them to the Tower of London.¹⁸⁰ The Black Friars of Chichester recorded a similar fate, with all of their goods sold to pay for debts and the

¹⁷⁹ Dr. John London wrote a report to Thomas Cromwell documenting numerous monasteries and what he did while at these monasteries. His actions ranged from defacing the structure to selling all of its goods, from stain glassed windows to plate and jewels: Dr. John London to Cromwell, 29 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300374, Document Ref.: SP 1/138 f. 45. Besides London, other visitors wrote short reports on the dissolution process: John Wellesburn to Cromwell, 11 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200493, Document Ref.: SP 1/130 f. 20; Sir Richard Ryche, Richard Pollard and Ric. Southwell to Cromwell, 29 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800021, Document Ref.: SP 1/242 f. 1; John Freman to Cromwell, 28 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800059, Document Ref.: SP 1/242 f. 72; Ric. Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 1 April 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400680, Document Ref.: SP 1/146 f. 236.

¹⁸⁰ Christchurch, Canterbury, and Rochester, 20 March 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600389, Document Ref.: N/A.

house stripped to the bone of all possessions.¹⁸¹ Similar to Hailes Abbey, visitors also recorded spoliation before they arrived to confiscate the monastic goods. At Repton, Thomas Legh reported that the house was “greatly spoiled” and many items were missing or stolen.¹⁸² He did not state whether this was the fault of the abbot and monks or the people in town, but his words showed concern about people removing goods from the monastery and taking items which now belonged to the King. Some visitation accounts also told not only of monastic dissolution but also recorded monasteries still standing throughout England. One report stated that by October 1538, a local visitor wrote that “there are 11 abbeys in Lincolnshire, great and small, still standing.”¹⁸³ These reports give an indication of the rapidity of the dissolution as well as an account of the pace within a specific county.

Many times, the visitors removed relics and images from the monasteries, as in the case of Hailes Abbey. The visitors scolded the monasteries and their brethren who kept these relics and used them to prompt pilgrimages from the population. One relic which received particular attention and had extant documents about its wonders was the Rood of Boxley. Monastic visitor Robert Southwell reported that the monks of Boxley Abbey apologized for their relic, which one man said “used to move its mouth and eyes, week, [and] nod...”¹⁸⁴ A letter revealed how this relic functioned, stating that the men defacing it found “certain engines and old wire, with old rotten sticks...which caused the eyes to move and stir in the head...and also the nether lip in

¹⁸¹ The Black Friars, Chichester, 8 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300574, Document Ref.: N/A.

¹⁸² Thomas Legh, L.L.D., to Cromwell, 28 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300721, Document Ref.: SP 1/138 f. 37.

¹⁸³ John Freman to Cromwell, 20 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300664, Document Ref.: SP 1/137 f. 236.

¹⁸⁴ Robt. Southwell to Cromwell, 3 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200415, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 257; Robert Southwell to Cromwell, 3 March 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 171-173; William Peterson to Conrad Pulbert, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200654, Document Ref.: N/A.

likewise to move as though it should speak.”¹⁸⁵ In 1538, William Peterson wrote that the commissioners removed the Rood of Boxley and it was “broken to pieces.”¹⁸⁶ The destruction of the Rood of Boxley was even relayed overseas, with Nicolas Partridge writing to Heinrich Bullinger stating how many relics were exposed as frauds and were subsequently destroyed, while specifically naming the Rood as one of the defunct relics.¹⁸⁷

Visitor accounts also mention other relics found at numerous monasteries. John London mentioned the image of “Our Lady at Caversham” and expounded that there “was great pilgrimage” to this site, which from the tone of his letter did not sound very approving of these pilgrimages.¹⁸⁸ John Hilsey, bishop of Rochester, wrote to Cromwell stating that a Black Friar of Cambridge wished to take “an image of Our Lady in his house, which has had much pilgrimage to her.”¹⁸⁹ Hilsey approved of the idea, because he felt that the man would not be “a maintainer of superstitious religion.”¹⁹⁰ Protestant reformer Hugh Latimer sarcastically stated that he hoped “our great Sibyll (the image of Our Lady of Worcester) [would be put] to some good purpose...She hath been the devil’s instrument to bring many...to eternal fire.”¹⁹¹ He also mentioned the images of the Lady at Walsingham, Ipswich, Doncaster, and Penyesse and hoped

¹⁸⁵ Jeffray Chamber to Cromwell, 7 February 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200238, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f. 12.

¹⁸⁶ William Peterson to Conrad Pulbert, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200654, Document Ref.: N/A. A brief account of the Rood of Boxley also can be found in: Peter Marshall, “The Rood of Boxley, the Blood of Hailes and the Defence of the Henrician Church,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46, no. 4 (October, 1995): 691-692.

¹⁸⁷ Nicolas Partridge to Bullinger, 12 April 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200767, Document Ref.: N/A; Nicolas Partridge to Bullinger, 17 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300384, Document Ref.: N/A.

¹⁸⁸ Dr. John London to Wriothesley, 17 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300378, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 268; Dr. John London to Cromwell, 17 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300377, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV; Dr. London to Cromwell, 17 September 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 221-223.

¹⁸⁹ John [Hilsey], Bp. of Rochester, to Cromwell, 30 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300232, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 1.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ Latimer to Cromwell, 13 June 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201193, Document Ref.: SP 1/133 f. 29.

them “all day in burning.”¹⁹² Some lists, such as Thomas Thacker’s list, only indicated the type of images or relics and their subsequent removal from various monasteries, with no indication of their final destinations.¹⁹³ One widespread similarity between Hailes Abbey and these other monasteries was that if a monastery had a relic or image which attracted pilgrims, they were quickly destroyed. Visitors and reformers revealed the relics and images as being frauds, and in some cases, publicly removed or denounced these relics. Some of these men could have had theological motivations for the removal, while others could have removed the items because of their desire for land or to obey the royal government’s orders for dissolution.

Besides the widespread removal of images and relics, the defacement of the entire buildings of their gold, silver, lead, and wood appeared in multiple accounts. John London reported to Cromwell that the friars of Reading did not have much in the way of movable valuables. However, he did describe the immense amount of lead inside specific parts of the building and covering the outside of the building, which he suggested be stripped from the building and sold for a profit.¹⁹⁴ London also told Cromwell that he and men chosen by the King to accompany him “defaced” parts of the friary, as well as Notley Priory, to pay some debts.¹⁹⁵ The defacement of many houses occurred because of their lead and the decorations within them.¹⁹⁶ London defaced some houses before the people could react or ask for help to save their

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Thomas Thacker to Cromwell, 1 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300264, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 29.

¹⁹⁴ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 14 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300355, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 119.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid; Dr. John London to Cromwell, 18 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300388, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 264; Dr. London to Cromwell, 18 September 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 225-227. There is also another document which gives a general overview of the spoliation, from the taking of gold and silver to the destruction of images: Spoil of the Monasteries, 26 June 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600834, Document Ref.: N/A.

¹⁹⁶ Lead of Friars’ Houses, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301042, Document Ref.: SP 1/140 f. 76.

monasteries. Much to the dismay of the people of Coventry, London and his men also began to deface two of their priories before they could appeal to Cromwell to save the buildings or the items within them.¹⁹⁷

The defacement process occurred at various monastic houses, while some visitors stated that they did not want to deface anything until further notified by the King or Cromwell.¹⁹⁸

London did not always deface every monastery he suppressed immediately. He did not deface Combe Abbey, but he did write to Cromwell that men needed to come and deface it quickly, or else the local population might take items.¹⁹⁹ When taking Kyme, Noncotton, Irforthe, Fossee, and Hevenynges, London stated that he “left the houses undefaced and the bells and lead to the King.”²⁰⁰ Richard Rich asked Cromwell when he was sending men to Abingdon Abbey in order to deface parts of the church, while also telling him that this place would not make an adequate new housing establishment for the King unless they fixed it up.²⁰¹ Local visitor Francis Cave stated that the monastery at Leicester remained “undefaced” and he awaited “instructions about defacing the church and other superfluous buildings.”²⁰² Similarly, visitors assessed Bury St. Edmund’s, stated the worth of the items with the house (which they valued at very little), and

¹⁹⁷ The Mayor and Aldermen of Coventry to Cromwell, 20 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300665, Document Ref.: SP 1/137 f. 238.

¹⁹⁸ The process of defacing and selling monastic goods appeared in many documents: Ric. Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301079, Document Ref.: SP 1/140 f. 101; John Williams, Ric. Pollard, and John Smith to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200199, Document Ref.: N/A.

¹⁹⁹ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400123, Document Ref.: SP 1/142 f. 124.

²⁰⁰ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 27 July 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401360, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 284; Dr. London to Cromwell, 27 July 1539, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 213-216.

²⁰¹ Sir Richard Ryche to Cromwell, 22 February 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200339, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f. 83.

²⁰² Dr. Francis Cave to Cromwell, 29 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300219, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 252; Francis Cave to Cromwell, 29 August 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 163-164.

waited on approval to deface the lead and bells.²⁰³ In Cornwall, John Tregonwell and John Smith wrote to Cromwell, stating that Launceston Priory was in possession of the King and that the “plate, bells, and whole house [remained] undefaced.”²⁰⁴ The monastery closed only a day prior to Tregonwell’s letter to Cromwell, but there must have been some concern about actions of defacement by locals against this house, since this was a running theme in later dissolution accounts.²⁰⁵

Major dismantling occurred at defunct monasteries throughout England. This ranged from completely stripping the interior of a monastic houses to removing lead and stone from the exterior of houses.²⁰⁶ Some places, such as the friaries of Huntingdon, Boston, Lincoln, Grantham, Newark, and Gimsby, had nothing but lead left after dissolution.²⁰⁷ Various people requested to purchase stone and wood from a number of monasteries, with one document revealing a request for stone and wood from Wigmore Abbey.²⁰⁸ Similarly, men living near dissolved monasteries applied for stone from its walls. John Russell appealed to buy the stone

²⁰³ Sir Richard Rych, and Others, to Henry VIII, 7 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500490, Document Ref.: SP 1/154 f. 108.

²⁰⁴ Dr. Tregonwell and John Smyth to Cromwell, 25 February 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400379, Document Ref.: SP 1/143 f. 162.

²⁰⁵ The visitors relayed to Cromwell any destruction that occurred in the monasteries, from stolen items to defaced items. Here is a sampling of sources from Southwest England: John Lord Audeley to Cromwell, 16 February 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400311, Document Ref.: SP 1/143 f. 86; Dr. Tregonwell, Dr. Petre, and John Smyth to Cromwell, 20 February 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400335, Document Ref.: SP 1/143 f. 115; Dr. Tregonwell and John Smyth to Cromwell, 25 February 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400379, Document Ref.: SP 1/143 f. 162; Robt. Southwell, Edw. Carne, John London, Ric. Poulet, and Wm. Berners to Cromwell, 2 December 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500654, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 324; The Late Abbot of Glastonbury, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500548, Document Ref.: SP 1/154 f. 136.

²⁰⁶ As referenced in Chapter 1, John Hare’s article on the dismantling of Southern monasteries and where their stones ended up enlightens a reader as to where this stone is today: John Hare, “Recycling the Monastic Buildings: The Dissolution in Southern England,” *The Historian*, no. 79 (2003): 22-27.

²⁰⁷ Ric. Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 23 February 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400359, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 248; Richard Bishop of Dover to Cromwell, 23 February 1539, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 191-193; Richard Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 1 March 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400428, Document Ref.: SP 1/144 f. 4.

²⁰⁸ Bp. Roland Lee to Mr. Scudamore, 18 January 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400095, Document Ref.: N/A.

from Pershore Abbey, “which I think few men will seek for, with the roof and covering of the library and the whole house of the myserycorde, and the whole workhouse, with 2 parts of the cloister with covering.”²⁰⁹ Even an abbot tried to buy stone from his own monastery. Philip Hoby, abbot of Evesham, asked John Scudamore if he could buy any remaining stone of Evesham after it was dissolved.²¹⁰ At times, the visitors hired men to complete the defacing process. Giovanni Portinari, an Italian man placed in charge of dissolving Lewes Priory in Sussex, reported to Cromwell that he and his men arrived at Lewes and found it “larger than people thought; yet all shall be pulled down.”²¹¹ The letter goes on to state,

On Friday morning, they commenced cutting the wall behind the high altar, where are five chapels and four pillars supporting a vault over the altar... They are first cutting under the foundation and putting in props, which afterwards they will burn...and think all this part will be down in eight or ten days at longest.²¹²

Portinari gave an update only four days later, stating his progress in the dismantling of Lewes. He wrote that he and his men had pulled down much of the building and that he would report to Cromwell only days later.²¹³ The process of dismantling appeared immense, with Portinari stating that he had “three carpenters, two smiths, two plumbers, one furnace man, and nine labourers.”²¹⁴ This report showed the extent to which it took to dismantle a single monastery, with a team of men pulling down walls and altars to return to the King and Cromwell.

²⁰⁹ John Russell to John Scudamore, 3 October 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302700124, Document Ref.: N/A.

²¹⁰ Philip Hoby to John Scudamore, 31 October 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500430, Document Ref.: N/A; Philip Hoby to John Scudamore, 31 October 1539, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 283-284.

²¹¹ Giovanni Portinari to Cromwell, 20 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200563, Document Ref.: SP 1/130 f. 93. Translated by J. Gairdner out of its original Italian.

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ Giovanni Portinari to Cromwell, 24 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200600, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 277. Translate by J. Gairdner out of original Italian; John Portinari to Cromwell, 24 March 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 180-181.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Documents and letters from visitors and monastic men reveal a change in tone from the letters of 1535-1536. Many of these earlier letters look to amend the injunctions and reforms implemented. Visitors became more forceful in closing and dismantling the monasteries, and the tone of their letters implied the dissolution of more than just the monastery in which they were writing. Abbots and monks sensed the changing feelings about monastic houses. They entrusted other men to help them in their causes, while also writing letters themselves in last efforts to save their monasteries from dissolution.

Some ordinary men tried to help certain abbots and monks in their endeavors to keep their monasteries open. The abbot of Peterborough wrote to Cromwell and expressed his thanks that Cromwell disregarded “untrue reports” against him.²¹⁵ John Russell, who was the abbot of Peterborough’s neighbor, supported the abbot’s suit and asked Cromwell to be kind to him, because he thought that Thomas Legh was lying about the abbot’s good character in order to get the monastery dissolved.²¹⁶ When dissolution became imminent for Peterborough Abbey, Russell wrote to Cromwell again, this time stating that he knew that the suppression was going to occur but asked that the abbot receive a good pension.²¹⁷ Russell wrote a final letter expressing thanks that Cromwell helped the abbot of Peterborough receive an adequate pension.²¹⁸ However, there were other men who showed the complete opposite regard for the monasteries and their inhabitants. Richard Graynfield wrote to Cromwell that he was glad that the suppression

²¹⁵ John Abbot of Peterburgh to Cromwell, 5 February 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800015, Document Ref.: SP 1/241 f. 294. One article states that the abbot did support the King in his suit for a divorce which ultimately changed the religious landscape of England: Christopher Morris, “Right Well Kept: Peterborough Abbey 1536-1539,” *The Historian*, no. 83 (Autumn, 2004): 20-23.

²¹⁶ The document which tells of Russell and the abbot being neighbors is: John Abbot of Peterborough to Cromwell, 4 June 1534, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301500804, Document Ref.: SP 1/84 f. 142. Russell’s appeal to Cromwell is relayed in: Sir J. Russell to Cromwell, 27 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300206, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f. 236.

²¹⁷ J. Lord Russell to Cromwell, 31 October 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500431, Document Ref.: SP 1/154 f. 58.

²¹⁸ J. Lord Russell to Cromwell, 16 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500545, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 119.

occurred and that it rid England of men who worshipped the bishop of Rome.²¹⁹ While Russell was trying to help a friend, Graynfield revealed his distaste for those who did not follow the new religion in England.

