

## The Shrine of St. Winefride and Social Control in Early Modern England and Wales

*Matthias Bryson is a senior majoring in History. He is from West Cape May, New Jersey. This History article was supervised by Prof. Katherine Clark.*

### Abstract:

In 1534, Henry VIII declared himself the supreme head of the Church of England. In the years that followed, his advisors carried out an agenda to reform the Church. In 1536, the Crown condemned pilgrimages and the veneration of saints' shrines and relics. By the end of the seventeenth century, nearly every shrine in England and Wales had been destroyed or fell into disuse except for St. Winefride's shrine in Holywell, Wales. The shrine has continued to be a pilgrimage destination to the present day without disruption. Contemporary scholars have credited the shrine's survival to its connections with the Tudor and Stuart regimes, to the successful negotiation for its shared use as both a sacred and secular space, and to the missionary efforts of the Jesuits. Historians have yet to conduct a detailed study of St. Winefride's role in maintaining social order in recusant communities. This article argues that the Jesuits and pilgrims at St. Winefride's shrine cooperated to create an alternative concept of social order to the legal and customary orders of Protestant society.

### Introduction

On August 29, 1687, the London Gazette reported that James II (r. 1685–8) “went this day to Holywell in Flintshire,” a small town tucked in the green hills of northeastern Wales, close to the border of England. While there, he performed the expected functions of a reigning monarch on an official visit. As the head of the Church of England, he met with “the Lord Bishop of St. Asaph and his Clergy with all dutiful Respect,” he greeted the local gentry who had gathered “to pay their Obedience to His Majesty,” and he “was pleased to Heal for the Evil”—that is, he laid his hands upon his subjects, regardless of birth or rank, in order to heal them of their illnesses, an ability traditionally believed to have been bestowed upon English monarchs by God, dating back to Edward the Confessor (r. 1042–66).<sup>1</sup> The

London Gazette reported that the king was “met by multitudes of People on both ways, sounding forth Joyful and Loyal Acclamations.”<sup>2</sup>

This was, however, no ordinary royal visit, and James II was no ordinary king. He was the last Catholic king of an overwhelmingly Protestant land. He had come to Holywell that day not only as king, but as pilgrim. James II found time between his official duties to pay his respects at the shrine of St. Winefride, a natural spring housed in a gothic chapel just outside of the town of Holywell and a center of Catholic pilgrimage dating back nearly a thousand years. He had come to petition the saint to

---

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Brogan, *The Royal Touch in Early Modern England: Politics, Medicine and Sin* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), 61.

<sup>2</sup> London Gazette (September 1—September 5, 1687).

grant him a male heir.<sup>3</sup> His wife did give birth to a son, but within sixteen months of his visit, James II was forced to flee England, as Parliament replaced him on the throne with his Protestant daughter, Mary II, and her husband, William of Orange. Reflecting on the king's visit to Holywell, the eighteenth-century Welsh writer and local historian Thomas Pennant referred to James as "the prince who lost three kingdoms for a mass."<sup>4</sup>

James II's pilgrimage to Holywell draws attention to a phenomenon in the countryside of Wales worth further exploration: the survival of a medieval Catholic shrine a century and a half after Henry VIII's reforms separated England from the Roman Catholic Church. The Henrician reforms targeted centers of traditional medieval Christianity—monasteries, chantries, and shrines. Many saints' shrines survived the initial reforms under Henry VIII and his successor Edward VI, and some remained centers of pilgrimage into the seventeenth century, but iconoclastic fervor reached new heights during the Interregnum of 1649–1660, as hardline Protestants attempted to complete the reformation of the English Church along Calvinist lines.<sup>5</sup> They destroyed many of the remaining Catholic holy sites and forced pilgrims to abandon the rest. St. Winefride's shrine in Holywell, however, survived the seventeenth century and remained an active center of Catholic worship. From the twelfth to the sixteenth century the focal point of her cult had been Shrewsbury Abbey, just on the

English side of the Welsh Marches where her bones were interred. The Crown's agents destroyed the abbey in the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s and with it the saint's shrine and her bodily relics. St. Winefride's well, which sat approximately fifty miles from Shrewsbury Abbey, was long a locus of her cult's activity, but after the abbey's destruction it became its center and the saint's sole shrine.

According to medieval hagiographies, Winefride was a Welsh noblewoman who lived in the seventh century. The protégé of her uncle, Beuno, a priest renowned for his piety, Winefride dedicated her life to chastity in service to God. In addition to being a holy woman, Winefride was reputed to have been beautiful. She caught the eye of a pagan prince named Caradoc, who made advances on her. She refused, fleeing from her house toward the church where Beuno was leading mass. Caradoc caught up with her and chopped off her head in a fit of rage. Beuno, as soon as he found out, ran from the church to where her body lay. He cried out for God to judge Caradoc. The earth opened up and swallowed Caradoc, dragging him straight to hell. Beuno placed Winefride's head on her neck and asked God to restore her to life. He then went to the church and finished the mass. When he returned, Winefride was miraculously revived, just as though she had never died but for a thin silver line around her neck where Caradoc had struck her, a mark she bore the rest of her life as an outward manifestation of God's grace. From the blood of her severed

---

<sup>3</sup> Alexandra Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 197.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Pennant, *The history of the parishes of Whiteford, and Holywell* (London, 1796), 230.

<sup>5</sup> The Interregnum refers to the period between 1649–1660, after the beheading of Charles I and the

restoration of his son, Charles II, to the throne of England. England became a republic in this period, ruled by Parliament under the leadership of hardline Protestants or "Puritans" who sought to continue the reformation of the Church, which they considered to be corrupted with the remnants of Catholic idolatry.

head a spring burst forth out of the ground. This fountain is purported to be the same one venerated as St. Winefride's shrine, also known as Holywell.

The waters of Holywell quickly developed a reputation for healing diseases and infirmities, and so the shrine became a pilgrimage destination in the Middle Ages, a practice which carried on even through the Reformation. Like many other popular late medieval and early modern saints, St. Winefride was first and foremost a healer, but whereas most saints were "specialist healers" whom people appealed to for healing of a specific ailment, St. Winefride was renowned as a healer of all manner of illnesses.<sup>6</sup> Written reports of healings at her shrine in Holywell date back to at least the twelfth century. In his life of St. Winefride, Robert, the abbot of Shrewsbury, attributed to St. Winefride the healing of leprosy, fevers, sores, and blindness.<sup>7</sup> By the end of the Middle Ages, St. Winefride's reputation for healing had only grown. The sixteenth-century Welsh bard Tudur Aled expanded the saint's repertoire when he wrote that she could heal "blindness, lameness, skin disorders, mental deficiency, infertility, paralysis in arm or leg, deafness or dumbness; and she could even restore the dead to life."<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> For example, Saints Katherine, Margaret, and Barbara were especially helpful for protection during childbirth, and St. Sebastian offered protection from the plague. See Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 179, 181.

<sup>7</sup> Robert, Prior of Shrewsbury, *The admirable life of Saint VVinefride virgin, martyr, abbesse*, trans. John Falconer (Saint-Omer: English College Press, 1635), Early English Books Online (STC / 974:15).

<sup>8</sup> Williams, Glanmor. "St. Winifred's Well: Ffynnon Wenfrewi." *Flintshire Historical Society journal*, vol. 36 (2003): 42.

<sup>9</sup> In a 1629, John Bridgeman, the Chief Justice of Chester recounted his efforts to stop pilgrimage to

Pilgrims traveled to the shrine at Holywell throughout the year to petition the saint for healing, but the shrine attracted its largest numbers of worshipers on the feast of St. Winefride's beheading, on June 22, and on November 3, her feast day in the Church calendar. These practices carried on through the Reformation. Even in the height of persecution, the summer pilgrimage drew hundreds or perhaps thousands of pilgrims.<sup>9</sup>

From the 1530s until the late seventeenth century, Protestant reformers made periodic attempts to end pilgrimages at Holywell. These efforts intensified in the 1640s and 1650s during the Civil Wars and the Interregnum as Puritans targeted centers of traditional worship, such as Holywell, for destruction.<sup>10</sup> Despite these efforts, the pilgrimages continued. Holywell's continued use as a sacred site was not unique in this period. Other shrines such as Lady Chapel at the ruins of the Mount Grace priory in Yorkshire, the chapel of Our Lady of the Crag in Knaresborough, and St. Robert's cave survived well into the seventeenth century before being abandoned. However, St. Winefride's well not only outlasted most other surviving shrines, it also attracted larger volumes of pilgrims.<sup>11</sup>

Holywell to the Privy Council. He reported catching people "to the number of fourteen or fifteen hundreth" in the act of pilgrimage. John Bridgeman, *Dom. Charles I.* vol. cli. n. 13, 1629, in *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, ed. Henry Foley (London: Burns and Oates, 1878), 534–5.

<sup>10</sup> For a survey of government crackdowns on the shrine at Holywell, see Williams, "St. Winifred's Well," 44–48.

<sup>11</sup> Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 167–169.

Most historians who have researched St. Winefride's shrine have focused on its connection to well-known figures, such as the late-medieval printer William Caxton or the royal family, or to important events, such as the Jacobite uprisings.<sup>12</sup> Other scholars, in particular Robert E. Scully and T.W. Prichard, have written broad surveys of St. Winefride's cult's history from the Middle Ages until the present day, with a focus on Jesuit missionary activity, yet they have offered little new in the way of historical analysis.<sup>13</sup> Shortly before his death in 2005, Welsh historian Glanmor Williams also wrote a chronological survey of the shrine at Holywell. His treatment of the shrine's history bears many of the same limitations as Scully's and Pritchard's research: it is a general chronological survey, and it skips the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries entirely.<sup>14</sup> Williams does, however, posit that St. Winefride's popularity at the end of the Middle Ages can be attributed to her connection with Beuno, himself a popular saint who was "far more celebrated in north Wales at the time" than St. David, the patron saint of Wales.<sup>15</sup> More recently, Alexandra Walsham has credited the survival of St. Winefride's cult to the Jesuit mission's successful incorporation of Counter-Reformation practices into the

medieval cult of St. Winefride, and to a successful negotiation with Protestants for the meaning of the shrine when Protestants flocked to it as a healing spa in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>16</sup> Walsham's treatment of the shrine at Holywell is insightful but brief; it serves as one example in her broader discussion of the religious landscape in early modern Britain. Scholars have yet to conduct detailed research into the impact of the shrine's survival on the lives of Catholic worshipers, particularly how they maintained social order.

Over the last thirty years, the debate among historians over the nature of social order in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England has been shaped by the work of Keith Wrightson and David Levine. In their landmark 1979 book, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525–1700*, Wrightson and Levine argue that economic changes contributed to the growing distinction between local elite landowners and the laboring poor. Coupled with a zealous expression of Protestantism—often labeled as "Puritanism"—the local elite enforced social behavior on the poor.<sup>17</sup> In his essay, "Two Concepts of Order: Justices, Constables and Jurymen in Seventeenth-century England," Wrightson states that

<sup>12</sup> M. J. C. Lowry, "Caxton, St. Winifred and the Lady Margaret Beaufort," *The Library*, 6th series, vol. 5, no. 2 (June 1983): 101–117; Anne F. Sutton, "Caxton, the Cult of St. Winifred, and Shrewsbury," in *Of Mice and Men: Image, Belief and Regulation in Late Medieval England*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2005), 109–126; Walsham, *Catholic Reformation*; Colin Haydon, "St. Winifred, Bishop Fleetwood and Jacobitism," in *Saints and Sanctity*, ed. Peter Clarke and Tony Claydon (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2011), 295–306.