Some abbots and monks looked toward the future and asked Cromwell whether they would be able to maintain their station as abbots and monks. There are examples of men being quite adamant about not giving up their chosen professions as abbots and monks. Thomas, prior of Christchurch Canterbury, said that he “will never desire to forsake his habit, because religious men have been in this church 900 years and more” and that “if religious men forsake their habits and go about the world, they will have many more occasions to offend God and commit sin than now.”²²⁰ Richard Thornden, warden of the manors of Christchurch Canterbury, declared that since the visitors visited the priory, “many things fall to ruin” at the monastic house.²²¹ The prior wanted to remain in his current station, but in light of his observation of decay at the monastic house, this seemed quite unlikely. While the prior diplomatically argued for his religious station, others expressed their discontent more outspokenly. One of the Austin Friars in Canterbury did not mince his words when he refused to acknowledge the King as head of the Church, stating that “he is ready to die for it that the King may not be head of the Church, but it must be a spiritual father appointed by God.”²²²

The abbot of Woburn expressed discontent at the suppressions, and monks reported his actions to the royal government. One letter written to Henry VIII stated that the men of Woburn

²¹⁹ Sir Ric. Graynfield to Cromwell, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401377, Document Ref.: SP 1/152 f. 204.

²²⁰ Thos. Prior of Christchurch Canterbury, to Cromwell, 20 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300145, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f. 126.

²²¹ [Dr.] Richard Thornden, Warden of the Manors, to Cromwell, 4 November 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300764, Document Ref.: SP 1/138 f. 82.

²²² Ric. Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 15 December 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301077, Document Ref.: SP 1/140 f. 98.

were accused of treason and “divers crimes.”²²³ The abbot of Woburn reported that since the visitations of his monastery, he had “prayed for the King as Supreme Head (of the English Church).”²²⁴ However, his monks told a different story about the abbot’s religious intentions. One monk, John Croxton, stated that the abbot said that he “wished himself to have died with the good men that died for holding with the Pope,” specifically Sir Thomas More and Bishop John Fisher.²²⁵ These accusations sealed this monasteries fate, by possibly showing sympathy for the Pope and not the royal supremacy.

A similar situation occurred at Colchester Abbey. Sir John Seyncler wrote to Cromwell and stated that the abbot of Colchester said after being asked if he would obey the King, “I will not say [so, for] the King shall never have my house but again my will and again my heart, for I know by my learning that he cannot take it by right and law.”²²⁶ The abbot of Colchester also was accused of treason against the King, with four or more men of Colchester accusing him of stating that the King “usurped” the Pope’s authority and that God would “take vengeance for suppressing houses of religion” against the King.²²⁷ The abbot tried to save himself by stating that the King was head of the church by law and assent of the realm and that if the monasteries only could be dissolved at God’s will, and if it was not God’s will, then God would take his

²²³ Abbot and Convent of Woburn to Henry VIII, 8 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200969, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 112.

²²⁴ The Abbot and Monks of Woburn, 12 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200994, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 76.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ Sir John Seyncler to Cromwell, 21 November 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300905, Document Ref.: SP 1/139 f. 144.

²²⁷ The Abbot of Colchester, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500474, Document Ref.: SP 1/154 f. 101; The Abbot of Colchester, 1 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500454, Document Ref.: SP 1/154 f. 79; The Abbot of Colchester, 3 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500469, Document Ref.: SP 1/154 f. 90; The Abbot of Colchester, 4 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500473, Document Number: SP 1/154 f. 98.

revenge on those who disobeyed Him.²²⁸ It is telling that the abbot's actions not only solidified the closure of his house, but he visited the executioner's block for his treasonous words.

By 1539, with many larger houses already falling victim to closure, the King issued an act for the dissolution of the greater monasteries. As one historian states, while the act "did indeed authorize further surrenders by the remnant which still stood, [it] was more important for its confirmation of the royal title which monks, nuns and friars had already made over to the crown."²²⁹ In a sense, the act gave final approval to the voluntary surrenders and subsequent dissolutions already occurring throughout England.²³⁰ The royal governmental document stated,

...the King, our sovereign lord shall have, hold, possess and enjoy to him, his heirs and successors for ever all and singular such late monasteries...which since the said fourth day of February the 27th year of the reign of our said sovereign lord have been dissolved, suppressed, renounced, relinquished, forfeited, given up or by any other mean come to his Highness; and by the same authority and in like manner shall have, hold, possess and enjoy all the sites...and other hereditaments which appertained or belonged to the said late monasteries...²³¹

The King recognized the voluntary surrenders and his hold on newly obtained land. By his own authority, he now controlled a lot of land and buildings associated with formerly recognized traditional Catholic religious practices. This new act set in motion the subsequent closures of those monasteries that had not voluntarily surrendered. The smaller monasteries, the friaries, and the larger monasteries which quietly dissolved or voluntarily surrendered left the last standing monasteries in a perilous position. They either had to voluntarily surrender themselves, showing good will to the King's authority, or try to keep their monasteries from dissolution.

Sources referring to Glastonbury Abbey's later years show the final closure of an abbey which

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, 1984), 69.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ G.R. Elton, ed., *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 389.

did not voluntarily surrender. Glastonbury's demise had a more dramatic conclusion, with a remarkable reaction from the people at its dissolution. The decline of the abbot's and the monastery's popularity occurred quickly, with people supporting the monastery in 1535 to people reviling it and its abbot in 1540. Within a five-year span, a quick progression of feelings culminated and led to the demise of Glastonbury and its abbot, Richard Whiting.

While the previous chapter touched on Glastonbury Abbey's initial visitations and subsequent injunctions, this chapter reveals what occurred after Glastonbury appeared to lose public favor. Whiting continually expressed his displeasure with governmental interference at his monastery. He wrote letters to a wide array of people about how he handled his monastery and its reputation. Whiting's authority was weakening, especially when his choices for land tenants came into question. He wrote many letters to Cromwell that reveal how he did not want to favor any of Cromwell's suggested men, because he already chose a patron for the intended land.²³² Whiting's reputation started to come into question as well. His correspondence with Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle, in Calais and subsequent letter from other persons to Lisle exemplified the abbot's diminishing reputation. Six months after he denied land to one of Cromwell's men, he wrote to Lisle about how one of Lisle's servants was stealing from the monastery:

my mew at Glasto[n]bury being closed with high and strong walls, locked and closely railed over, hath been sundry time by night broken by one Richard Gybbs, servant unto the said Stephyn Pike [Lisle's servant], and many divers cygnets and other poultry therefrom taken, to my great displeasures and damages.²³³

For unknown reasons, Lisle accused the abbot of using slanderous "words" against him.

The document never defined what "words" insinuated, but they caused two men to write to Lisle

²³² Abbot of Glastonbury to Cromwell, 28 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300723, Document Ref.: SP 1/138 f. 38; Richard, Abbot of Glastonbury to Cromwell, 28 March 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400636, Document Ref.: SP 1/144 f. 180.

²³³ The Abbot of Glastonbury to Lord Lisle, 26 June 1539, in *The Lisle Letters*, vol. 5, ed. Muriel St. Clare Byrne (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 547; Richard [Whiting], Abbot of Glastonbury, to Lord Lisle, 26 June 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401202, Document Ref.: SP 3/3 f. 101.

to amend his view of Whiting. Lord William Stourton assured Lisle that he was “wrongly informed of him [the abbot].”²³⁴ William Popley declared that that abbot of Glastonbury “is a sage, circumspect and of good estimation” and did not believe in the slander against his character.²³⁵ Some men believed in the abbot’s good character well into 1539. Historian David Knowles stated that “until the day of trouble, all who mention Whiting do so with respect...”²³⁶ However, Lisle’s remarks illustrate the changing opinions of Whiting. This general attack on an abbot’s character could seem insignificant. However, when looking at the dates of the letters written, Lisle’s negative opinions occurred in June 1539, and Whiting met his end four months later.

By September 1539, Richard Whiting and Glastonbury Abbey were in danger. Men who once admired the abbot now wrote negatively about him. Visitor Richard Layton admitted that he praised Whiting to the King once, but declared that men can make mistakes in judgment from time to time. Also, he now believed that Whiting and all monks were “false, feigned, flattering, hypocrite knaves.”²³⁷ In late September 1539, Glastonbury received a second set of visitors, who wrote to Cromwell stating that they found a “written book of arguments against the divorce of his kings majestie and the lady dowager, which we take to be a great matters.”²³⁸ They also claimed that since the abbot already appeared as a “traitorous” man, this was enough to arrest him for treason. They proceeded to displace the remaining monks and account for the treasure

²³⁴ William Lord Stourton to Lord Lisle, 29 June 1539, in *The Lisle Letters*, vol. 5, ed. Muriel St. Clare Byrne (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 549; W. Lord Stourton to Lord Lisle, 29 June 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401216, Document Ref.: SP 3/7 f. 183.

²³⁵ William Popley to Lord Lisle, 30 June 1539, in *The Lisle Letters*, vol. 5, ed. Muriel St. Clare Byrne (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 550; Wm. Popley to Lord Lisle, 30 June 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401219, Document Ref.: SP 3/13 f. 63.

²³⁶ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 379.

²³⁷ Ric. Layton, Priest, to Cromwell, 16 September 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500191, Document Ref.: SP 1/153 f. 102.

²³⁸ The Commissioners to Cromwell, 22 September 1539, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 255-256.

they discovered.²³⁹ A week later, the visitors wrote to Cromwell a second time, indicating that they found jewel and plate hidden in “wallis, vauttis, and other secrette placis.”²⁴⁰ The visitors estimated that the monastery was worth inordinately more than originally thought. They also relayed that the servants and monks of Glastonbury “were very glade to departe, most humbly thankinge the kyngis majestie of his grete goodnes” after they received a generous pension to leave the grounds.²⁴¹ Lay servants, as well as monks, seemed content to abandon a place they called home for years.

In October 1539, a letter penned by a French dignitary to his fellow countryman expressed that Whiting’s fate was unclear. Charles de Marillac wrote home to France to Anne de Montmorency, Duc de Montmorency, about the abbot’s travails. Marillac relayed to Montmorency that by October 25, 1539, Whiting was in the Tower of London on charges of stealing from Glastonbury and having a book in favor of Katherine of Aragon and against Henry VIII’s marriage to Anne Boleyn.²⁴² There are clearly documents missing between June and October 1539, but from the progression of events, Richard Whiting and Glastonbury Abbey declined in influence quickly and dramatically. His reputation and subsequent arrest for treason revealed how quickly fortunes turned against the monasteries.

Richard Whiting’s end was as tragic as the downfall of Glastonbury Abbey itself and echoed the fate of other abbots in England. Multiple accounts described his execution. Richard Pollard wrote to Cromwell that Whiting was “drawyn thorowe the towne upon a hurdyll to the

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ The Commissioners to Cromwell, 28 September 1539, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 257-258.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Marillac to Montmorency, 25 October 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500401, Document Ref.: N/A. This document is a translation by J. Gairdner from the original French to English.

hyll callyd the Toree, where he was put to execution.”²⁴³ Lord Russell expounded on Whiting’s execution, located near Glastonbury on Torre Hill, and how Whiting’s “heedd [was] stryken off [and placed] upon the abbey gate at Glaston.” Russell’s letter continued by stating,

there was never scene in thies partes so greate apparaunce as were here at this present tyme, and never better wylyng to serve the kyng...there were many bylles put upp ageynst the abbott by hys tenauntes and others, for wronges and injuryes that he hadd donne theym.²⁴⁴

Whiting’s execution was communicated overseas as well, with Charles de Marillac writing to King Francis I of France that “two abbots have been lately executed for high treason [abbots of Glastonbury and Reading], one before the gate of his own abbey...they were hanged and their bodies left in chains.”²⁴⁵ All three accounts are very similar, and each showed a level of brutality to an abbot that had a rapid decline in popularity.

Repercussions for the religious men living within monasteries varied from man to man. However, Whiting’s execution shows that it was not uncommon for an abbot or monk to face execution in the second phase of the dissolution. Executions were rare during the early visitation years and primarily were reserved for those who participated in the Pilgrimage of Grace. The later executions appeared to occur because of a refusal to turn over monastic lands or cited as the abbots and monks participating in treasonous activity by those reporting on them. Cromwell

²⁴³ Richard Pollard to Cromwell, 16 November 1539, *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 261-262; Ric. Pollard to [Cromwell], 16 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500546, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 166.

²⁴⁴ Lord Russell to Cromwell, 16 November 1539, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 259-260; J. Lord Russell to [Cromwell], 16 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500545, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 119.

²⁴⁵ Marillac to Francis I, 30 November 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500633, Document Ref.: N/A. This document is a translation by J. Gairdner from the original French to English.

briefly mentioned the executions of the abbots of “Reading, Glastonbury, and others...” in his remembrances.²⁴⁶

News of the executions circulated outside England. In addition to Marillac’s letter to France, Heinrich Bullinger received multiple letters from associates about the dissolution of the monasteries and more specifically, on the executions of various abbots. John Butler wrote to Bullinger and stated that, “the monasteries, wonderful to relate, are all destroyed...the two abbots of Glastonbury and Reading have been condemned for treason and quartered.”²⁴⁷

Bartholomew Traheron wrote that, “All of the monks of this country have lost that name, some of the principal monasteries are turned into schools, and three of the most wealth abbots (Glastonbury, Reading, and Colchester) were led to execution a little before Christmas for a conspiracy to restore the Pope.”²⁴⁸ Nicolas Partridge wrote about the executions of the abbots of Glastonbury, Reading, and Colchester, and said it was because they had “secreted property and conspired to restore popery.”²⁴⁹ Partridge also stated that “the King...would promote the truth and has desired certain bishops to consult about selecting 12 monasteries where boys might be brought up in learning.”²⁵⁰

One of the biggest repercussions from the dissolution was immense land acquisition by wealthy men and occasionally the populous. While the King obtained all of the land from the monastic closures, many men appealed to him to let them purchase these lands. Land acquisition occurred during the first phase of the dissolution, but the second phase produced a far greater and

²⁴⁶ Cromwell’s Remembrances, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500439, Document Ref.: Cotton Titus B/I f. 446.

²⁴⁷ John Butler to Bullinger, 24 February 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600267, Document Ref.: N/A.

²⁴⁸ Bartholomew Traheron to Bullinger, 20 March 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600394, Document Ref.: N/A.

²⁴⁹ Nicolas Partridge, 26 February 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600277, Document Ref.: N/A.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

widespread grab for land across the country.²⁵¹ For example, Robert Peterson wrote to Cromwell asking for land from Lewes Priory, which adjoined his already owned land.²⁵² Rauff Waryne appealed to Cromwell for the same reasons, wanting the house of the Black Friars of Chester, which connected to his property.²⁵³ In the North, John Lamplugh wrote to Cromwell and stated that Alexander and Henry Staynton tried to lie to him in order to obtain land from Furness Abbey, saying that they had relatives that once owned it.²⁵⁴ Also in the North, Edward Stanley, earl of Derby, wanted land from Whalley Abbey, stating that he already had a grant to use the land from when it was a functioning monastery.²⁵⁵ Bishop Roland Lee put the lands of Wigmore Abbey into one of his relatives' hands, and wrote several letters hoping that Cromwell would let this man, John Bradshaw keep the land, so it would remain in his family.²⁵⁶ Even the primary

²⁵¹ Here is an immense list of land acquisitions which do not appear in full explanation in this paper: Anthony Sandes to Cromwell, 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302101379, Document Ref.: SP 1/127 f. 165; Thomas Cade to Cromwell, 4 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200423, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f. 154; Christopher Jenney to Cromwell, 1 April 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800027, Document Ref.: SP 1/242 f. 10; Thurstan Tyldisley to Cromwell, 16 April 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200802, Document Ref.: SP 1/131 f. 115; Jane Calthrop to Cromwell, 17 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201030, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 101; Sir Christopher Jenney to Cromwell, 22 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800057, Document Ref.: SP 1/242 f. 68; Thomas Earl of Rutland to Cromwell, 12 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300340, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 108; Thomas, Earl of Rutland to Wriothesley, 12 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300341, Document Ref.: SP 7/1 f. 41; Sir Ric. Gresham to Cromwell, 22 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300686, Document Ref.: SP 1/137 f. 253; Charles, Duke of Suffolk, to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200652, Document Ref.: SP 1/130 f. 219; [The Black Friars], King's Langley, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301041, Document Ref.: SP 1/140 f. 75; Thomas Fairfax to Cromwell, 13 February 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600204, Document Ref.: SP 1/157 f. 132; Sir Ric. Graynfield to Cromwell, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: 4302401377, Document Ref.: SP 1/152 f. 204; John Croke, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500824, Document Ref.: SP 1/156 f. 52; Thetford, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500849, Document Ref.: SP 1/156 f. 95.