<sup>13</sup> Robert E. Scully, "St. Winifride's Well: The Significance and Survival of a Welsh Catholic Shrine

from the Early Middle Ages to the Present Day," in *Saints and Their Cults in the Atlantic World*, ed. Margaret Cormack (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007) 202–228; T.W. Pritchard, *St. Winefride, Her Holy Well & the Jesuit Mission, c. 650–1930* (Wrexham, UK: Bridge Books, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Williams, "St. Winifred's Well," 32–51.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>16</sup> Walsham, *Catholic Reformation*, 188–191, 199–205.

<sup>17</sup> Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525–1700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

there were two concepts of order in English villages: legal order, which was divinely ordained and enforced from the top down, and customary order, based on principles of neighborliness and social harmony and enforced through social pressure.<sup>18</sup> The idea of these two concepts of order has held up in the decades since, but historians have since challenged aspects of their theses, especially the Marxist-influenced struggle between local village elites and the laboring sorts. Rather than representing two separate cultures in conflict with each other, village elites and laborers shared many social values and worked together to enforce them.<sup>19</sup>

There are still aspects of this debate that have not received enough attention from historians. Wrightson and Levine based their argument on a single village in the southeast of England, eventually broadening the scope of their study to other communities, but the debate has continued to focus on southern English villages with predominantly Protestant populations. This paradigm leaves little room to study how Catholic recusants conceived of social order.<sup>20</sup> The practice of the Catholic faith was illegal in Protestant England and Wales, which placed Catholics on the receiving end of social control measures under both legal and customary concepts of order.

---

<sup>18</sup> Keith Wrightson, "Two concepts of order: justices, constables and jurymen in seventeenth-century England," in *An Ungovernable People: The English and their Law in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. John Brewer and John Styles (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1980), 21.

<sup>19</sup> Bernard Capp, *England's Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and its Enemies in the Interregnum, 1649–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Henry R. French, "Social Status, Localism and the 'Middle Sorts of People' in England 1620–1750," *Past and Present*, no. 166 (Feb 2000): 66–99; Steve Hindle, "The Enforcement of Social Policy," in *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550–1640*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000),

This essay challenges this binary concept of social control. An analysis of the primary texts shows that pilgrims from all social ranks and Jesuits at St. Winefride's shrine worked together to enforce social order. They created an alternative social order that did not rely on the enforcement of laws or social pressure, but on appeals to God through his agent, St. Winefride. First, this article examines the active involvement of the Catholic gentry and nobility in the cult at Holywell. It then explores St. Winefride's role in punishing social transgressors, such as blasphemers, scolds, and suspected witches. Finally, it turns its attention to the belief that St. Winefride's defended Catholics from Protestant persecution.

This essay relies on evidence from the "Documenta de Sancta Wenefreda," a collection of healing accounts collected by a Jesuit group known as the Bollandists from the years 1556 to 1674. The Jesuits carefully curated miracle accounts to illustrate appropriate social behavior to the Catholic laity, and to demonstrate God's sovereign authority as revealed through his saints in a Protestant land. However, the "Documenta" not only records Jesuit strategy, it also contains the beliefs of English and Welsh lay worshipers. The "Documenta" shows

146–175; Hindle, "The Reformation of Manners," in *The State and Social Change*, 176–203; Martin Ingram, "From Reformation to Toleration: Popular Religious Cultures in England, 1540–1690," in *Popular Culture in England, c. 1500–1850*, ed. Tim Harris (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 95–123; Ingram, "Reformation of Manners in Early Modern England," in *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*, ed. Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox, and Steve Hindle (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 47–81.

<sup>20</sup> The term "recusant" refers to a Catholic in England or Wales who refused to attend Church of England services as required by law.

how Catholics viewed the role of saints in their lives as well as their own place in society.

*St. Winefride's Authority Over Social Ranks*

Although the majority of pilgrims to Holywell were from the lower orders, the “Documenta” made a point of recording the involvement of members of the gentry and the peerage in an effort to establish St. Winefride’s God-given authority over the social order. A record from 1574, during the reign of Elizabeth I, relates that one “M<sup>r</sup> John Williams Esq.” was a devotee of St. Winefride, who “with others (according to the manner of devout persons) bathed themselves in the Well.” In addition to gentlemen of the middling sort like John Williams, the accounts in the “Documenta” contain the names of nobles who acted as benefactors of devotees, defraying the expenses of pilgrimage for ill persons of the lower orders. In 1624, the Jesuits recorded the report of a young Welsh woman named Jane James, who had been bedridden with a mysterious illness for years. Rumors of Ms. James’s torment and of her wish to make the pilgrimage to Holywell spread around her town until they reached “the virtuouse and truly Noble Lady the Lady Anne,” whom the text identifies as “wife to Henry the then Lord Herbert of Raglan and since first Marquesse of Worcester.”<sup>21</sup> As soon as the lady became aware of Jane’s condition, she “ordered one of her servants to assist the sick mayde with a horse-litter to Hollywell.”<sup>22</sup> When Jane James bathed in the well’s waters, the text reports that her condition dramatically improved, and that she received complete healing after bathing

in the well three times over a period of several years.<sup>23</sup> The story illustrates that Lady Anne’s power to help was limited to financial assistance. For the Jesuit compilers of the “Documenta” only God, through St. Winefride, had the power to heal Jane James. Though the account does not record whether the Lady Anne was herself a devotee of St. Winefride, or even a Catholic, her patronage of Jane James places her within the extended financial and social network that sustained the shrine at Holywell.