²⁵² Robt. Peterson to Cromwell, 21 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200583, Document Ref.: SP 1/130 f. 111.

²⁵³ Rauff Waryne to Cromwell, 31 January 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400185, Document Ref.: SP 1/142 f. 184.

²⁵⁴ Sir John Lamplugh to Cromwell, 1 September 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500127, Document Ref.: SP 1/153 f. 67.

²⁵⁵ Edward Earl of Derby to Cromwell, 2 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200414, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f. 149.

²⁵⁶ Bishop Roland Lee to Cromwell, 8 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200971, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 53; Bishop Roland Lee to Cromwell, 21 June 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale

visitors felt that they needed compensation for their duties and asked for land. Thomas Legh expressed interest in Holme Abbey, which he helped quietly dissolve. He wrote at least two letters, one to Cromwell and one to Wriothesley, asking for “preferment” of abbey lands.²⁵⁷ Two years later, Legh appealed to Cromwell for more abbey land and stated that “I am hold to remind you of my suit for Saint Oswald’s...”²⁵⁸ Multiple grants passed through the royal government to give land to people throughout England.²⁵⁹

At times, a town near a dissolved monastery applied for its land. Richard Rex has argued that towns obtained the monastic grounds “in the shape of monastic buildings for use as parish churches, grammar schools or town halls, but little was saved from wreck.”²⁶⁰ Robert Southwell’s letter to Cromwell was one of the few sources obtained through many searches showing town land acquisition. He told of the monastic house of Gawntes and how the town as a whole applied to acquire it and its land.²⁶¹ There was neither resistance nor any attempt to thwart the dissolution. The town wanted to obtain the land for other uses and appealed to Cromwell for that right. In Norwich, the mayor and aldermen asked for the houses and lands of the friaries in

Document Number: MC4302201248, Document Ref.: SP 1/133 f. 157; Bishop Roland Lee to Cromwell, 19 November 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300886, Document Ref.: SP 1/139 f. 117; Bishop Roland Lee and W. Sulyard to Cromwell, 8 December 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301026, Document Ref.: SP 1/140 f. 57; Bishop Roland Lee to Cromwell, 19 July 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401328, Document Ref.: SP 1/152 f. 143; Bp. Roland Lee to Cromwell, 24 October 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500396, Document Ref.: SP 1/154 f. 44.²⁵⁷ Thomas Legh, L.L.D., to Cromwell, 18 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200556, Document Ref.: SP 1/130 f. 87; Thomas Legh, L.L.D., to Wriothesley, 19 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200560, Document Ref.: SP 1/130 f. 92.

²⁵⁸ Thomas Legh, L.L.D., to Cromwell, 16 January 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600079, Document Ref.: SP 1/157 f. 53.

²⁵⁹ The grants normally stated a month and a year and had a person’s name listed with what land they wanted to obtain. While listing all of the grants in this note would not be practical, an example of two grants which mentions Glastonbury Abbey land are as follows: Grants in February, 1541, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302700593, Document Ref.: N/A; Grants in July, 1544, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303101049, Document Ref.: N/A.

²⁶⁰ Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 55.

²⁶¹ Robt. Southwell and Others to Cromwell, 16 December 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500717, Document Ref.: SP 1/155 f. 119.

town, since one was already dissolved and the “other three orders will be dissolved likewise.”²⁶²

Likewise, the mayor and aldermen of Northampton appealed for the land of the friaries in their town, hoping even to have a small part of the land for farming.²⁶³

Richard, bishop of Dover, wrote about the White Friars, Black Friars, and Grey Friars in Gloucester and the town wanting to obtain the friaries’ land. An alderman of the town desired one of the houses, because he wanted to use it to house the poor and help them find work.²⁶⁴

Other accounts stated that this man “doth much good in that town among the poor people, setting many on work, above 300 daily,” which would truly benefit the town.²⁶⁵ The dissolution of the friaries did not appear too detrimental, since these structures already were physically decaying. With the eventual acquiescence of the friars, the town acquired the building without putting up any resistance to the knowledge that it displaced an aspect traditional Catholic religion.

In light of imminent closure, the abbot of Evesham wrote to Cromwell and wished that if his monastery were to close, then hopefully it could be used as an “educational establishment.”²⁶⁶ He cites the “wholesome air” of the town and that it is one of the only monasteries in the near region used for hospitality.²⁶⁷ The abbot and monks of Evesham Abbey wrote a second letter to Cromwell in 1539 and again asked for their house to be used for the “true preaching of the word

²⁶² Mayor and Aldermen of Norwich to Cromwell, 5 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300291, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 73.

²⁶³ [Mayor and Corporation of] Northampton to Cromwell, 23 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300693, Document Ref.: SP 1/137 f. 267.

²⁶⁴ Ric. Bp. of Dover to Cromwell, 28 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201509, Document Ref.: SP 1/134 f. 261; “Eyewitnesses at Gloucester, 1538,” in *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, ed. Joyce Youings (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971), 178-179. This document depicted the view from the mayor and three aldermen that mirrored those of Richard, Bishop of Dover.

²⁶⁵ “Eyewitnesses at Gloucester, 1538,” in *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, ed. Joyce Youings (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971), 178.

²⁶⁶ Petition of the abbot and convent of Evesham to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300884, Document Ref.: SP 1/139 f. 114.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

of God” and to educate the young people.²⁶⁸ While their requests went unfulfilled, the King and Cromwell refounded other monasteries and turned them into schools or cathedrals.

Thomas Audeley specifically mentioned the state of monasteries to Cromwell when stating that he wanted to remind Cromwell to keep some houses open, “not as abbeys but [as] colleges.”²⁶⁹ For example, the priory of Rochester turned into a cathedral and a school, with “one learned man freely to teach a grammar school and to bring up poor men’s children in learning.”²⁷⁰ The royal government also transformed Christchurch, Canterbury from a monastic cathedral chapter into a secular, Protestant one, releasing official documentation telling of the change.²⁷¹ Likewise, the priory of Carlisle became Carlisle Cathedral, the chapter at Durham Cathedral became secular, and the monastery of St. Werburg in Chester became Chester Cathedral.²⁷² Finally, at Peterborough Abbey, the brethren “handed to him [King Henry] the keys on 29 November 1539 and the cathedral was established in September 1541.”²⁷³ While only a few monasteries had the luxury of transforming into colleges or cathedrals, there was still an indication of the usefulness of some of these buildings, which turned into places for the new Protestant teachings.

²⁶⁸ The Abbot and Convent of [Evesham], Wore, to Cromwell, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401230, Document Ref.: SP 1/152 f. 104.

²⁶⁹ Sir Thomas Audeley, Chancellor, to Cromwell, 8 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300315, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 86.

²⁷⁰ Rochester Cathedral, 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600390, Document Ref.: SP 1/158 f. 56; Rochester Cathedral, 4 July 1541, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800212, Document Ref.: SP 1/243.

²⁷¹ Canterbury Cathedral, 8 April 1541, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302700713, Document Ref.: N/A.

²⁷² Durham Cathedral, 12 May 1541, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302700843, Document Ref.: N/A; Carlisle Cathedral, 25 May 1541, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800209, Document Ref.: SP 1/243 f. 159; Chester Cathedral, 12 July 1541, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800213, Document Ref.: SP 1/243.

²⁷³ Christopher Morris, “Right Well Kept: Peterborough Abbey 1536-1539,” *The Historian*, no. 83 (Autumn, 2004): 20.

As for the personal lives of the abbots and monks, one historian states that while we “can follow up [on] quite a number of careers in some detail, we remain almost totally ignorant of the lives of the great majority.”²⁷⁴ Abbots and monks generally received pensions for giving up their monasteries or not fighting their closures. Some letters simply state that the abbot and monks received “convenient pensions.”²⁷⁵ Some abbots and monks also expressed delight at leaving the monasteries in “secular apparel.”²⁷⁶ John Poletensis, the abbot of Pershore, only desired a good pension for him and his monks and also the books from the monastery.²⁷⁷ Robert Kyng, the abbot of Walden, stated that he wished to be “out of danger of the King’s laws,” whether that meant being a religious man or a lay man.²⁷⁸ John London wrote to Cromwell to help the men of the four friaries in Oxford, for they “change their papistical garments” and are “very old men.”²⁷⁹ The abbots and monks sometimes found it perilous to be out of a monastic house, with one report saying that “people see their manner of living to be monstrous...few give them alms.”²⁸⁰

²⁷⁴ G.W.O Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (New York: Walker and Company, 1966), 139; Margaret McGlynn, “The Payment of Pensions to the Ex-Religious of Tudor Bedfordshire,” *Midland History* 32, (2007): 41-67.

²⁷⁵ Christchurch, Canterbury, and Rochester, 20 March 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600389, Document Ref.: N/A; John, abbot of Bordysley to Cromwell, 26 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201088, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 150; Sir John Nevyell to Dr. Lee, 3 June 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201145, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 199; Cromwell to Dr. [Lee] and William Cavendish, 6 November 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300779, Document Ref.: SP 1/138 f. 131.

²⁷⁶ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 18 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300388, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 264; Dr. London to Cromwell, 18 September 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 225-227.

²⁷⁷ John Poletensis, Abbot of Pershore, to Cromwell, 23 February 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400360, Document Ref.: SP 1/143 f. 146.

²⁷⁸ Robt. Kyng, late abbot of Walden, to Cromwell, 17 July 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401315, Document Ref.: SP 1/152 f. 137.

²⁷⁹ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 31 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300243, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 269; Dr. London to Cromwell, 31 August 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 221-224.

²⁸⁰ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 14 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300100, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f. 85.

However, these brief reports indicate that not all monks were desolate and homeless after the dissolution and obtained pensions to keep them living relatively peacefully in England.

vi.

While the first phase of the dissolution of the English monasteries focused on reform within the monastic houses and the closure of a few poor houses, the second phase of the dissolution took on a different tone. Visitation letters rarely mentioned reform during these later years and monetary inventories chronicled the inside and outside of monastic buildings. While the first phase of the dissolution showed a distinct difference between the treatments of northern monasteries as compared to all other monasteries, the second phase reveals the variances in monastic responses throughout England. There are examples in all regions of monasteries showing a variance of responses to the closures, from participating in voluntary closure of their houses to some putting up a fight to keep their houses open. The second phase of the dissolution of the England monasteries displayed a full-scale dissolution, without much indication of reform in any monastery. While the attitudes of abbots and monks varied from region to region and monastery to monastery, the responses of the English people in various regions echoed a similar pattern to that of the religious men. In chapter four, the English people's actions and reactions will show that the dissolution did not go unnoticed throughout England.

CHAPTER IV

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE'S ACTIONS AND REACTIONS

In 1539, Christopher Chaitour, a servant of the bishop of Durham, explained a verbal exchange he had with another man as he was travelling the English roads. Chaitour stated that the man, named Craye, asked him if there were any abbeys still standing in England. Chaitour replied, "that they should be down shortly, by report."²⁸¹ The other man continued, "is there none that grudgeth with such pulling down of abbeys in your country?"²⁸² Chaitour ended the conversation by stating, "I trust no, for if there be any such they keep it secret, for there hath been so sore punishment."²⁸³ The man stated, "Surely, there are much grudging in these parts, but none dare speak, and many goeth of begging, and it causeth much robbing."²⁸⁴

This exchange between two men demonstrates an important theme in the two-phase process of the dissolution of the English monasteries: the ambivalence of the English people. Chaitour relayed that the dissolution was almost complete, with all monastic houses under threat of imminent closure. The other man seemed skeptical as to whether people really agreed with what was happening to the destruction of traditional religious institutions. From Chaitour and Craye's conversation, it is clear that the people had mixed reactions to the dissolution. While all monastic houses were eventually dissolved, this does not tell us whether the English people felt a connection to the monasteries or how the dissolution impacted their overall religious feelings. An analysis of the people's actions and reactions to the dissolution of the monastery in this two-phase dissolution will reveal whether the dismantling of the monasteries elicited a minimal

²⁸¹ Christopher Chaitour, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500784, Document Ref.: SP 1/155 f. 153.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

response from the English people or whether the people actively impacted the dissolution. This chapter will also address whether the events Shagan describes at Hailes Abbey were an anomaly. First, the documents from the early phase of the dissolution will illustrate the many ways in which monasteries served their communities through 1537. Second, the documents from the second phase of the dissolution will demonstrate the people's continuing interactions with the monasteries, their reactions to widespread closures, and whether the laity complied with the closures or resisted these closures.

vii.

In medieval England, the lay community used monasteries for a variety of purposes.²⁸⁵ One of the main ways monasteries served the laity was by providing hospitality to pilgrims and other travelers.²⁸⁶ Letters during the first phase show that there was concern over removing this connection between the laity and the monks. Throughout the documents and letters, abbots and monks expressed concern over their ability to continue giving hospitality to the laity.

Chapter two of this thesis revealed that visitors imposed injunctions on the monasteries for various reasons. Some of these injunctions, such as the requirement that abbots and monks cloister themselves off from the outside world, were in direct conflict with the monastic tradition of hospitality toward travelers. In fact, the heads of many religious houses struggled to maintain that hospitality toward visitors through the first phase of the dissolution, and local inhabitants strove to keep their monasteries functioning and relevant in society. In late 1534, the abbot of Lylleshull stated that he agreed to rent part of his lands of Wyldmor Grange to a man who the

²⁸⁵ J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, 1984), 74. Scarisbrick gives numerous ways that the monasteries impacted the local populations, such as providing a place for younger brothers in large families, a place to pray for loved ones, and a place for rest through hospitality.

²⁸⁶ Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People*, 74.

King favored but could give no more of his land “for without it we cannot maintain hospitality.”²⁸⁷ A little over a year later, these types of pleas continued, with many stating that they needed enough land and housing to keep this link with town and traveler. George Gyffard stated that one house in eastern England “keeps such hospitality as could not be maintained without great economy on half as much land.”²⁸⁸ Robert, prior of Lewes, stated that he did not have much but hoped to keep his house running to continue hospitality and expressed that he thought Cromwell wanted hospitality to continue.²⁸⁹ The Prior of Lenton thought it was important for his house to “keep up hospitality” and appealed to Cromwell to help his decaying house.²⁹⁰ Similarly, the abbot of Chester expressed that if he had to lease land to some of the men that Cromwell said he had to lease to, then it would be “a great hindrance to our maintaining hospitality.”²⁹¹

Not all monasteries needed to plead for help when trying to maintain their hospitality. Loys Ferrers, abbot of Wymondham, stated that he and his convent maintained “hospitality according to the King’s injunctions” through the renting of his lands.²⁹² People near St. James Abbey in Northampton viewed the abbey as helpful to the poor, with one man stating that “they

²⁸⁷ Robert Abbot of Lylleshull to Cromwell, 20 November 1534, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301501475, Document Ref.: SP 1/87 f. 38.

²⁸⁸ Geo. Gyffard to Cromwell, 19 June 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301801207, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 249; George Giffard to Cromwell, 19 June 1536, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 136-138.

²⁸⁹ Robt. Prior of Lewes to Cromwell, 31 August 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900384, Document Ref.: SP 1/106 f. 55.

²⁹⁰ The Prior of Lenton to Cromwell, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301801277, Document Ref.: SP 1/104 f. 224.

²⁹¹ The Abbot of Chester to Cromwell, 1 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001136, Document Ref.: SP 1/119 f. 120.

²⁹² Loys Ferrers, Abbot, and the Convent of Wymondham to Cromwell, 22 August 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC 4302100592, Document Ref.: SP 1/124 f. 86; Loys Ferrers, Abbot of Wymondham, to Cromwell, 13 September 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100715, Document Ref.: SP 1/124 f. 231.

are greatly relieved by this house, which has a good report through the whole town.”²⁹³ The town and visiting travelers viewed the abbot as a kind and well-liked man.²⁹⁴ However, only two months later, John London reported that St. James’s Abbey was “out of order.”²⁹⁵ London’s report either revealed the truth of the decaying nature of St. James’s Abbey or embellished its character to obtain its closure. As seen from earlier records though, people made statements about how this abbey was helpful and pivotal in poor relief and general relief to travelers.

While hospitality concerns did not appear as frequently in the second phase of the dissolution, a few documents reveal that some abbots and monks did think about their connection to the English people. After the resignation of the former abbot of Chester in 1538, about which the town was delighted, the new abbot, Thomas Clerk, stated that if everything was taken from his monastery, he could no longer adhere to the hospitality of the town.²⁹⁶ Thomas Audeley stated that St. John’s and St. Osyes helped the poor people of the town and that if these two monasteries closed, then that relief and hospitality would no longer exist.²⁹⁷ Similarly, William Parre told Cromwell that Pipewell Abbey proved the poor people relief, hospitality, and charity that no other house nearby could offer.²⁹⁸ During the later years, as pilgrimages declined, the hospitality of most monasteries was limited to poor relief.

People also sought sanctuary within monasteries, with some people trying to escape arrest for a crime. Documents reveal that Westminster Abbey in London provided sanctuary to

²⁹³ Edmund Knyghtley and others to Cromwell, 19 May 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800948, Document Ref.: SP 1/104 f. 32.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 16 July 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900104, Document Ref.: SP 1/105 f. 69.

²⁹⁶ Sir Will. Brereton to Cromwell, 4 February 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200225, Document Ref.: SP 1/128 f. 179; Thomas Abbot of Chester to Cromwell, 7 June 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201161, Document Ref.: SP 1/133 f. 3.

²⁹⁷ Sir Thomas Audeley, Chancellor, to [Cromwell], 8 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300315, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 86.

²⁹⁸ Sir Wm. Parre to Cromwell, 6 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201536, Document Ref.: SP 1/134 f. 112.

many people in this situation. While these accounts do not refer to any of the people's religious affiliations, they reveal another reason why monasteries were valued in their communities.

The Privileges of Westminster Abbey stated that people could seek sanctuary for a crime, even for one against the King.²⁹⁹ In February 1536, Bishop Roland Lee wrote to Cromwell to apply for a King's pardon for a man who murdered another man. Lee wrote of the accused murderer taking sanctuary at Westminster and explained that he would emerge from sanctuary after obtaining a pardon.³⁰⁰ In another account from February 1536, a woman named Eleanor Studley complained to Cromwell that a priest, Sir Thomas Tleude, spoke seditious words and should not be able to take refuge in a church. She appealed to Cromwell for assistance in getting him out of sanctuary at Westminster.³⁰¹ In April 1536, there was an account of a murderer who sought refuge in another townspeople's home. He was apprehended by local authorities, but as they were passing Westminster on his way to jail, he stated, "I would I were in yonder church... I would thou haddest gone straight thither before, so that I had not been cumbered."³⁰² This accused murderer longingly looked to Westminster Abbey as a place to escape conviction for his alleged crime. This phenomenon occurred more often during the medieval years up to the first phase of the dissolution. No letter found in this research indicated that people sought sanctuary after 1537, which could indicate that the monasteries no longer were a safe place for criminals to seek refuge. In the later years, people's appeals to monasteries changed from sanctuary to refuge, mostly from sicknesses that swept through England.

²⁹⁹ Privileges of Westminster Abbey, 1534, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301501411, Document Ref.: SP 1/87 f.1. This document was originally in Latin. J.Gairdner provided a translated annotation, which is referenced above.

³⁰⁰ Roland Lee, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and Thos. Englefield, to Cromwell, 26 February 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800360, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 71.

³⁰¹ Eleanor Studley to Cromwell, 22 February 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800346, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 64.

³⁰² Sanctuary for Murder, 30 April 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800794, Document Ref.: SP 1/103 f. 195.

As late as 1538, the town of Coventry appealed to Cromwell on behalf of the Grey and White Friars' houses, because they were places of refuge for those who fell ill with the plague.³⁰³ The mayor believed that if the people had to seek help at the other parish churches, then they would infect more people than they would if they sought refuge in the friaries.³⁰⁴ A year later, the city of Coventry expressed interest in obtaining Coventry Cathedral after the dissolution occurred. The people were concerned that the laity had no place to seek refuge when the plague infected the town.³⁰⁵ Some even pushed for Cromwell to wait on dissolving Coventry Cathedral and the friaries until the town's magistrates could talk to Cromwell personally and ask for the acquisition of these lands and buildings.³⁰⁶

Another important function of monasteries before their dissolution was the education of local populations. The Bishop of Lincoln even expressed that one local man, Master Day, would make a good addition to St. James, Northampton. The Bishop stated that "the appointment will please the whole country, for he is learned and virtuous..."³⁰⁷ A letter less than a year later stated that at a visitation, this same man was a "right discreet man, a good husbender, and well beloved of all."³⁰⁸ Similarly, Bishop Roland Lee wrote that the "gentlemen" of Hereford defended the

³⁰³ The Mayor and Aldermen of Coventry to Cromwell, 20 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300405, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 161; Dr. John London to Cromwell, 22 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300689, Document Ref.: SP 1/137 f. 259.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁵ The City of Coventry to the President of the Council in the Marches of Wales, 8 January 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400040, Document Ref.: SP 1/142 f. 25.

³⁰⁶ Roger Wigston to Cromwell, July 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401389, Document Ref.: SP 1/152 f. 210.

³⁰⁷ John Bishop of Lincoln to Sir Francis Brian, 3 August 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700024, Document Ref.: SP 1/95 f. 10.

³⁰⁸ George Gyffard to Cromwell, 19 May 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800947, Document Ref.: SP 1/104 f. 30.

house of Awconbury, because they have had “their women and children brought up in virtue and learning” at that house.³⁰⁹

In one account, the prior of Christchurch Twynham explained that the priory was also the parish church for the surrounding areas. The priory was so multifunctional that closing it would remove a place for the poor to receive help, a refuge of hospitality for travelers, a grammar school for children, and an institution of worship for the town.³¹⁰ The decimation of monasteries brought drastic changes to many parts of Dorset. Some of the religious men were relieved to be free from their monastic vows, while the townspeople lost their land leases and major religious institution of the county. These sources from the first phase of the dissolution illustrate the educational and religious value of the monasteries in their respective towns.

In 1535, the abbot of Winchcombe Abbey wrote to Cromwell asking for him to repeal various visitation injunctions, including the one barring women from the monastery and closing multiple entrances to the monastery. The abbot appealed for upper class women and friends of the monastery to be able to enter because of their deep financial and religious interests. He also asked to open a gate to the town so that the townspeople and the monastery could exchange food.³¹¹ The monastery relied on the people, and the abbot’s appeals demonstrated that the people still were supporting monasteries through donations. Throughout the first phase and the second phase of the dissolution of the English monasteries, documents reveal that the medieval monasteries were still serving the towns with hospitality, preaching, and education, and that local people still embraced these connections to traditional Catholicism.

³⁰⁹ Bishop Roland Lee to Cromwell, 26 December 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901386, Document Ref.: SP 1/113 f. 29.

³¹⁰ The Prior of Christchurch, Hants, to [Henry VIII], 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201132, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 175.

³¹¹ Winchcombe Abbey, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301701187, Document Ref.: SP 1/100 f. 118.

During the two phases of the dissolution of the English monasteries, compliance with the dissolution varied from region to region. People complied with the dissolution of their monasteries for many reasons. Some may not have liked the abbots or monks in their town, while others wanted to remain obedient to the King and his supremacy. Others showed a sense of collaboration when tearing apart a monastery, with people coming together to steal and ransack the monastic structures. As Ethan Shagan has demonstrated, a good example of the dismantling of a monastery occurred at Hailes Abbey.

After the dissolution of Hailes Abbey, the government confiscated and sold monastic land and goods. Soon, as Shagan illustrates, "...local people began breaking into the ex-monastery and systematically tearing it apart."³¹² He recounts an extensive list of the items people stole from the monastery, from items as small as a pot to as large as stained glass windows.³¹³ It was a widespread and illegal enterprise by those involved, but no one from the area reported his neighbor to the authorities.³¹⁴ Even though Gloucestershire supposedly leaned more toward traditional Catholic religion, evidence suggests that financial motives were not the only ones for the dismantling of Hailes Abbey. Evangelical men and Catholic men alike removed items from the monastery, either to destroy because of superstition or to save from the destruction.³¹⁵ Hailes Abbey gives a complete documented example of the dismantling of the monastery, not only by the royal government but also by the local population. Was this example

³¹² Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 176.

³¹³ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 177-178.

³¹⁴ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 178-179.

³¹⁵ Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 181-193.

an isolated incident of compliance, or did others resist the dissolution and refuse to partake in the destruction of the abbeys?

From an extensive search of the primary sources, Hailes Abbey does not appear to be an anomaly. In fact, numerous sources showed the same basic pattern of closure and looting by the local population. Confiscation and collaboration occurred even during the first phase of the dissolution. Royal visitors appealed to people who took items from monasteries to return them as soon as possible. Richard Southwell stated that he visited Hoxon and that he recovered some of the goods the abbot and others sold but “shall obtain the rest as I can discover in whose hands it is.”³¹⁶ William Parre warned the people of the town that if they did not bring back items stolen from Barlings Abbey or Kirkstead Abbey, “he would hang any who concealed anything.”³¹⁷ At Furness Abbey, men had to be put in place to “prevent anything being embezzled” from the house.³¹⁸ However, sometimes people stole items before the visitors or King’s men arrived at the dissolved monastic house. Richard Pollard stated that at Bridlington, a “great part [of monastic goods] was stolen by the poor people before his coming.”³¹⁹ He was surprised by how poor the people were in this area and expressed surprise by their “great spoil and robbery” before he arrived.³²⁰ One monastery in eastern England had items quickly removed from the house, because rumors spread that a local man and company were going to steal and riot after the

³¹⁶ Ric. Southwell to Cromwell, 11 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800083, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 58.

³¹⁷ Sir Wm. Parre to Cromwell, 22 March 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000721, Document Ref.: SP 1/117 f. 84.

³¹⁸ Sussex and Others to Henry VIII, 6 April 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000866, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 294.

³¹⁹ Richard Pollard to Cromwell, 14 June 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100098, Document Ref.: SP 1/121 f. 120.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

submissive surrender of the monastery of St. David's.³²¹ At Lewes Priory, John Milsent wrote to Henry Polsted that the people "steal the glass out of the windows, bear away doors, and pluck down ceilings," leaving very little behind.³²² Opportunistic people stole items from the monasteries, as well as the poor and the people who embraced new religious practices.

In later years, people continued to steal items from the monasteries, mirroring the actions from Hailes Abbey. William Petre found one house "so bare" and much of its plate stolen and was amazed by the destruction of one monastic house which was not in debt at all.³²³ Finding a monastery empty of its contents was not atypical. Richard Riche wrote that unknown persons defaced Bordesley Abbey, and he demanded to know who these people were and where they sold all of the contents.³²⁴ Thomas Legh found that the people had spoiled Repton before he arrived.³²⁵ John Hilsley, the baliff of Leominster, wrote to Cromwell about the theft occurring at the late priory of Leominster, with plate and part of a shire stolen from the priory.³²⁶

Some reports indicated that the King's men sent goods to the royal government quickly so that they could preempt the local population's thievery. John London sent the lead from Notley Abbey to the King immediately after dissolution, because he thought that it would be "stolen by night," which he stated also happened to a nearby friary.³²⁷ In one report, London

³²¹ W. [Barlow], Bp. of St. David's, to [Cromwell], 5 April 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000854, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 318.

³²² John Milsent to Henry Polsted, 12 December 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303701285, Document Ref.: SP 1/241 f. 245.

³²³ Dr. William Petre to Wriothsley, 11 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200986, Document Ref.: SP 7/1 f. 22.

³²⁴ Sir Ric. Riche to John Scudamore and Robt. Burgoyne, 31 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201531, Document Ref.: N/A.

³²⁵ Thomas Legh, LLD, to Cromwell, 28 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300721, Document Ref.: SP 1/138 f. 37.

³²⁶ John Hilsley, Deputy Baliff of Leominster, to Cromwell, 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600490, Document Ref.: SP 1/158 f. 176.

³²⁷ Dr. John London to [Cromwell], 17 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300377, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV; Dr. London to Cromwell, 17 September 1538, in *Three*

expressed concern that people would steal from the monasteries, and even gave a list of monasteries in eastern England and stated whether or not he a party of the King's men should arrive immediately to take the contents inside the monasteries back to the King.³²⁸ For example, he stated that he did not deface any house without assent from the royal government, but if no one arrived to watch the houses, the "houses will be spoiled."³²⁹ At Reading, London reported that "This is a town of much poor people, and they fell to stealing so fast in every corner of the house that I have been fain to tarry a whole week here to set everything in due order."³³⁰ Richard Layton feared that the neighboring population would steal items from the Black Friars at Norwich, and he stated that people would steal "the lead on the aisles and the glass in the windows."³³¹ Layton sold everything at the friary, except this lead and glass and got someone to guard the friary until further notice.³³² He found similar problems at other houses. Layton stated that he appointed men to guard plate and items at other monasteries, but these men relayed that people "break up the doors, walls, and pales."³³³ He criticized some men who received items

Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 221-223.

³²⁸ Dr. John London to [Cromwell], 29 October 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300734, Document Ref.: SP 1/138 f. 45.

³²⁹ Ibid; Dr. John London to Cromwell, 18 January 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400092, Document Ref.: SP 1/142 f. 86; Dr. John London to Cromwell, 27 January 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400160, Document Ref.: SP 1/142 f. 161.

³³⁰ Dr. John London to [Cromwell], 18 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300388, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 264; Dr. London to Cromwell, 18 September 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 225-226.

³³¹ Ric. Bp of Dover to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300953, Document Ref.: SP 1/139 f. 173.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ric. Bp of Dover to Cromwell, 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301078, Document Ref.: SP 1/140 f. 100. This was also a main complaint for the men guarding Lewes Priory: John Milsent to Henry Polsted, 12 December 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303701285, Document Ref.: SP 1/241 f. 245.

from other monasteries (he did not name the specific ones) and did not want to give these items back unless ordered by Cromwell.³³⁴

In Cornwall, Launceston Priory and Bodmin Priory left numerous sources alluding to their status and influence within their respective towns. The election of a new abbot at Launceston troubled the priory and the townspeople. Sir John Chamond and Sir Stephen Lampre insinuated that Sir John Schere, newly-elected prior of Launceston, received money to become the prior, and they openly examined people in town about the matter. One man testified that there was no knowledge in the town regarding election until townspeople saw a nobleman, Sir William Courtenay, ride out of town immediately following the election, presumably to spread the news to those who endorsed Schere.³³⁵ There was also discontent that while the former prior, Sir John Baker, improved the priory's finances, after Schere took over, the priory sunk in debt.³³⁶ Courtenay wrote that he believed Schere to be "an honest man, whatever people may report of him."³³⁷ These documents reveal the townspeople's concern for and involvement in the priory's affairs. Rumors continued to spread when Schere dragged the priory into debt, including the suspicion that the local aristocracy placed the prior in his new position.³³⁸ Bodmin Priory did not fare much better than Launceston. Thomas Wandesworth, the new prior of Bodmin, complained about his "unthrifty canons" and how they lived "against the order of religion."³³⁹ Shortly

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Launceston Priory, 16 February 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301600233, Document Ref.: SP 1/90 f.132.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Sir W. Courtenay to Cromwell, 8 May 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301600705, Document Ref.: SP 1/92 f. 131. This quote comes from the annotation by J. Gairdner, as the original manuscript is too dark and blurred to decipher the exact wording. Upon review of other documents annotated by Gairdner, he remained true to much of the original wording to make the assumption he remained true to the wording in this particular document.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Thos. Prior of Bodmin to Mr. Lores, 28 May 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301801014, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 139. The date of this document is debatable. Two other sources list it as 25 May 1535. These sources are Thomas Wright, ed., *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the*

thereafter, the prior pleaded for Cromwell to help his poor priory or else his “neighbors of Bodmin” would destroy the priory. He even stated that townspeople, armed with weapons, stole fish from the monastery’s servants and that they pilfered monastic woods and waters.³⁴⁰ The townspeople expressed displeasure toward Bodmin Priory, with the prior of Bodmin perceiving the townspeople as a threat toward the priory and its land and goods.

Prior to the visitors’ arrival in Cornwall, rumors spread through many towns that the visitors planned to “take away crosses, chalycsshes [chalices] and other yodle [idols] of the churches.”³⁴¹ People were alarmed at the prospect of losing these symbols of traditional Catholic religion. However, one of the visitors stated that he observed “myche conformyty” and people ready to “obbaye the kynge[s] authoritye” when he arrived in Cornwall.³⁴² While monasteries were symbols of traditional Catholic religion, the discontent surrounding the abbots and monks kept these institutions in a separate category than images or parish churches. Tales of corruption or disillusion with an old, decaying medieval institution possibly dissuaded people in Cornwall from feeling a deeper attachment to Launceston Priory and Bodmin Priory.