Members of the peerage did more than provide financial assistance to pilgrims in need. The names of prominent nobles appear in registers of pilgrims in the seventeenth century. In fact, their presence indicates that, not only did social elites worship St. Winefride, they shared in the dangers associated with this outlawed act of devotion. In 1629, during the reign of Charles I, representatives of the Crown attempted to put a stop to Holywell pilgrimages. To prosecute Catholic worshipers, they recorded the names of pilgrims in a register and sent it to the Privy Council. Among those listed are “divers other knights, ladies, gentlemen and gentlewomen of divers counties,” as well as nobles, including Lord Shrewsbury, Lady Falkland, and William Howard.<sup>24</sup>

Nearly fifty years after the 1629 attempt at suppression, St. Winefride’s devotees still faced prosecution if they were caught in the act of pilgrimage. The “Documenta” preserves a letter between two Jesuit priests written in 1673. Hugh Owen, a Jesuit missionary in northern Wales, wrote a letter to William Morgan, the superior of the

<sup>21</sup> C. de Smedt, “Documenta de Sancta Wenefreda,” *Analecta Bollandiana*, v. 6 (1887): 327.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 329.

<sup>24</sup> Bridgeman, *Dom. Charles I.* vol. cli. n. 13, in *Records of the English Province*, 534–5.

Jesuit residence of St. Winefride in Holywell. The Jesuit compilers of the “Documenta” noted that the letter was written in code because their missionary activities were still outlawed in England and they would have “come to grave danger if the letter were to fall into the hands of their adversaries.”<sup>25</sup> In the letter, Owen described a secret pilgrimage to Holywell in 1670, two years before Morgan began his post in Holywell. Euphemistically referring to St. Winefride’s shrine as the “Closett,” he explained that no one made use of it “on ye 22<sup>th</sup>,” that is, there was no pilgrimage on the twenty-second of June, the date of St. Winefride’s summer pilgrimage. He went on to relate that certain of “the most eminent” visitors were “permitted to go in... and say their devotions.” Among the distinguished visitors was Madam Lumley, “ye Lords mother,” and her daughter, as well as the Lady Green, whom he noted was “the most famouse” visitor.<sup>26</sup> The letter implies that the public pilgrimage had been canceled in 1670 due to risks of punishment. Despite this, the noble pilgrims persisted in paying their respects to their patron saint in private. The dangers of Catholic worship were common to all of St. Winefride’s devotees, regardless of rank, even in Wales and the borderlands of the North, and they all placed themselves at her mercy for healing and protection.

The Jesuits used St. Winefride’s influence among Catholics of all ranks in society to reinforce the narrative that St. Winefride, and therefore the Catholic Church, had authority directly from God that

was not subject to the political or cultural changes in England and Wales. Pilgrims, regardless of their rank, approached St. Winefride on equal footing, and the accounts demonstrated her ability to grant healing and protection to them all. This narrative helped St. Winefride evolve from a local healing saint into a powerful arbiter of social order. Because her worshipers ascribed to her authority over all ranks in society, she was not subject to either the legal or customary social order. She could, therefore, not only heal devout worshipers, she could protect them from Protestant and legal persecution.

#### *St. Winefride and Social Control*

Many people in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England expressed concern about breakdown of the social order. In court cases, laws, and personal writings from the period, both the social elites and the lower sorts expressed the desire to maintain appropriate behavior and social harmony. Catholic recusants were in the difficult position of largely agreeing with Protestant moral standards while finding themselves on the receiving end of social control efforts, alongside such offenders as blasphemers and witches. In his 1584 tractate on witchcraft, Reginald Scot stated that witches “are women which be commonly...superstitious and papists.”<sup>27</sup> Catholic worshipers faced the problem of how to participate in maintaining social control while living in a Protestant society that had turned existing methods of control *against* them. Lay worshipers strived to

<sup>25</sup> The original Latin reads “...grave discrimen venirent, si epistola incidisset in manus adversariorum,” de Smedt, “Documenta,” 351.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 351–352.

<sup>27</sup> Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, in *Sources and Debates*, in *Sources and Debates in English History, 1485–1714*, ed. Newton Key and Robert Bucholz (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 125–127.

maintain community harmony without the influence to bring it about through social pressure. The Jesuit missionaries in England and Wales were largely concerned with the problem of enforcing social control on the laity in a society in which they had no legal standing. As one of the few remaining Catholic pilgrimage centers in England and Wales in the seventeenth century, Holywell was in the rare position to provide social stability to both the laity and the clergy who worshiped at St. Winefride's well. The miracles that the devout believed St. Winefride worked at her shrine provided them with a powerful source of hope and a paradigm for order. The healing accounts the Jesuits collected in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries show how St. Winefride's role changed from a late-medieval healer into a source of social control. In these records, not only did she heal penitent worshipers, she also punished transgressors. The Jesuits used these accounts to reinforce appropriate moral behavior. For the worshipers, they illustrated St. Winefride's God-given power to redress their grievances against Protestant persecution. Priest and pilgrim alike could appeal to God through his saint to punish those who disrupted social harmony.

Instances of saints punishing wayward worshipers date back to the Middle Ages in popular tradition. Medieval saints punished worshipers for not showing them proper devotion, or for breaking a vow to make a pilgrimage to their shrines.<sup>28</sup> These punishments reflect the late-medieval relationship between worshiper and saint, which mirrored the earthly relationship between commoner and lord. Worshipers

paid tribute to the saints in the form of prayers, pilgrimages, and monetary donations, and in return, the saints protected and healed the worshipers.<sup>29</sup>

St. Winefride was no exception. In his account of St. Winefride's life, Robert of Shrewsbury recorded an account that typifies this patron-client relationship between saint and worshiper. He reported that one night a group of thieves stole iron parts from a water mill not far from St. Winefride's shrine. They placed them in their own mill, intending to use them, but "through the merits of S. Winefride" the parts would not work in the thieves' mill. The thieves returned the stolen parts and "confessed their fault penitently in the Saintes Chappell; warning others thereby not to commit the like theft in places neere unto it."<sup>30</sup> St. Winefride "had shewed herselfe so powerfull a Patronesse of her Chappell, and Defendresse of such," but her protection was fundamentally local.<sup>31</sup> Her protection only extended to "the places neere unto" her chapel. Like a local lord, she defended those on her land who depended upon her protection. Just as her physical protection was internal to her local community, her spiritual authority was internal to the community of the Church. The thieves' sin was economic, not theological—they wanted to mill grain without paying for parts. They were, for all their faults, Christians who repented for their misdeeds and were welcomed back into Christian fellowship.

St. Winefride's role evolved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from a local saint and protector of the vicinity of her shrine to a powerful arbiter of social

---

<sup>28</sup> Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 185.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 160–162.

<sup>30</sup> Robert of Shrewsbury, *The admirable life of Saint Winefride*, 205–207.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 192–193.



order whose influence extended beyond the confines of Flintshire and of the Catholic Church. This is reflected in the expansion of the types of people who came under the saint's judgment: scolds and suspected witches. These groups were popular targets of both legal and customary social control in this period. A scold was a quarrelsome or blasphemous person who verbally abused his or her family or neighbors. Though the term could refer to a man or a woman, it became almost exclusively female over time.<sup>32</sup> Scolding disrupted social harmony in a village and was a criminal offense. Scolds, therefore, frequently appear in court records in the sixteenth century. Concerns over witches were also common in early modern England and Wales. Though ostensibly about protecting the Christian community from satanic harm, accusations of witchcraft frequently centered on more secular, mundane aspects of social order. Accused witches tended to be women, usually on the margins of the community. Reginald Scot claimed that, in addition to their tendency to be "papists," witches were women who were "old, lame, bleary-eyed, foul, and full of wrinkles, poor and sullen." In other words, they were marginal members of the community and thus easy targets of blame for disrupting the social order.

The cult at Holywell provided Catholic worshippers with a context in which they

could exert social control over these marginal groups in a way not available to them in the broader Protestant society in which they lived. The legal order enforced appropriate behavior in villages through the implementation of laws by the local elite. Villagers often used shaming rituals, such as charivari, rough music, or skimmingtons, which involved mocking a transgressor with loud music, public humiliation, and even physical abuse.<sup>33</sup> Though they approached it in different ways, the local elite and villagers shared a concern for maintaining social order.<sup>34</sup> St. Winefride's miracle accounts illustrated that the saint's devotees did not need to resort to courts or public rituals to maintain social control. Instead, they could achieve it by seeking divine justice through God's agent, St. Winefride.

In a report dated to 1574, during the reign of Elizabeth I, a man named William Shone—a servant of the aforementioned John Williams, Esq.—loudly and "irreligiously" berated the devout worshippers who were bathing in St. Winefride's well, including his own master. He declared "with scorne and contempt" that he wanted to clean his boots in the water. He lept into the pool, and "his whole body [was] stricken with lamenesse and benumbed." Shone was taken from the well in a harrow, and he was reduced to begging for food. Eventually, he returned to

---

<sup>32</sup> Martin Ingram, "'Scolding women cucked or washed': a crisis in gender relations in early modern England?" in *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England*, ed. Jennifer Kermode and Garthine Walker (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 51.

<sup>33</sup> Charivari and rough music refer to rituals in which a community shamed one of their members by publically mocking them in song and, at times, driving them from the town or village. Skimmingtons were specifically targeted at adulterers. See "Wiltshire Quarter Sessions, deposition of Thomas

Mills, cutler, and his wife Agnes (Spring 1618)," in *Sources and Debates*, 113.

<sup>34</sup> Wrightson, "Two concepts of order," in *An Ungovernable People*, 21; David Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold: the Enforcement of Patriarchal Authority in Early Modern England," in *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*, ed. A. J. Fletcher and J. Stevenson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 116–117, 122; Rachel Weil, "Politics and Gender in Crisis in David Underdown's 'The Taming of the Scold,'" *History Compass* 11/4 (2013): 383, 384.

Holywell and bathed in the water, reverently asking God to forgive him “by the intercession of S. Wenefride.” God and St. Winefride heard his prayer and healed him, but not to his full strength.<sup>35</sup> In this account, St. Winefride not only displayed her ability to strike down and heal Shone’s physical body, she also restored the social order. In addition to blaspheming God and St. Winefride, Shone disrespected his own master. St. Winefride’s punishment accomplished three things. It humbled Shone, reinforced the importance of staying within one’s station, and confirmed worshipers’ faith in St. Winefride by bringing Shone into the fold of the Church. Another version of the story appears in the autobiography of John Gerard. The details of Gerard’s account mirror those in the “Documenta,” but when St. Winefride paralyzed Shone, Gerard concluded, “Thus was he punished and others confirmed in their belief.”<sup>36</sup> The worshipers present, by this account, saw God defend them through St. Winefride from an unbelieving persecutor.

In 1617, forty-three years after William Shone mocked St. Winefride, a Welsh woman named Lowry Davies made the pilgrimage to Holywell with her neighbors, “rather out of pastime then devotion.” According to the “Documenta,” when she left, she blasphemed God and St. Winefride, saying to her friends, “What a notable foole um I to come so farr on foot to bath myself in these cold waters: had it not been as good for me to wash in the mill-river at home as to come hither?” Her friends rebuked her, but she “persisted in hereticall disposition,” as she walked until she suddenly stopped in her tracks. St. Winefride had struck her

blind where she stood. Davies returned to the well and repented for her blasphemy. After bathing her eyes in the waters, St. Winefride restored her sight, but not completely.<sup>37</sup> As in the case of William Shone, Lowry Davies’s judgment at the hands of St. Winefride restored the social order by humbling the transgressor and justifying the faith of her friends whom she mocked.

The treatment of witches in the “Documenta” also reveals St. Winefride’s evolution in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from a local saint to a powerful source of social control. Witches appear frequently in the “Documenta” as a foil for St. Winefride. In each account in which a witch appears, a sick person consults her before resorting to Holywell for healing. In each case, the witchcraft is ineffective, or it actively harms the patient. When the afflicted person finally makes a pilgrimage to Holywell, St. Winefride instantly heals them when they enter her waters. The witches’ inability to heal the sick with their craft contrasts with St. Winefride’s healing powers. Unlike the scoffers, the witches never appear in these accounts in the proximity of Holywell. They are the neighbors of the pilgrims, women from towns and villages farther afield.