There were some that did not feel much remorse for the monks or the monasteries. John Whalley stated that “no question of it, they be exceedingly superstitious, ceremonious, and pharisaical...”³⁴³ While some rejected the traditional Catholic religion, other people did not like the supposedly immoral activities of some abbots and monks. For example, in 1535, the abbot of

Suppression of Monasteries (London: Camden Society, 1843), 130-131; Prior of Bodmin to Mr. Lock, 25 May 1535, “Departing Canons of Bodmin: the Prior’s Letter, 1535,” in *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, ed. Joyce Youings (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971), 148.

³⁴⁰ Thos. Wandesworth, Prior of Bodmin, to Cromwell, 21 July 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900143, Document Ref.: SP 1/105 f. 95.

³⁴¹ Dr. John Tregonwell to Cromwell, 5 September 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900418, Document Ref.: SP 1/106 f. 134.

³⁴² *Ibid.*

³⁴³ John Whalley to Cromwell, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301600615, Document Ref.: SP 1/92 f. 61.

Cerne Abbey, Thomas Corton, wasted church goods on concubines and impregnated more than one woman.³⁴⁴ Townspeople exclaimed that his actions were “to the great slander of our religion” and that he pursued “honest women” in the town as well.³⁴⁵ In some people’s minds, getting rid of the monasteries also would extinguish any bad behavior some associated with them.

Some people simply let the process of the dissolution occur smoothly in the second phase. John Wellesburn stated that the abbots, monks, and the people in the town did not put up resistance to instructions to the one of the house, presumably Abingdon.³⁴⁶ He stated in a letter only a couple weeks later that he did not feel that any man “grieved for dissolving the abbey.”³⁴⁷ In 1538, John London stated that the people of Oxford did not approve of the friars’ way of living and did not give their house any charity.³⁴⁸ The Grey Friars of Reading stated in the surrender of their house that one reason for their surrender was that the people no longer supported them.³⁴⁹

In the north, after the Pilgrimage of Grace, there were many who simply desired order and peace. In a letter from Henry VIII to Sir William Fitzwilliam and Sir John Russell, the King stated that he heard from various accounts that there were “no great stirrings” among the

³⁴⁴ Thomas Corton, Abbot of Cerne, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301600155, Document Ref.: SP 1/89 f. 104. In the document, it states the names of three women who supposedly had children with the abbot.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ John Wellesburn to Cromwell, 13 February 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200275, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f. 36.

³⁴⁷ John Wellesburn to Cromwell, 26 February 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200366, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f. 98.

³⁴⁸ Dr. John London to Cromwell, 14 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300100, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f. 85.

³⁴⁹ The Grey Friars, Reading, 13 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300349, Document Ref.: N/A.

common people of England.³⁵⁰ He heard that the people were “weary of their folly” and would be “glad of a pardon.”³⁵¹ From hearing this, Henry VIII believed that people were repentant for the uprisings in the north. Henry VIII continued in his letter by explaining to Fitzwilliam and Russell that he did not need to assent to the will of the people in this regard, but they needed to listen to him when he said that the monasteries should be removed. Mr. Brandlyng, mayor of Newcastle, stated that he wished for the Duke of Norfolk to visit the town lands, because the “country will grow wild again” without him to supervise.³⁵² He feared the friars in town and stated that they had reentered their house, and he only let it happen because it would please the town and if he did not, his part of the country and others would rise up.³⁵³ A couple months later, the Duke of Norfolk wrote that he travelled to multiple parts of the north in order to quell any further rebellions and stated that when he arrived, many people came up to him “to submit to the King’s mercy.”³⁵⁴ Norfolk stated only months later that the northern part of the country was “in such good obedience” and he never thought it possible.³⁵⁵ Other documents stated that “every where the people are very sorry for their offences against the King.”³⁵⁶ While this compliance was not always the case in northern England, these examples demonstrate that not all of the north resisted the dissolution.

There are numerous reports from other parts of England from 1535 to 1540 indicating obedience to the dissolution. Some religious men showed that they were willing to help with the

³⁵⁰ Henry VIII to Fitzwilliam and Russell, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901287, Document Ref.: SP 1/112 f. 151.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² R. Brandlyng, Mayor of Newcastle, to Mr. Blithman, 26 December 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901388, Document Ref.: SP 1/113 f. 31.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Norfolk to Cromwell, 21 February 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000499, Document Ref.: SP 1/116 f. 89.

³⁵⁵ Norfolk to Gardiner and Brian, 18 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001266, Document Ref.: SP 1/120 f. 146.

³⁵⁶ Lancaster Herald to Cromwell, 26 December 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901387, Document Ref.: SP 1/113 f. 30.

effort to convert the laity to the new Protestant religion. Richard Layton stated that the bishop of Durham would help in the “abolition of the bishop of Rome and his usurped power.”³⁵⁷ Layton believed that the bishop of Durham would be able to convince his diocese and his religious men of the legitimacy of the King’s supremacy. Thomas Audeley expressed relief after receiving inventories of various monasteries that some of the eastern part of England was not rebelling by stating, “Thanks be to our Lord, the country is in good order and quietness about me, and there where I have been, and begin to fall to good quietness without contentions.”³⁵⁸ Similarly, Roland Lee, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, stated that the surrounding country by him was quiet and that there was no news to report to Cromwell.³⁵⁹

Not only did some people comply with the dissolution, but they circulated rumors about the monasteries and their inhabitants. One report stated that a “simple person” who was friends with a former abbot accused the abbot of Coggeshall of misdoings.³⁶⁰ Several serious charges were made against the abbot of Coggeshall, not just from this one “simple person” but from monks within the house. Some of these charges included his misdeeds with the ordinary people around his monastery. For example, Richard Clerke, monk of Coggeshall, gave a disturbing recounting of a rumor that the abbot planned to give “a drink to a young woman to cause

³⁵⁷ Richard Layton to Cromwell, 26 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800187, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 154.

³⁵⁸ Thos. Lord Audeley to [Cromwell], 12 August 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500040, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 231; Sir Thomas Audley to Cromwell, 12 August 1539, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 239-241.

³⁵⁹ Bishop Roland Lee to Cromwell, 17 May 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302401014, Document Ref.: SP 1/151 f. 134.

³⁶⁰ Henry Earl of Essex to Cromwell, 13 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800098, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 75.

miscarriage” and when she almost died, the abbot and others came up with a plan to “[bury] her in the woodyard.”³⁶¹

Further examples show rumors and negative remarks against the monasteries and their brethren. A London merchant tailor, Thomas Madockes, stated that he thought the abbot of Shrewsbury “misused the foundation of his monastery contrary to his Grace’s last injunctions.”³⁶² Madockes gave a list of misdoings by the abbot, from not making accounts of his goods to neglecting the decaying rood and ornaments in his house.³⁶³ The monks of St. Mary de Pratis Abbey in Leicester expressed that they did not want to lose their current abbot, but there were reports going around the town and to the King himself about various misdeeds done by him.³⁶⁴ William, the abbot of York, stated that the people around his monastery knew that he had “been used in this dangerous time with divers persons,” but that he was just trying to save his monastery from destruction.³⁶⁵ He begged Cromwell to “give no credence to reports of light persons against me.”³⁶⁶ Mr. Heydon wrote that his servant John Galant heard about a “great insurrection like to be among the King’s subject about Walsyngham.”³⁶⁷

There were rumors about John Bale, a White Friar in Ipswich who “preached erroneous opinions” on religion to the people around the town.³⁶⁸ However, debate raged amongst the

³⁶¹ Article against the Abbot of Coggeshall, 23 January 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800168, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 127.

³⁶² The Abbot of Shrewsbury, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800169, Document Ref.: SP 1/101 f. 135.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ The Monks of Leicester to the Earl of Huntingdon, 4 July 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900030, Document Ref.: SP 1/105 f. 11.

³⁶⁵ Wm. Abbot of York to Cromwell, 18 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000153, Document Ref.: SP 1/114 f. 157.

³⁶⁶ William Abbot of York to Cromwell, 18 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000154, Document Ref.: SP 1/114 f. 159.

³⁶⁷ Sir J. Heydon to Richard Gresham, 26 April 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001073, Document Ref.: SP 1/119 f. 31.

³⁶⁸ Sir Humfrey Wyngfeld to the Duke of Suffolk, 8 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000043, Document Ref.: SP 1/114 f. 46; John N. King, “Bale, John (1495-1563),” in *Oxford Dictionary of*

people of the town about whether to accept or deny his teachings.³⁶⁹ An earlier document states that these same White Friars, particularly Bale, had been teaching the “new theology” for four to five years.³⁷⁰ Some of his and others opinions stated that lifting the Host and chalice did not mean that Christ was actually in these objects, but that it was just a “remembrance” of him.³⁷¹ Bale specifically stated that church was “but only in heaven above, and in man’s heart on earth.”³⁷² Bale’s theological teachings persisted longer than just in these accounts during the dissolution. He became a prominent Protestant reformer, playwright, and writer, writing plays that alluded to the downfall of Catholicism and the rise of Protestantism, such as *King John* and *The Chief Promises of God*.³⁷³

At times, reports about a particular monastery or abbot could conflict with each other. Two letters show the differing opinions on how people viewed certain abbots and monks. First, a letter talking about Folkestone Abbey stated that the prior was “a very good husband and no less beloved by his neighbors,” even after the dissolution of his monastery.³⁷⁴ However, a letter the prior wrote (presumably to Cromwell) stated that after the dissolution, he was “destitute” and “friendless.”³⁷⁵ In 1538, people still continued to spread rumors about different abbots and

National Biography, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1175> (accessed February 19, 2014). Article/1175, accessed 19 Feb 2014].

³⁶⁹ Ibid

³⁷⁰ New Theology, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700237, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/V f. 397.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ John N. King, “Bale, John (1495-1563),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1175> (accessed February 19, 2014).

³⁷⁴ Thos. Bedyll, Hen. Polsted, and John Anthony to Cromwell, 16 November 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700838, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 258; The Commissioners in Kent to Cromwell, 16 November 1535, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 88-89.

³⁷⁵ The Late Prior of Folkestone, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901457, Document Ref.: SP 1/113 f. 124.

monks. John, abbot of Peterborough, wrote to Cromwell of the “untrue reports” that circulated about him and hoped that it did not influence Cromwell’s thoughts on him.³⁷⁶ By the end of 1538, the abbot continued to express concern over reports against him by “certain people.”³⁷⁷

As previously stated in chapter three, at times, towns or individuals asked for or acquired formerly monastic land. Richard Pollard stated that some of the people of Lincoln wanted the land belonging to Barlings and Kirkstead.³⁷⁸ People also appealed for other parts of the monastery. John Russell stated that the town around Little Malvern asked for five bells from the monastery, since it “served the parish church as well as the monastery.”³⁷⁹ A letter from mid-1537 stated that “people came from all parts of the South” to buy cattle, land, and other objects from the monasteries.³⁸⁰ Richard Pollard stated that after the dissolution of Whalley Abbey, he rented out lands to “the poor inhabitants” of the town until the King gave further instruction for the land’s intended use.³⁸¹ In the later years of the dissolution, there is evidence of even more land changing hands. In 1538, Thomas Cade stated that he would use the monastic lands from Abingdon for good by having the people to work on the land.³⁸² John London stated that multiple towns in Oxford desired the houses of friars, some appealing for them because of their location

³⁷⁶ John Abbot of Peterburgh to Cromwell, 5 February 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303800015, Document Ref.: SP 1/ 241 f. 294.

³⁷⁷ John, Abbot of Peterborough, to Cromwell, 16 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300369, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 131.

³⁷⁸ Sir Wm. Parre to Cromwell, 9 August 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100519, Document Ref.: SP 1/124 f. 9.

³⁷⁹ John Russell to Cromwell, 28 September 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100804, Document Ref.: SP 1/125 f. 51.

³⁸⁰ Robert Southwell to Cromwell, 3 July 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100222, Document Ref.: SP 1/122 f. 196.

³⁸¹ Richard Pollard to Cromwell, 9 July 1537, *State Paper Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100251, Document Ref.: SP 1/122 f. 223. Another letter to Cromwell also stated the poor people’s want for land of suppressed abbeys: Robert Southwell to Cromwell, 20 August 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100578, Document Ref.: SP 1/124 f. 67.

³⁸² Thomas Cade to Cromwell, 4 March 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200423, Document Ref.: SP 1/129 f. 154.

near water mills.³⁸³ Thomas Legh relayed that the friars at Lichfield relinquished their friary to the town for safe keeping.³⁸⁴ In 1540, the people around Waltham Abbey asked if they could obtain the abbey bell for their town, as they could not afford to buy a new one.³⁸⁵ Throughout England, the people that complied with the dissolution of the monasteries appealed to obtain land, with some succeeding while other wealthy gentlemen obtained monastic lands. This demonstrates the collaboration of many English people in the process of the dissolution.

In contrast to all the evidence presented here of compliance with the dissolution, there were many instances of resistance. Both phases appear to show resistance to the closing of the monasteries, even when it seemed imminent and that there was no way to save the remaining houses. While resistance in the north during the Pilgrimage of Grace is the most well-known, other areas throughout England showed resistance to the closing of their monasteries. In some cases, people came together to protest the closure of their monasteries. This illustrates that not all English monasteries followed the collaborative model that Shagan sets out for Hailes.

In northwest England in 1536, the abbot and monks of Norton gathered a group of “200 or 300 persons” to keep the King’s men from taking the monastery’s goods.³⁸⁶ This group supported the abbot and monks of Norton, but another large force of locals against their actions kept them from succeeding in their endeavor to get back their monastery.³⁸⁷ He and a few of his monks were subsequently arrested, but that did not mean that the people in the country were

³⁸³ Dr. John London to [Cromwell], 8 July 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302201368, Document Ref.: SP 1/134 f. 123.

³⁸⁴ Thomas Legh, LLD, to Cromwell, 12 August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300085, Document Ref.: SP 1/135 f. 67. This was not an atypical occurrence and other towns asked to take over the defunct monasteries and friaries: Thomas Vachell to Cromwell, 14 January 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400074, Document Ref.: SP 1/142 f. 56.

³⁸⁵ Waltham Abbey, 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600405, Document Ref.: SP 1/158 f. 79.

³⁸⁶ Sir Piers Dutton to Sir Thomas Audeley, 12 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900694, Document Ref.: SP 1/108 f. 14.

³⁸⁷ G.W.O Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (New York: Walker and Company, 1966), 86.

against their actions. After imprisoning the abbot and two canons of Norton, Sir Thomas Boteler stated that he felt that these men were guilty of the “misdemeanours” against them but that the ordinary people “of the country imputes no fault to them.”³⁸⁸ The ordinary people’s opinions did not matter too much to Audeley or others, as a later letter stated that Audeley had permission “to hang them (the abbot and his canons) as traitors.”³⁸⁹ Henry VIII specifically stated that he wanted the men hanged right away and “in such places as they (Piers Dutton, William Brereton, and Thomas Audeley) think advisable for a terrible example to all others.”³⁹⁰

Because of the Pilgrimage of Grace, there is ample documentation of the people’s defense of their monasteries in the northeast.³⁹¹ John Russell and William Parre relayed to Henry VIII that he asked some northern confidants “the state of the commons’ hearts,” to which he was told that more would have joined the rebels had not the King’s men come at that time.³⁹² They also reported that over 100 men had already left to join the rebels and that they would be duly apprehended.³⁹³ An account by the commissioners to dissolve the monasteries in Northumberland relayed that the monastery of Hexham armed itself, and the town duly armed itself as well while also ringing the bell of the monastery to signal the visitors’ arrival.³⁹⁴ Some

³⁸⁸ Sir Thos. Boteler to Cromwell, 8 November 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901033, Document Ref.: SP 1/111 f. 26.

³⁸⁹ Sir Piers Dutton to Cromwell, 30 November 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901227, Document Ref.: SP 1/112 f. 47.

³⁹⁰ Henry VIII to Sir Piers Dutton and Sir William Brereton, 19 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900801, Document Ref.: SP 1/108 f. 187.