An account from the *Interregnum* tells of Edward Powell, a young man with a festering condition in his leg. After suffering for a long time, he reluctantly received help from a local woman, “fearing that her skill had some dependance of witchcraft.”<sup>38</sup> Her ministrations improved Powell’s condition for a while, but whenever he missed a treatment he “[found] himselfe immediately

<sup>35</sup> de Smedt, “Documenta,” 311.

<sup>36</sup> Gerard, *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan*, 47.

<sup>37</sup> de Smedt, “Documenta,” 318–319.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

thereafter in grievous torment.”<sup>39</sup> Powell went to Holywell twice to bathe in the healing waters, and St. Winefride healed his leg. The narrator of the account drew a striking contrast between the suspected witch and St. Winefride. The former, when she was unable to heal Powell, realized that she had been found out as a fraud, and she fled the country, but when St. Winefride healed the young man, “the fame of his miraculous cure was spread all over the country.”<sup>40</sup> The Jesuits used the account as an effective cautionary tale about the dangers of resorting to the aid of “cunning folk” instead of relying on the grace of God made available through his saints. At the same time, it served as an example of St. Winefride defending her devotees from disruptive members of their own community. The witch’s fate, exile from the country, restored order to Powell’s community.

By the seventeenth century, St. Winefride’s role had evolved from the patroness and “defendress” of her chapel whom Robert of Shrewsbury praised in the twelfth century to the powerful patroness and defender of the social order. In a period characterized by anxiety over the breakdown of social order, in which village elite and the laboring sorts alike feared the destabilizing effect of scolds, blasphemers, and accused witches, these accounts portrayed St. Winefride as an efficient, just source of order. They reflect the desire of Catholic worshipers to see social order maintained and the Jesuit effort to maintain authority

while preserving social order through means beyond social pressure or legal authority.

#### *St. Winefride as Defender from Persecution*

When St. Winefride healed Edward Powell, the “Documenta” proclaims that “the fame of his miraculous cure was spread all over the country, causing a greater admiration thereof not only in Catholic, but also in Protestants.”<sup>41</sup> This passage reflects a third aspect of St. Winefride’s role as social arbiter: her ability to vindicate her followers’ faith in the presence of Protestants. Holywell became a destination for Catholics and Protestants alike. Non-Catholic relatives, friends, and acquaintances of sick devotees accompanied them to the shrine, often to lend assistance. Local farmers used the well as a water source for their livestock. Toward the end of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth centuries, Holywell, like Bath, became a popular tourist spa.<sup>42</sup> Though most of these interactions were peaceful, the mere presence of unbelievers at a sacred shrine was a constant and painful reminder to Catholics that they inhabited the margins of a Protestant society. But Protestant and Catholic interactions at Holywell were not always peaceful. As discussed above, throughout the Tudor and Stuart periods, the Crown and reformers made periodic attempts to stop pilgrimages to Holywell. The “Documenta” and other Catholic texts portrayed St. Winefride as a powerful protector in the face of systemic Protestant persecution. The Jesuits used these accounts

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 333.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 333, 335.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 332, 335.

<sup>42</sup> For the use of Holywell as a watering hole for livestock, see William Fleetwood, *The Life of St. Winefride, together with her litanies; with some*

*historical observations made thereon* (London: Dolphin, 1713), 10–12. For an example of early eighteenth-century Protestants using Holywell as a spa, see Celia Fiennes, *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes, 1685–c.1712*, ed. Christopher Morris (London: Webb & Bower, 1982), 158–159.

to reinforce the message that social pressure from worshipers' Protestant peers and the legal pressure from the Crown were subject to God's authority on display in the miracles of St. Winefride.

The recorders of the "Documenta" placed particular emphasis on the presence of Protestant witnesses to St. Winefride's miracles.<sup>43</sup> For the devout, occasions when Protestants witnessed and acknowledged the work of St. Winefride were a testament to God's power. The healing and conversion of a Protestant was an even more powerful testament to God's sovereignty, and the Jesuits used such stories to great effect. In an account from the reign of Charles II, a crippled man named Roger Whetston, whom the text describes as "both a Quaker and an Anabaptist" went to Holywell, where St. Winefride healed him. Another Quaker named Robert Hill, who was "well acquainted" with Whetston, confirmed that the latter was previously crippled. The Jesuit writer of this account added, "severall testimonies of the same miraculous cure of Roger Whetston are present in my custodie."<sup>44</sup> Not only did St. Winefride display God's power to several Quakers, her miracle brought Whetston into the fold. The account stated that he "willingly embraced the catholique faith," and that he had his son baptized into the Church as well.<sup>45</sup>

It was never more important to reassure worshipers of St. Winefride's power to vindicate their faith than in the face of persecution from the secular authorities.

Among the several attempts to suppress pilgrimage to Holywell in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the crackdown in 1637 stands out both for the intensity of its execution, and the response it produced in Catholic writers. Though Charles I was a Protestant, his wife, Henrietta Maria, was Catholic. This fact stoked the ever-present fears that Catholicism would gain a foothold in England.<sup>46</sup> Writers from this period frequently warned of the dangers of allowing Catholic pilgrimages to Holywell to continue. In 1624, John Gee, a priest in the Church of England, wrote a tract entitled *The Foot out of the Snare*, in which he tried to expose the illegal missionary activities of the Jesuits and other Catholics. He lamented to the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbot, and to the House of Lords that "superstitious Papists... go in pilgrimage" to Holywell. They had become "so bold... that they intruded themselves diuers times into the Church... and there said Masse without contradiction." He warned that Catholics might "easily presume to the same liberty heer in England," and he reported that Catholics in Ireland had already "intruded titular Bishops, to supplant the Church-government there in force."<sup>47</sup> In 1632, Archbishop Abbot wrote a letter directly to the king to recommend "that serious Letters should be directed from your Majesty or Privy Council, to the Lord President of Wales and his Fellow Commissioners, that at Summer next, some course should be taken for the repressing of this Confluence,

---

<sup>43</sup> See also the account of a Catholic man and a Protestant woman who miraculously conceived a child after the husband made a pilgrimage to Holywell, and the report of a cripple who was miraculously healed in front of "at least twenty protestants, that were eyewitnesse of this stupendious miracle. de Smedt, "Documenta," 319–322, 324–325.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 346.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 346.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, "St. Winifred's Well," 46.

<sup>47</sup> John Gee, *The foot out of the snare: with a detection of sundry late practices and impostures of the priests and Jesuits in England* (London: H. Lownes, 1624), Early English Books Online (STC / 1450:12), 34.

being indeed no better than a Pilgrimage.”<sup>48</sup> These warnings culminated in the government’s suppression of the shrine at Holywell in 1637.

The Chief Justice of Chester, John Bridgeman, carried out a coordinated raid on Holywell, designed to destroy the shrine itself and to undermine the economy that supported it.<sup>49</sup> In a 1636 letter to the Privy Council, Bridgeman reported that he was coordinating with justices of the peace in Flintshire to “use all meanes to hinder the pilgrimages to Hollywell.” He ordered the justices of the peace to close most of the inns and alehouses of Holywell to prevent them from catering to pilgrims, and he charged the remaining innkeepers with informing on any pilgrims or strangers who came to Holywell during the summer pilgrimage. Though Bridgeman stopped short of his threat of “muringe up the head of the springe,” he had the statue of St. Winefride in the shrine’s crypt destroyed and he commanded his men to tear out the iron handrails in the water that pilgrims used to steady themselves against the strong current as they bathed.<sup>50</sup>

The Jesuit priest Philip Metcalfe recorded his own version of the 1637 crackdown in his life of St. Winefride. He

corroborated the basic facts of the events, but he added that “both he who commanded it, and those who executed his Orders, contrary to the persuasion of several moderate Protestants, were shortly after exemplarly punish’d by Uncommon Misfortunes and Disasters.”<sup>51</sup> Metcalfe reinterpreted what ought to have been a defeat as a victory for God against the persecutors of his Church, but what exactly did Metcalfe mean when he said that Bridgeman and the men who carried out his commands “were shortly after exemplarly punish’d”? The “Documenta” similarly states that these men “experience[d] divine vengeance in an amazing way.”<sup>52</sup> According to one account, shortly after the suppression of pilgrimages at Holywell, Bridgeman “died from a disease called *miserere*, after having discharged excrement from his mouth for three days.”<sup>53</sup> The same account claims that one of Bridgeman’s lieutenants was instantly paralyzed when he ordered the iron rods be removed from St. Winefride’s well, and he remained bedridden until the following February when he died at the age of forty.<sup>54</sup> Metcalfe concluded his account of the 1637 crackdown with a warning to any would-be persecutors:

---

<sup>48</sup> William Laud, *The history of the troubles and trial of the Most Reverend Father in God and blessed martyr, William Laud* (London: Printed for Ri. Chiswell at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul’s Church-Yard, 1695), 519–20.

<sup>49</sup> Previously mentioned in connection with the 1629 persecution of the cult at Holywell. See fn. 9.

<sup>50</sup> Henry Foley, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus: Historic Facts Illustrative of the Labours and Sufferings of its Members in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (London: Burns and Oates, 1878), 535; Williams, “St. Winifred’s Well,” 46–47.

<sup>51</sup> Philip Metcalfe, *The life, and miracles, of S. Wenefride; virgin, martyr, and abbess; patroness of*

*Wales*. London, 1712, 150, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (CW117954128).

<sup>52</sup> The original Latin states, “divinam ultionem mirum in modum experiuntur.” de Smedt, “Documenta,” 330–331.

<sup>53</sup> The original Latin states, “Praedictus Judex pro certo sequenti januario mortuus est morbo qui vocatur miserere, egerens excrementa sua per os ad tres dies.” C. de Smedt, “De Sancta Wenefreda,” *Acta Sanctorum*, v. 1 (1887): 738.

<sup>54</sup> The original Latin states that he, “usum alterius lateris corporis sui amisit quo tempore sublata sunt ferramenta, atque ita perrexit languere usque ad sequentem februarium, atque sic obit, cum esset vir robustus annorum quadaginta,” C. de Smedt, “De Sancta Wenefreda,” 738.

“Moreover, had I not confin’d my self to the Last Century, I could mention Precedents, more than sufficient, to caution Persons from being too forward in their Contempts of Saint Wenefride and her Well, which is sometimes severely taken notice of by Him, who has said, He that touches you, toucheth the Apple of Mine Eye.”<sup>55</sup>

John Bridgeman’s suppression of Holywell was undoubtedly a setback for St. Winefride’s cult, but it failed to accomplish its purpose. Pilgrimages persisted through this and other attempts to shut it down. Even as Protestant iconoclasm reached its zenith during the Interregnum, between 1649 and 1660, Catholics continued to journey to Holywell, and when the Protestant travel writer Celia Fiennes went to Holywell on a pleasure trip at the end of the seventeenth century, she observed an “abundance of the devout papists on their knees around the well.”<sup>56</sup> An important reason for its survival was the Jesuits’ successful crafting of a narrative in which St. Winefride had the authority to heal and to punish Protestants, even those sent by the king to destroy her well. Equally important was her devotees’ belief that she could, in fact, perform the miracles attributed to her.