³⁹¹ Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 99. Christopher Haigh also shared the same sentiments, writing that defense of the monasteries was indeed a reason for the Pilgrimage of Grace: Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 119.

³⁹² Sir J. Russell and Sir William Parre to Henry VIII, 9 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900634, Document Ref.: SP 1/107 f. 115. A list only a couple days later gave a complete account of the people involved in the rebellions, from secular to lay rebels: The Lincolnshire Rebellion, 12 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900683, Document Ref.: SP 1/107 f. 159.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁴ The Canons of Hexham, 28 September 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900517, Document Ref.: SP 1/106 f. 222.

even expressed delight at restoring the monasteries in the north, with an one side of a verbal exchange stating, “Marry, for all the abbeys in England be beholden to us, for we have set up all the abbeys again in our country, and though it were never so late they sang matins the same night.”³⁹⁵ At times, some thought “it [was] the dangerest insurrection that hath been seen.”³⁹⁶

In some cases, local people helped the abbots and monks reoccupy their dissolved houses. The abbot and monks of Salley wrote to the royal government to let them reenter their dissolved monastic house to live, citing that “the whole country supports them in enter their house.”³⁹⁷ One document stated that the monks of Salley Abbey were “reinstated by the commons” at some point during the Pilgrimage of Grace.³⁹⁸ The document revealed that many feared that the people would steal from the dissolved, unattended monastery. This revelation seemed to point to the people stealing not only out of greed, but to save monastic goods from entering the King’s hands.³⁹⁹ Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby, stated that he was leery of the people in the north, especially the ones who resided near Salley Abbey and Whalley Abbey.⁴⁰⁰ Accounts about Salley Abbey state that the abbot “had as many friends as any man, and if any house should stand, his was like to do so.”⁴⁰¹ The abbot refused to reveal any of the men’s names who helped him, stating that these men of the town showed great dislike of Salley’s dissolution

³⁹⁵ Sir William Pyrton and John Seyncler to Cromwell, 16 December 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901335, Document Ref.: SP 1/112 f. 206.

³⁹⁶ Fitzwilliam to Lord Chancellor Audeley, 7 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900598, Document Ref.: N/A.

³⁹⁷ Monastery of Salley to Sir Thomas Percy, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900799, Document Ref.: SP 1/108 f. 183.

³⁹⁸ The Pilgrimage of Grace, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900798, Document Ref.: SP 1/108 f. 180.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁰ E. earl of Derby to the Lord Admiral, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901132, Document Ref.: SP 1/111 f. 176.

⁴⁰¹ The Abbot of Sawley, 23 February 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000512, Document Ref.: N/A.

and did not want those monks or others to suffer that fate.⁴⁰² Henry VIII enacted swift justice against the abbot and monks and implied that he wanted any local people involved hanged. He stated that the ordinary people needed to be “executed as traitors” and that the abbot and monks needed to be hanged as well, but to “see that no town or village begin to assemble” at their hangings.⁴⁰³

Even though the King forbade people to attend the hangings at Salley, the public observed hangings in other parts of England. One letter states that the abbots and monks of “Salley, Hexham, Newminster, Lanercost, St. Agathe...” incited the people toward rebellion.⁴⁰⁴ He gave the gruesome orders to hang townspeople near the monasteries’ surrounding towns, “by the hanging of them upon trees, and by the quartering of them, and by the setting of their heads and quarters in town...”⁴⁰⁵

The northern population witnessed the executions of the rebels of the Pilgrimage of Grace, just as the western population witnessed the revealing of the blood of Hailes. One historian stated that the “Pilgrimage’s defeat only speeded [the dissolution] up...”⁴⁰⁶ Richard Southwell wrote that these rebels were executed in public and the people attending “were very numerous.”⁴⁰⁷ The King and councilors chose to reveal the blood of Hailes and execute the rebellious men of the Pilgrimage of Grace in the public eye. The common people could see that the blood was a fraud and that executions were what happened to those who did not obey the new religion and King’s supremacy. Some men even died with the executed, rebellious monks.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Henry VIII to the Earl of Derby, 19 October 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301900797, Document Ref.: SP 1/108 f. 176.

⁴⁰⁴ Henry VIII to the Duke of Norfolk, 22 February 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000500, Document Ref.: SP 1/116 f. 92.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 201.

⁴⁰⁷ Ric. Southwell to Cromwell, 29 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001330, Document Ref.: SP 1/120 f. 220.

The Duke of Norfolk wrote that some of them monks of Watton were taken to be locked up, as well as “divers other people.”⁴⁰⁸ Norfolk later stated that he felt that the northern people now followed the King’s supremacy and rejected the bishop of Rome.⁴⁰⁹

By 1537, the monastic community and the lay community began to wonder whether the monasteries had any place in the future of England. The abbot of Barlings and others within his monastery and about town stated that they thought once the visitors were done with the “survey of the less[er] monasteries they would return and dissolve the greater.”⁴¹⁰ In Norfolk, a man named Ralph Pegerson wrote, “You see how these abbeys go down, and our living goeth away with them; for within a while Bynham shall be put down and also Walsingham, and all other abbeys in that country.”⁴¹¹ He and George Gisborough even suggested that the “commons who were oppressed by gentlemen” would rise up against the closing of “so many religious houses where God was well served.”⁴¹² A man in Northampton had his ear nailed to the pillory in town and stated that he hoped to see the people who were “plucking down abbeys, hanged.”⁴¹³ The Duke of Norfolk even felt that he needed to be at the dissolutions of Bridlington and Jervaulx, because the country was “populous and the houses greatly beloved by the people,” and he felt that all of the items of the houses may not be there if he was not there to guard them.⁴¹⁴

⁴⁰⁸ Duke of Norfolk to Henry VIII, 30 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000313, Document Ref.: SP 1/115 f. 130.

⁴⁰⁹ Norfolk to Cromwell, 31 March 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000800, Document Ref.: SP 1/117 f. 173.

⁴¹⁰ The Abbot of Barlings, 22 March 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000723, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 245.

⁴¹¹ Disaffection in Norfolk, 28 April 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001083, Document Ref.: SP 1/119 f. 33.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

⁴¹³ Sir Wm. Parre to Cromwell, 9 August 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100519, Document Ref.: SP 1/124 f. 9.

⁴¹⁴ The Duke of Norfolk to Henry VIII, 10 May 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302001200, Document Ref.: SP 1/120 f. 26.

The visitors had their own opinions of the people from different parts of England and their reactions to the dissolutions. Richard Layton stated that “there can be no better way to beat the King’s authority into the heads of the rude people in the North than to show them that the King intends reformation and correction of religion.”⁴¹⁵ He also thought these people were “superstitious” and did not follow the King’s supremacy as they did the Pope.⁴¹⁶ Layton also made observations about Christchurch, Canterbury. There was a fire while he was staying near the monastery that frightened him and made him think about the contents of that monastery. He commanded all who were present to save the shrines and jewels, presumably so not to diminish the King’s profit and lose valuable items. Finally, he stated in disgust that some items tended to be stolen “by poor folks, who came rather to spoil than to help.”⁴¹⁷ Roland Lee, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, asserted that he thought the areas around his diocese were “in good towardness to do the King’s service as any subjects living.”⁴¹⁸ Thomas Legh stated that after dissolving Fordeham Abbey and Chatteris Abbey, there were still many households which used the abbeys as their parish churches. Legh mentioned that there was another parish church in town where he thought they should go instead, which many did not fight too much about that statement.⁴¹⁹

While some historians have suggested that the north was not the only region to feel positive sentiment for the monasteries during the turbulent early years, few examples come to

⁴¹⁵ Ric. Layton, 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301600979, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 56.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Richard Layton to Cromwell, 23 October 1535, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301700676, Document Ref.: SP 1/98 f. 54.

⁴¹⁸ Roland bishop of Coventry and Lichfield to Cromwell, 15 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000114, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/V f. 414.

⁴¹⁹ Dr. Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 3 September 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300283, Document Ref.: SP 1/136 f. 70.

light in secondary writings.⁴²⁰ However, the primary sources do reveal some other examples of places other than the north experiencing resistance during both phases of the dissolution. In 1536, the county of Devon displayed displeasure toward the closures, which caused some to take immediate action against the dissolution. Townswomen in the town of Exeter assembled at the Priory of St. Nicholas, “some with spikes, some with shovels, some with pikes, and some with such tools as they could get...” in order to break into the church and stop two men from “pulling down the rood loft.”⁴²¹ The women drove the men out of the monastery after chasing them with their weapons but were themselves arrested by the mayor who was “very loathe [that] the visitors should be advertised of any such disorders and troubles.”⁴²² After the visitors arrived and dissolved the monastery, the mayor released the women, who he did not feel harbored any “traitorous intent[ions]” toward the monastery.⁴²³ The town of Exeter seemed split on the status of St. Nicholas. There were men stealing from the monastery, possibly for financial gain (there was no mention of their religious leanings in the records). The women defended the monastery from destruction, which suggests religious motivations. People exhibited differing opinions toward monasteries and their worth, even within the same town.

⁴²⁰ Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 99. While Shagan does give one example in Hertfordshire of a parson fearing the pulling down of monasteries, not many other examples appear that sentiments in the North were not the only feelings toward the dissolution.

⁴²¹ John Hooker, “Popular Reactions at Exeter,” in *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, ed. Joyce Youings (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971), 164-165. This event and document is also mentioned in Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 189. Hooker recounted this event from memory, but a document does exist which solidifies Hooker’s story. This document appears on *State Papers Online*: Sir Thos. Denys and others to the Marquis of Exeter, 13 February 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800302, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 27. Originally, these women appeared to be men dressed as women, but upon later examination, sources confirmed that women were the ones carrying weapons to disrupt the destruction of the Priory of St. Nicholas.

⁴²² John Hooker, “Popular Reactions at Exeter,” in *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, ed. Joyce Youings (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971), 164-165.

⁴²³ Sir Thos. Denys and others to the Marquis of Exeter, 13 February 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800302, Document Ref.: SP 1/102 f. 27.

As stated in an earlier chapter, people even went against some of the injunctions implemented at the monasteries. For example, the abbot of St. Werburg's, Chester, closed the door to his monastery in order to keep his monastery cloistered, but a merchant in the town, Robert Challener, and others broke down the door and came into the monastery as they pleased.⁴²⁴ Whether this was because they did not approve of the injunction or because they wanted to steal from the monastery is unclear, but it does show resistance to the boarding up of a monastery and restricting people's access to it.

In Devon, the abbot of Hartland, Thomas Popé, wrote to Cromwell in 1538 that there were many rumors in town about whether the King was going to continue dissolving religious houses. He was unaware of who started the rumors but was upset that they were spreading through the town. He lamented that there were many people in the town that believed in "that abominable monster of Rome."⁴²⁵ Popé implemented the injunctions to rid his monastery and the town of the bishop of Rome's power and to follow the new religion. He followed the advice of the government and ignored the will of the people in regard to religion. However, this was not enough to keep the monastery from closing in 1539, perhaps because, as he indicated in his letters, the people of the town still believed in the Roman Catholic Church and its practices.

The King's men had to remove images and relics from many monasteries, just as they did with the blood of Hailes. After confiscating the image of Our Lady of Walsingham, one lady expressed that she thought the image still performed miracles, even though it was taken to London to not be seen or to be used as a pilgrimage image.⁴²⁶ The King's men had to take away

⁴²⁴ John Abbot of St. Werburg's, Chester, to Cromwell, 24 May 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301800980, Document Ref.: SP 1/104 f. 47.

⁴²⁵ Thomas Popé [Abbot of Hartford] to Cromwell, 1 May 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200906, Document Ref.: SP 1/132 f. 3.

⁴²⁶ Sir Roger Touneshend to Cromwell, 20 January 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600092, Document Ref.: SP 1/157 f. 57.

the images and relics at Lincoln Cathedral as well, as “simple people are deceived and brought into superstition” by them.⁴²⁷ The author of the document also declared that the image of Our Lady at Walsingham was not “out of some of their heads.”⁴²⁸ William Bassett explained to Cromwell that he had to deface much of Buxstone and St. Mudwen of Burton-on-Trent, so as to dissuade people from visiting these places and giving offerings of money to it.⁴²⁹ Removing images and relics did not always keep people from trying to worship the same way they and their ancestors had for years.

Some made comments about how much discord there was throughout England. One letter stated that in the north, the “country is not so quiet” and that there had to be guards posted at some monasteries, such as Furness Abbey.⁴³⁰ Sir Arthur Darcy also stated that the north “was never in a more dreadful and true obeisance.”⁴³¹ By mid-1537, Thomas Audeley stated that the people around Essex and Suffolk appeared “irritable” and “inconstant,” which provides a hint as to how they viewed the religious changes happening around them.⁴³² Henry, earl of Cumberland wrote that “the people are so wild that there is danger of further rebellion.”⁴³³ The Council of the

⁴²⁷ Lincoln Cathedral, 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600794, Document Ref.: N/A. At least one other account showed items being taken away from a monastery because of superstitious activity: Henry VIII to Sir Will Goring and [William] Ernely, 14 December 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302301068, Document Ref.: SP 1/140 f. 87.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Sir William Bassett to [Cromwell], August 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302300252, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 285; Sir William Bassett to Cromwell, 1538, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 143-144. Other accounts show the need deface quickly and to guard against thievery: Dr. John London to Cromwell, 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302400123, Document Ref.: SP 1/142 f. 124.

⁴³⁰ Sussex and Others to Henry VIII, 6 April 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000866, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 294.

⁴³¹ Sir Arthur Darcy to Cromwell, 8 June 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100062, Document Ref.: Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 287; This letter does not appear to have a clear date in other compilations of monastic sources: Sir Arthur Darcy to Cromwell, in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 158-159.

⁴³² Lord Chancellor Audeley to Cromwell, 24 July 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302100348, Document Ref.: SP 1/123 f. 81.

⁴³³ Henry Earl of Cumberland to Henry VIII, 12 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000092, Document Ref.: SP 1/114 f. 75.

North treaded carefully when dealing with the people in their area. One document stated that the people in Lancashire were “not as quiet as the King would wish” and that reformers needed to be brought in to teach them “the Word of God.”⁴³⁴ Sir William Fairfax wrote that abbots and bishops in the north were reaching out to their tenant farmers and tried to “stir the people” into rebellious actions.⁴³⁵ Some of the discord continued but only in words. Nicholas Haryson, parson of Plesley, stated outright that, “It is a marvelous thing, for if the Lords of England were as they have been, as they be now but boys and fools, the King should not have pulled down so many abbeys as he hath done.”⁴³⁶ As late as 1541, John, bishop of Chester, stated that the people of Chester diocese still were “behind the King’s subjects in the south” in terms of embracing new religious doctrine.⁴³⁷ Resistance to the dissolution began during the first phase of the dissolution and continued well into the second phase and possibly even after all of the houses no longer stood.

Through an analysis of the actions and reactions of the English people, it is clear that both compliance and resistance to the closures of the monasteries were common throughout both the first and second phases of the dissolution. While northern England saw the most resistance, mostly relating to the Pilgrimage of Grace, other regions of England also displayed resistance. The evidence reveals that Hailes was not an anomaly. Similar events occurred at other monasteries. The documents also reveal various modes of compliance and resistance not found in the case of Hailes. In many cases, people collaborated with the dissolution not necessarily

⁴³⁴ The Government of the North, 1536, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4301901427, Document Ref.: SP 1/113 f. 69.

⁴³⁵ Sir William Fayrffax to Cromwell, 22 January 1537, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302000213, Document Ref.: SP 1/115 f. 2.

⁴³⁶ Sir John Markham to Cromwell, 30 April 1538, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302200884, Document Ref.: SP 1/131 f. 187.

⁴³⁷ John Bishop of Chester to Henry VIII, 26 November 1541, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302701394, Document Ref.: SP 1/168 f. 6.

because they were supporters of the new religion, but because they had something to gain in the process. All in all, the actions and reactions of the English people varied from region to region, even within regions, but evidence indicates that there were many forms of compliance to the dissolution, as well as active forms of resistance.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The dissolution of the English monasteries was a monumental event in the history of the English Reformation. The closure of monasteries changed the religious landscape by removing a recognizable Catholic institution – monasticism – as well as removing an important connection between the religious and the laity. The two-phase process of the dissolution took roughly five years to complete, with all of the English monasteries eventually surrendering to the royal government's will. The final monastic closures occurred late in 1539 into early 1540, with the last monastic house, Waltham Abbey, surrendering to the royal government on March 23, 1540.⁴³⁸ While evidence suggests that the English people sought monastic land as the closures occurred, they also sought land grants well into the 1540s. Grants from various months and years reveal that the acquisition of monastic land continued to appeal to the English people.⁴³⁹ Some abbots and monks adapted to their new lives outside of the monasteries, either by living off of their royal pensions, engaging a new religious life in emerging Protestant churches, or living in relative peace and quiet.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁸ A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), 143; Waltham Abbey, 23 March 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600404, Document Ref.: N/A. A few monasteries that closed in this final phase of closures: Gyborne Priory, 22 December 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500748, Document Ref.: N/A; Hayles Abbey, 31 December 1539, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302500805, Document Ref.: N/A; Shap Abbey, 14 January 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600068, Document Ref.: N/A; Thetford Priory, 16 February 1540, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302600218, Document Ref.: N/A.

⁴³⁹ There are many grants that mention monastic land, too many to write all here. A few examples of these grants are: Grants in July 1543, 1543, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4302901019, Document Ref.: N/A; Grants in May 1544, 1544, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303100622, Document Ref.: N/A; Grants in June 1545, 1545, *State Papers Online*, Gale Document Number: MC4303301095, Document Ref.: N/A.

⁴⁴⁰ G.W.O. Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (New York: Walker and Company, 1966), 140; David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 402.

If one only examined the results of the dissolution, it could be easy to conclude that the English people were not concerned about the loss of the monasteries. However, events leading up to the dissolution reveal that there was a mixture of compliance and resistance from the abbots and monks as well as the laity.

The distinction in each phase reveals the evolving nature of the dissolution process, with the first phase being primarily an array of visitations and reforms, while the second phase rarely implemented reforms but clearly intended to dissolve the remaining smaller houses as well as the larger, wealthier monasteries. The first phase of the dissolution, from 1535 to early 1537, revealed a distinct process of visitations, implementation of reform injunctions, and the dissolution of small, poor, and delinquent houses. From the letters of the visitors and monks, it is clear that the focus of the first phase of the dissolution was reform, with injunctions trying to bring the monasteries back to their original functions and rules of medieval times.

The second phase of the dissolution, from late 1537 to 1540, revealed a distinct absence of the desire to reform the monasteries, with many sources indicating the immediate dissolution of the larger monasteries. At the same time, the friaries suffered a similar fate alongside the monasteries, and people also acquired their land and any remaining wealth. The main theme of this phase was dissolution itself and the dividing of the monasteries resources. While all monastic houses surrendered to the royal government, some monastic buildings were reestablished and used as Protestant cathedrals and schools. However, others continually fell into disrepair, with the contents of the houses taken by the royal government or stolen by the local population.

Finally, the actions and reactions of the laity revealed that their attachment to the monasteries did not diminish between the first phase and second phase but remained the same

throughout the entire time of the dissolution. An analysis of the lay communities and their actions and reactions revealed a variety of conclusions. The actions and the reactions of the people essentially mirrored each other in both phases. While some people displayed their dismay at the dissolving these places of refuge, hospitality, and education, others saw an opportunity to obtain large amounts of land as well as steal various items from the monasteries. Some people actively fought for the monasteries, whether it was in the northern rebellion of Pilgrimage of Grace or in the western reaches of Devon. Compliance varied in its forms, from the people not acting in any way to some people spreading rumors about the abbots and monks and stealing their goods after dissolution.

Overall, this thesis provides a reassessment of the dissolution of the English monasteries and strives to provide a refreshed view of the dismantling of a traditional Catholic institution and its affect on the English people. Clearly, the dissolution of the monasteries was a vital event in the course of the transition from Catholicism to Protestantism. Nevertheless, more research still is needed to further understand the two-phase process of the dissolution, as well as the local people's reactions to the dissolution. The post-revisionists, specifically Ethan Shagan, are beginning to bring the dissolution back into the context of the English Reformation. In addition to this thesis on the overall process and reactions to the dissolution of the English monasteries, continuing studies into the process of the dissolution and the reactions of the laity at the isolated, local level would further the study of how the dissolution affected all of England.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CHART I

Below are listed the primary sources used from *State Papers Online*. For the two classification numbers, the Gale Document Number is the document's online database organization number, while the Document Reference is the hard copy, manuscript organization number.

Date	Sender	Recipient	Gale Document Number	Document Reference
4 June 1534	John, Abbot of Peterborough	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301500804	SP 1/84 f. 142
20 November 1534	Robert, Abbot of Lylleshull	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301501475	SP 1/87 f. 38
8 May 1535	William Courtenay	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301600705	SP 1/92 f. 131
28 May 1535	Thomas, Prior of Bodmin	Mr. Lores	MC4301801014	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 139
3 July 1535	Nicholas Austen, Abbot of Rewley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301601004	SP 1/85 f. 26
1 August 1535	William Fordham, Monk of Worcester	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700010	SP 1/95 f. 8
3 August 1535	John, Bishop of Lincoln	Francis Bryan	MC4301700024	SP 1/95 f. 10
8 August 1535	William Fitzwilliam	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700054	SP 1/95 f. 46
20 August 1535	John Ap Rice	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700145	SP 1/95 f. 121
23 August 1535	William, Abbot of York	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700164	SP 1/95 f. 144
24 August 1535	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700173	SP 1/95 f. 155
26 August 1535	Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301780194	SP 1/95 f. 175
2 September 1535	John FitzJames	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700260	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 47

2 September 1535	Richard Phelypps	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700263	SP 1/96 f. 64
3 September 1535	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700272	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 69
9 September 1535	Richard, Abbot of Winchcombe	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700321	SP 1/96 f. 107
15 September 1535	John, Abbot of Oseney	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700382	SP 1/96 f. 163
26 September 1535	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700451	SP 1/97 f. 15
27 September 1535	Thomas, Abbot of Abingdon	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700462	SP 1/97 f. 26
27 September 1535	John Tregonwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700464	SP 1/97 f. 28
29 September 1535	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700479	SP 1/97 f. 47
10 October 1535	Katherine Dawbnaye	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700584	SP 1/97 f. 120
11 October 1535	Thomas, Abbot of Ford	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700597	SP 1/97 f. 130
16 October 1535	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700628	SP 1/98 f. 14
16 October 1535	John Ap Rice	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700629	SP 1/98 f. 16
22 October 1535	John Ap Rice	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700668	SP 1/98 f. 48
23 October 1535	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700676	SP 1/98 f. 54
26 October 1535	Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700692	SP 1/98 f. 63
October 1535	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700639	SP 1/98 f. 22
1 November 1535	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700744	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 272
1 November 1535	The Monks of Chertsey	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700745	SP 1/98 f. 145
2 November 1535	John Maxey, Bishop of Elphin	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700754	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV
2 November 1535	Anthony Sawnder	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700756	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 60

4 November 1535	Edward Bestney	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700770	SP 1/98 f. 171
4 November 1535	Robert, Abbot of Athelney	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700772	SP 1/98 f. 174
5 November 1535	John Ap Rice	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700781	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 145
6 November 1535	John, Abbot of Bury	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700790	SP 1/99 f. 1
16 November 1535	Thomas Bedyll, Henry Polsted, & John Anthony	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700838	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 258
19 November 1535	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700858	SP 1/99 f. 60
25 November 1535	The Monks of Christchurch, Canterbury	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700889	SP 1/99 f. 85
7 December 1535	Richard, Abbot of Winchcombe	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700944	SP 1/99 f. 113
22 December 1535	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301701016	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 162
1535	John Whalley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301600615	SP 1/92 f. 61
1535	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301600979	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 56.
1535	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301700046	SP 1/95 f. 38
1535	Thomas Solmes, Canon of St. Osyth's	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301701174	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 26
7 January 1536	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800054	SP 1/101 f. 35
11 January 1536	Richard Southwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800083	SP 1/101 f. 58
13 January 1536	Henry, Earl of Essex	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800098	SP 1/101 f. 75
14 January 1536	Archbishop Edward Lee of York	Henry VIII	MC4301800103	Cotton Cleopatra E/VI f. 238
15 January 1536	Thomas Bedyll	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800107	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 234

20 January 1536	Richard Layton & Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800141	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 136
22 January 1536	Robert, Abbot of St. Alban's	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800156	SP 1/101 f. 113
26 January 1536	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800186	SP 1/101 f. 153
26 January 1536	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800187	SP 1/101 f. 154
13 February 1536	Thomas Denys & Others	Henry, Marquis of Exeter	MC4301800302	SP 1/102 f. 27
22 February 1536	Eleanor Studley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800346	SP 1/102 f. 64
26 February 1536	Roland Lee, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield & Thomas Englefield	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800360	SP 1/102 f. 71
6 March 1536	Marmaduke Bradley, Abbot of Fountains	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800433	SP 1/102 f. 148
17 March 1536	John Whalley	Thomas Cromwell	MC 4301800501	SP 1/102 f. 195
19 March 1536	William Wood, Prior of Bridlington	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800511	SP 1/102 f. 199
21 March 1536	Marmaduke Bradley, Abbot of Fountains	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800524	SP 1/102 f. 208
1 April 1536	Eustace Chapuys	Charles V of Spain	MC4301800616	N/A
23 April 1536	Henry Everyngham	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800744	SP 1/103 f. 158
12 May 1536	Richard Strete	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800888	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 283
19 May 1536	George Gyffard	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800947	SP 1/104 f. 30
19 May 1536	Edmund Knyghtley & Others	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800948	SP 1/104 f. 32
24 May 1536	John, Abbot of St. Werburg's, Chester	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301800980	SP 1/104 f. 47

19 June 1536	George Gyffard	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301801207	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 249
4 July 1536	The Monks of Leicester	The Earl of Huntingdon	MC4301900030	SP 1/105 f. 11
16 July 1536	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900104	SP 1/105 f. 69
21 July 1536	Thomas, Prior of Bodmin	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900143	SP 1/105 f. 95
July 1536	John Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900198	SP 1/105 f. 199
11 August 1536	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900284	N/A
31 August 1536	Robert, Prior of Lewes	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900384	SP 1/106 f. 55
5 September 1536	Dr. John Tregonwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900418	SP 1/106 f. 134
5 September 1536	Gilbert Talbot & John Russell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900420	SP 1/106 f. 137
30 September 1536	John Vernon	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900524	SP 1/106 f. 226
7 October 1536	William Fitzwilliam	Thomas Audeley	MC4301900598	N/A
9 October 1536	John Russell & William Parre	Henry VIII	MC4301900634	SP 1/107 f. 115
12 October 1536	Piers Dutton	Thomas Audeley	MC4301900694	SP 1/108 f. 14
19 October 1536	Henry VIII	Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby	MC4301900797	SP 1/108 f. 176
19 October 1536	Henry VIII	Piers Dutton & William Brereton	MC4301900801	SP 1/108 f. 187
4 November 1536	Piers Eggecombe	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301900992	SP 1/110 f. 175
8 November 1536	Thomas Boteler	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301901033	SP 1/111 f. 26
30 November 1536	Piers Dutton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301901227	SP 1/112 f. 47
16 December 1536	William Pyrton & John Seyncler	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301901335	SP 1/112 f. 206
26 December 1536	Roland Lee, Bishop of Coventry & Lichfield	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301901386	SP 1/113 f. 29

26 December 1536	Lancaster Herald	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301901387	SP 1/113 f. 30
26 December 1536	R. Brandlyng, Mayor of Newcastle	Mr. Blithman	MC4301901388	SP 1/113 f. 31
1536	The Prior of Lenton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4301801227	SP 1/104 f. 224
1536	Monastery of Salley	Thomas Percy	MC4301900799	SP 1/108 f. 183
1536	Edward Stanley, earl of Derby	Thomas Howard, Lord Admiral	MC4301901132	SP 1/111 f. 176
1536	Henry VIII	William Fitzwilliam & John Russell	MC4301901287	SP 1/112 f. 151
8 January 1537	Humfrey Wyngfeld	Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk	MC4302000043	SP 1/114 f. 46
12 January 1537	Henry, Earl of Cumberland	Henry VIII	MC4302000092	SP 1/114 f. 75
15 January 1537	Roland Lee, Bishop of Coventry & Lichfield	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000114	Cotton Cleopatra E/V f. 414
18 January 1537	William, Abbot of York	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000153	SP 1/114 f. 157
18 January 1537	William, Abbot of York	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000154	SP 1/114 f. 159
19 January 1537	Piers Eggecombe	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000173	SP 1/114 f. 187
30 January 1537	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	Henry VIII	MC4302000313	SP 1/115 f. 130
16 February 1537	Thomas Cranmer	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000457	SP 1/116 f. 42
21 February 1537	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000499	SP 1/116 f. 89
22 February 1537	Henry VIII	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	MC4302000500	SP 1/116 f. 92
11 March 1537	Robert Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex & Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	MC4302000653	SP 1/116 f. 253

18 March 1537	Richard Pollard	Mr. Hall, Receiver to the King in Lincolnshire	MC4302000697	SP 1/117 f. 31
22 March 1537	William Parre	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000721	SP 1/117 f. 84
29 March 1537	Thomas Audeley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000787	Cotton Titus B/I f. 384
31 March 1537	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000800	SP 1/117 f. 173
5 April 1537	W. Barlow, Bishop of St. David's	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302000854	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 318
6 April 1537	Sussex & Others	Henry VIII	MC4302000866	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 294
22 April 1537	Richard Pollard	Mr. Hall of Huntingdon	MC4302001025	SP 1/118 f. 243
26 April 1537	J. Heydon	Richard Gresham	MC4302001073	SP 1/119 f. 31
1 May 1537	The Abbot of Chester	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302001136	SP 1/119 f. 120
10 May 1537	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	Henry VIII	MC4302001200	SP 1/120 f. 26
18 May 1537	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	Stephen Gardiner & Francis Bryan	MC4302001266	SP 1/120 f. 146
27 May 1537	John Russell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302001325	SP 1/120 f. 211
29 May 1537	Richard Southwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302001330	SP 1/120 f. 220
5 June 1537	Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk	Henry VIII	MC4302100037	SP 1/121 f. 53
5 June 1537	William Gascoygne, the younger	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100039	SP 1/121 f. 57
8 June 1537	Arthur Darcy	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100062	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 287
14 June 1537	Richard Pollard	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100098	SP 1/121 f. 120
22 June 1537	Tristram Teshe	Richard Pollard	MC4303701237	SP 1/241 f. 76

3 July 1537	Robert Southwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100222	SP 1/122 f. 196
9 July 1537	Richard Pollard	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100251	SP 1/122 f. 223
24 July 1537	Thomas Audeley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100348	SP 1/123 f. 81
3 August 1537	Richard Pollard	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100462	SP 1/123 f. 195
9 August 1537	William Parre	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100519	SP 1/124 f. 9
20 August 1537	Robert Southwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100578	SP 1/124 f. 67
22 August 1537	Loys Ferrers, Abbot, and the Convent of Wymondham	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100592	SP 1/124 f. 86
13 September 1537	Loys Ferrers, Abbot, of Wymondham	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100715	SP 1/124 f. 213
28 September 1537	John Russell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302100804	SP 1/125 f. 51
12 December 1537	John Milsent	Henry Polsted	MC4303701285	SP 1/241 f. 245
1537	Anthony Sandes	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302101379	SP 1/127 f. 165
18 January 1538	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200107	SP 1/128 f. 87
26 January 1538	Hugh, Abbot of Reading	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200154	SP 1/128 f. 122
4 February 1538	William Brereton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200225	SP 1/128 f. 179
5 February 1538	John, Abbot of Peterborough	Thomas Cromwell	MC4303800015	SP 1/241 f. 294
7 February 1538	Jeffray Chamber	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200238	SP 1/129 f. 12
13 February 1538	John Wellysburn	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200275	SP 1/129 f. 36
22 February 1538	Richard Ryche	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200339	SP 1/129 f. 83
26 February 1538	John Wellysburn	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200366	SP 1/129 f. 98
1 March 1538	William Petre	Unknown	MC4302200401	Cotton Vespasian F/XIII f. 264

2 March 1538	Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200414	SP 1/129 f. 149
3 March 1538	Robert Southwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200415	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 257
4 March 1538	Thomas Cade	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200423	SP 1/129 f. 154
11 March 1538	John Wellysburn	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200493	SP 1/130 f. 20
17 March 1538	William Petre	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200540	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 308
18 March 1538	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200556	SP 1/130 f. 87
19 March 1538	Thomas Legh	Thomas Wriothesley	MC4302200560	SP 1/130 f. 92
20 March 1538	Giovanni Portinari	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200563	SP 1/130 f. 93
21 March 1538	Robert Peterson	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200583	SP 1/130 f. 111
24 March 1538	Giovanni Portinari	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200600	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 277
29 March 1538	Richard Rich, Richard Pollard, & Richard Southwell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4303800021	SP 1/242 f. 1
1 April 1538	Christopher Jenney	Thomas Cromwell	MC4303800027	SP 1/242 f. 10
12 April 1538	Nicolas Partridge	Heinrich Bullinger	MC4302200767	N/A
16 April 1538	Thurstan Tyldisley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200802	SP 1/131 f. 115
30 April 1538	John Markham	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200884	SP 1/131 f. 187
1 May 1538	Thomas Popé, Abbot of Hartford	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200906	SP 1/132 f. 3
6 May 1538	The Council of the North	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200954	SP 1/132 f. 39
8 May 1538	Abbot and Convent of Woburn	Henry VIII	MC4302200969	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 112

8 May 1538	Roland Lee	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200971	SP 1/132 f. 53
10 May 1538	John, Abbot of Combermere	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200982	SP 1/132 f. 67
11 May 1538	William Petre	Thomas Wriothesley	MC4302200986	SP 7/1 f. 22
17 May 1538	Jane Calthrop	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201030	SP 1/132 f. 101
26 May 1538	John, abbot of Bordysley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201088	SP 1/132 f. 150
27 May 1538	Roland Lee	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201102	SP 1/132 f. 157
3 June 1538	John Nevyell	Thomas Legh	MC4302201145	SP 1/132 f. 199
7 June 1538	Thomas, Abbot of Chester	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201161	SP 1/133 f. 3
13 June 1538	Hugh Latimer	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201193	SP 1/133 f. 29
21 June 1538	Roland Lee	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201248	SP 1/133 f. 157
6 July 1538	William Parre	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201356	SP 1/134 f. 112
6 July 1538	Robert Burgoyne	John Scudamore	MC4302201357	N/A
7 July 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201361	SP 1/134 f. 114
8 July 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201368	SP 1/134 f. 123
25 July 1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201482	SP 1/134 f. 241
28 July 1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302201509	SP 1/134 f. 261
31 July 1538	Richard Riche	John Scudamore & Robert Burgoyne	MC4302201531	N/A
12 August 1538	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300085	SP 1/135 f. 67
13 August 1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300098	N/A
14 August 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300100	SP 1/135 f. 85
20 August 1538	Thomas, Prior of Christchurch Canterbury	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300145	SP 1/135 f. 26
22 August 1538	Christopher Jenney	Thomas Cromwell	MC4303800057	SP 1/242 f. 68

22 August 1538	The Council of the North	Henry VIII	MC4302300162	SP 1/135 f. 140
24 August 1538	William Blithman	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300188	SP 1/135 f. 218
25 August 1538	Hugh Latimer	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300194	SP 1/135 f. 226
27 August 1538	John Russell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300206	SP 1/135 f. 236
27 August 1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300208	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 319
28 August 1538	John Bouchier	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300216	SP 1/135 f. 243
28 August 1538	John Freman	Thomas Cromwell	MC4303800059	SP 1/242 f. 72
29 August 1538	Francis Cave	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300219	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 252
30 August 1538	John Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300232	SP 1/136 f. 1
31 August 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300243	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 269
August 1538	William Bassett	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300252	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 285
1 September 1538	Thomas Thacker	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300264	SP 1/136 f. 29
3 September 1538	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300283	SP 1/136 f. 70
5 September 1538	Mayor and Aldermen of Norwich	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300291	SP 1/136 f. 73
8 September 1538	Thomas Audeley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300315	SP 1/136 f. 86
9 September 1538	John, Abbot of Vale Royal	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300323	N/A
12 September 1538	Thomas, Earl of Rutland	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300340	SP 1/136 f. 108
12 September 1538	Thomas, Earl of Rutland	Thomas Wriothesley	MC4302300341	SP 7/1 f. 41
14 September 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300355	SP 1/136 f. 119

16 September 1538	John, Abbot of Peterborough	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300369	SP 1/136 f. 131
17 September 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300377	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV
17 September 1538	John London	Thomas Wriothesley	MC4302300378	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 268
17 September 1538	Nicolas Partridge	Heinrich Bullinger	MC4302300384	N/A
18 September 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300388	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 264
20 September 1538	The Mayor & Aldermen of Coventry	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300405	SP 1/136 f. 161
27 September 1538	John Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300448	SP 1/137 f. 33
20 October 1538	John Freman	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300664	SP 1/137 f. 236
20 October 1538	The Mayor & Aldermen of Coventry	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300665	SP 1/137 f. 238
22 October 1538	Richard Gresham	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300686	SP 1/137 f. 253
22 October 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300689	SP 1/137 f. 259
23 October 1538	[Mayor & Corporation of] Northampton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300693	SP 1/137 f. 267
28 October 1538	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300721	SP 1/138 f. 37
28 October 1538	Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300723	SP 1/138 f. 38
28 October 1538	Hugh Latimer	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300724	SP 1/138 f. 39
29 October 1538	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300734	SP 1/138 f. 45
4 November 1538	Richard Thornden	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300764	SP 1/138 f. 82
6 November 1538	Thomas Cromwell	Thomas Legh & William Cavendish	MC4302300779	SP 1/138 f. 131

19 November 1538	Roland Lee	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300886	SP 1/139 f. 117
21 November 1538	John Seyncler	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300905	SP 1/139 f. 144
23 November 1538	John Nevill	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300918	SP 1/139 f. 147
8 December 1538	Roland Lee & W. Sulyard	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302301026	SP 1/140 f. 57
13 December 1538	Hugh Latimer	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302301055	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 320
14 December 1538	Henry VIII	William Goring & William Ernley	MC4302301068	SP 1/140 f. 87
15 December 1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302301077	SP 1/140 f. 98
15 December 1538	George Lawson & Others	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302301083	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 291
1538	John Williams, Richard Pollard, & John Smith	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200199	N/A
1538	Abbot of Hailes	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200354	SP 1/129 f. 94
1538	Charles, Duke of Suffolk	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302200652	SP 1/130 f. 219
1538	William Peterson	Conrad Pulbert	MC4302200654	N/A
1538	The Prior of Christchurch, Hants	Henry VIII	MC4302201132	SP 1/132 f. 175
1538	The Abbot and Convent of Evesham	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300884	SP 1/139 f. 114
1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302300953	SP 1/139 f. 173
1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302301078	SP 1/140 f. 100
1538	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302301079	SP 1/140 f. 101
8 January 1539	The City of Coventry	Roland Lee, President of the Council in the Marches of Wales	MC4302400040	SP 1/142 f. 25

14 January 1539	Thomas Vachell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400074	SP 1/142 f. 56
18 January 1539	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400092	SP 1/142 f. 86
18 January 1539	Roland Lee	John Scudamore	MC4302400095	N/A
27 January 1539	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400160	SP 1/142 f. 161
31 January 1539	Rauff Waryne	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400185	SP 1/142 f. 184
16 February 1539	John, Lord Audeley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400311	SP 1/143 f. 86
20 February 1539	Dr. John Tregonwell, Dr. Petre, & John Smyth	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400335	SP 1/143 f. 115
23 February 1539	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400359	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 248
23 February 1539	John Poletensis, Abbot of Pershore	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400360	SP 1/143 f. 146
25 February 1539	Dr. John Tregonwell & John Smyth	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400379	SP 1/143 f. 162
1 March 1539	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400428	SP 1/144 f. 4
28 March 1539	Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400636	SP 1/144 f. 180
1 April 1539	Richard, Bishop of Dover	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400680	SP 1/146 f. 236
17 May 1539	Roland Lee, Bishop of Coventry & Lichfield	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302401014	SP 1/151 f. 134
26 June 1539	Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury	Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle	MC4302401202	SP 3/3 f. 101
29 June 1539	William Stourton	Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle	MC4302401216	SP 3/7 f. 183
30 June 1539	William Popley	Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle	MC4302401219	SP 3/13 f. 63

17 July 1539	Robert Kyngge, Abbot of Walden	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302401315	SP 1/152 f. 137
19 July 1539	Roland Lee	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302401328	SP 1/152 f. 143
27 July 1539	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302401360	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 284
July 1539	Roger Wigston	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302401389	SP 1/152 f. 210
12 August 1539	Thomas Audeley	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500040	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 231
15 August 1539	William Penizon	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500054	SP 1/153 f. 25
1 September 1539	John Lamplugh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500127	SP 1/153 f. 67
8 September 1539	Thomas Moyle	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500142	SP 1/153 f. 78
16 September 1539	Richard Layton	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500191	SP 1/153 f. 102
16 October 1539	Thomas Barket	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500351	SP 1/154 f. 23
24 October 1539	Roland Lee	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500396	SP 1/154 f. 44
25 October 1539	Charles de Marillac	Anne de Montmorency	MC4302500401	N/A
31 October 1539	Philip Hoby	John Scudamore	MC4302500430	N/A
31 October 1539	John Russell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500431	SP 1/154 f. 58
7 November 1539	Richard Rich & Others	Henry VIII	MC4302500490	SP 1/154 f. 108
16 November 1539	Richard Pollard	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500546	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 166
16 November 1539	John Russell	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500545	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 119
30 November 1539	Charles de Marillac	Francis I of France	MC4302500633	N/A

2 December 1539	Robert Southwell, Edward Carne, John London, Richard Poulet, & William Berners	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500654	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 324
8 December 1539	Walter Hendle, Richard Layton, Thomas Legh, Richard Bellassys, & Richard Watkins	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500680	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 290
16 December 1539	Robert Southwell & Others	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500717	SP 1/155 f. 119
19 December 1539	Walter Hendle & Others	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302500733	SP 1/155 f. 128
1539	John London	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302400123	SP 1/142 f. 124
1539	The Abbot and Convent of [Evesham]	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302401230	SP 1/152 f. 104
1539	Richard Graynfield	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302401377	SP 1/152 f. 204
16 January 1540	Thomas Legh	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302600079	SP 1/157 f. 53
20 January 1540	Roger Touneshend	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302600092	SP 1/157 f. 57
13 February 1540	Thomas Fairfax	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302600204	SP 1/157 f. 132
24 February 1540	John Butler	Heinrich Bullinger	MC4302600267	N/A
26 February 1540	Nicolas Partridge	Heinrich Bullinger	MC4302600277	N/A
20 March 1540	Bartholomew Traheron	Heinrich Bullinger	MC4302600394	N/A
3 October 1540	John Russell	John Scudamore	MC4302700124	N/A
1540	John Hilsley, Deputy Bailiff of Leominster	Thomas Cromwell	MC4302600490	SP 1/158 f. 176
26 November 1541	John, Bishop of Chester	Henry VIII	MC4302701394	SP 1/168 f. 6

APPENDIX B

CHART II

The primary sources from *State Papers Online* did not always contain a specific sender and recipient, with some only containing a letter name. When categorizing these letters, the only difference between this chart and the previous chart is the “letter name” column instead of the “sender” and “recipient” columns.

Date	Letter Name	Gale Document Number	Document Reference
1534	Privileges of Westminster Abbey	MC4301501411	SP 1/87 f.1
16 February 1535	Launceston Priory	MC4301600233	SP 1/90 f.132
1535	New Theology	MC4301700237	Cotton Cleopatra E/V f. 397
1535	Abbey of Wardon	MC4301701184	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 199
1535	The Abbot of Abbotsbury	MC4301701104	SP 1/100 f. 11
1535	Thomas Corton, Abbot of Cerne	MC4301600155	SP 1/89 f. 104
1535	Winchcombe Abbey	MC4301701187	SP 1/100 f. 118
23 January 1536	Articles against the Abbot of Coggeshall	MC4301800168	SP 1/101 f. 127
24 April 1536	Suppression of the Monasteries	MC4301800749	SP 5/4 f. 145
30 April 1536	Sanctuary for Murder	MC4301800794	SP 1/103 f. 195
24 June 1536	Dissolution of the Monasteries	MC4301801233	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 336
July 1536	Dissolution of the Monasteries	MC4301901530	SP 5/3 f. 108
24 August 1536	In St. Alban's Abbey	MC4301900365	N/A
28 September 1536	The Canons of Hexham	MC4301900517	SP 1/106 f. 222
12 October 1536	The Lincolnshire Rebellion	MC4301900683	SP 1/107 f. 159
1536	The Abbot of Shrewsbury	MC4301800169	SP 1/101 f. 135
1536	St. Mary's Abbey, York	MC4301800223	N/A

1536	List of Monasteries in England of a less yearly value than 200l...	MC4301801281	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 347
1536	The Pilgrimage of Grace	MC4301900798	SP 1/108 f. 180
1536	The Government of the North	MC4301901427	SP 1/113 f. 69
1536	The Late Prior of Folkestone	MC4301901457	SP 1/113 f. 124
23 February 1537	The Abbot of Sawley	MC4302000512	N/A
22 March 1537	The Abbot of Barlings	MC4302000723	Cotton Cleopatra E/IV f. 245
26 March 1537	Wigmore Abbey	MC4302000763	SP 1/117 f. 139
28 April 1537	Disaffection in Norfolk	MC4302001083	SP 1/119 f. 33
1537	The Monks of Whalley	MC4302000642	SP 1/116 f. 242
12 May 1538	The Abbot and Monks of Woburn	MC4302200994	SP 1/132 f. 76
15 August 1538	Friars of Chester	MC4302300102	N/A
13 September 1538	The Grey Friars, Reading	MC4302300349	N/A
8 October 1538	The Black Friars, Chichester	MC4302300574	N/A
1538	[The Black Friars], King's Langley	MC4302301041	SP 1/140 f. 75
1538	Lead of Friars' Houses	MC4302301042	SP 1/140 f. 76
24 August 1539	Haughmond Monastery	MC4302500083	N/A
1 November 1539	The Abbot of Colchester	MC4302500454	SP 1/154 f. 79
3 November 1539	The Abbot of Colchester	MC4302500469	SP 1/154 f. 90
4 November 1539	The Abbot of Colchester	MC4302500473	SP 1/154 f. 98
22 December 1539	Gysborne Priory	MC4302500748	N/A
31 December 1539	Hayles Abbey	MC4302500805	N/A
1539	Cromwell's Remembrances	MC4302500439	Cotton Titus B/I f. 446
1539	The Abbot of Colchester	MC4302500474	SP 1/154 f. 101

1539	The Late Abbot of Glastonbury	MC4302500548	SP 1/154 f. 136
1539	A Discourse against Treason	MC4302500639	SP 1/155 f. 50
1539	Christopher Chaitour	MC4302500784	SP 1/155 f. 153
1539	John Croke	MC4302500824	SP 1/156 f. 52
1539	Thetford Priory	MC4302500849	SP 1/156 f. 95
1539	The Abbot of Peterborough	MC4302500901	SP 1/156 f. 145
14 January 1540	Shap Abbey	MC4302600068	N/A
16 February 1540	Thetford Priory	MC4302600218	N/A
20 March 1540	Christchurch, Canterbury, and Rochester	MC4302600389	N/A
23 March 1540	Waltham Abbey	MC4302600404	N/A
26 June 1540	Spoil of the Monasteries	MC4302600834	N/A
1540	Rochester Cathedral	MC4302600390	SP 1/158 f. 56
1540	Waltham Abbey	MC4302600405	SP 1/158 f. 79
1540	Lincoln Cathedral	MC4302600794	N/A
February 1541	Grants in February	MC4302700593	N/A
8 April 1541	Canterbury Cathedral	MC4302700713	N/A
12 May 1541	Durham Cathedral	MC4302700843	N/A
25 May 1541	Carlisle Cathedral	MC4303800209	SP 1/243 f. 159
4 July 1541	Rochester Cathedral	MC4303800212	SP 1/243
12 July 1541	Chester Cathedral	MC4303800213	SP 1/243
1543	Grants in February	MC4302901019	N/A
1544	Grants in May	MC4303100622	N/A
1544	Grants in July	MC4303101049	N/A
1545	Grants in June	MC4303301095	N/A

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