### *Conclusion*

The phenomenon of pilgrimage to St. Winefride’s shrine in Holywell throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries presents a challenge to existing historical models of social order in this period. The existing model of two competing sources of social order does not take into account the experiences of Catholic worshipers,

especially in the context of temporary communities that formed around a sacred site such as St. Winefride’s shrine at Holywell. Together, the Jesuits and lay worshipers of Holywell created a third concept of order based on appeal to God’s authority through the intercession of St. Winefride. The documents studied in this article demonstrate how priests and worshipers ascribed to their patroness the authority to impart God’s grace to all social ranks, to punish those who disturbed social harmony, and to defend the faithful from persecution. Yet it should not be overlooked that this narrative is based in genuine belief in St. Winefride to perform miracles. This faith sustained a Catholic community formed around the Holywell pilgrimage that persists in the twenty-first century. This topic warrants more detailed study than historians have yet conducted. The “*Documenta de Sancta Wenefreda*” and other Jesuit writings from this period have much to tell historians about the way Catholic worshipers and the Jesuits understood the relationship between divine and secular authority, their place in society, and appropriate moral behavior.

---

<sup>55</sup> Metcalfe, *The life, and miracles, of S. Wenefride*, 150–151.

<sup>56</sup> Fiennes, *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes*, 158–159.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

- Bridgeman, John. *Dom. Charles I.* vol. cli. n. 13, 1629. In *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, edited by Henry Foley, 534–5. London: Burns and Oates, 1878.
- de Smedt, C. “De Sancta Wenefreda,” *Acta Sanctorum*, v. 1 (1887): 691–758.
- “Documenta de Sancta Wenefreda.” *Analecta Bollandiana* v. 6 (1887): 305–352.
- Fiennes, Celia. *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes, 1685–c.1712*, edited by Christopher Morris. London: Webb & Bower, 1982.
- Fleetwood, William. *The Life of St Wenefrede, together with her litanies; with some historical observations made thereon.* London: Dolphin, 1713.
- Gee, John. *The foot out of the snare: with a detection of sundry late practices and impostures of the priests and Jesuits in England.* London: H. Lownes, 1624. Early English Books Online (STC / 1450:12).
- Gerard, John. *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan.* Translated by Philip Caraman. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956.
- Laud, William. *The history of the troubles and trial of the Most Reverend Father in God and blessed martyr, William Laud.* London: Printed for Ri. Chiswell at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul’s Church-Yard, 1695. Early English Books Online (Wing / 74:08 [v. 1]).
- London Gazette. September 1, 1687–September 5, 1687; Issue 2274. Gale (Z2000708533).
- Metcalf, Philip. *The life, and miracles, of S. Wenefride; virgin, martyr, and abbess; patroness of Wales.* London, 1712. Eighteenth Century Collections Online (CW117954128).
- Pennant, Thomas. *The history of the parishes of Whiteford, and Holywell.* London, 1796. Eighteenth Century Collections Online (CW3300355586).
- Robert, Prior of Shrewsbury. *The admirable life of Saint Wenefride virgin, martyr, abbess.* Translated by John Falconer. Saint-Omer: English College Press, 1635. Early English Books Online (STC / 974:15).
- Scot, Reginald. *The Discoverie of Witchcraft.* In *Sources and Debates in English History, 1485–1714*, Edited by Newton Key and Robert Bucholz. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- “Wiltshire Quarter Sessions, deposition of Thomas Mills, cutler, and his wife Agnes (Spring 1618).” In *Sources and Debates in English History, 1485–1714*, edited by Newton Key and Robert Bucholz. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, 113.

### Secondary Sources

- Brogan, Stephen. *The Royal Touch in Early Modern England: Politics, Medicine and Sin.* Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015.
- Duffy, Eamon. *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

- Foley, Henry. *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus: Historic Facts Illustrative of the Labours and Sufferings of its Members in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. London: Burns and Oates, 1878.
- French, Henry R. "Social Status, Localism and the 'Middle Sorts of People' in England 1620–1750." *Past and Present*, no. 166 (Feb 2000): 66–99.
- Haydon, Colin. "St. Winifred, Bishop Fleetwood and Jacobitism." In *Saints and Sanctity*, edited by Peter Clarke and Tony Claydon, 295–306. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2011.
- Hindle, Steve. "The Enforcement of Social Policy." In *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550–1640*, 146–175. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- "The Reformation of Manners." In *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550–1640*, 176–203. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- Ingram, Martin. "From Reformation to Toleration: Popular Religious Cultures in England, 1540–1690." In *Popular Culture in England, c. 1500–1850*, edited by Tim Harris, 95–123. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.
- "Reformation of Manners in Early Modern England." In *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*, edited by Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox, and Steve Hindle, 47–81. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.
- "'Scolding women cucked or washed': a crisis in gender relations in early modern England?" In *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England*, edited by Jennifer Kermode and Garthine Walker, 48–80. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994.
- Lowry, M. J. C. "Caxton, St. Winifred and the Lady Margaret Beaufort," *The Library*, 6th series, vol. 5, no. 2 (June 1983): 101–117.
- Pritchard, T.W. *St. Winefride, Her Holy Well & the Jesuit Mission, c.650–1930*. Wrexham, UK: Bridge Books, 2009.
- Scully, Robert E. "St. Winifride's Well: The Significance and Survival of a Welsh Catholic Shrine from the Early Middle Ages to the Present Day." In *Saints and Their Cults in the Atlantic World*, edited by Margaret Cormack, 202–228. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007.
- Sutton, Anne F. "Caxton, the Cult of St. Winifred, and Shrewsbury." In *Of Mice and Men: Image, Belief and Regulation in Late Medieval England*, edited by Linda Clark, 109–126. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2005.
- Underdown, David. "The Taming of the Scold: the Enforcement of Patriarchal Authority in Early Modern England." In *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*, edited by A. J. Fletcher and J. Stevenson, 116–136. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Walsham, Alexandra. *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014.
- *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Weil, Rachel. "Politics and Gender in Crisis in David Underdown's 'The Taming of the Scold.'" *History Compass* 11/4 (2013): 381–388.



- Williams, Glanmor. "St. Winifred's Well: Ffynnon Wenfrewi," *Flintshire Historical Society journal*, vol. 36 (2003): 32–51.
- Wrightson, Keith. "Two concepts of order: justices, constables and jurymen in seventeenth-century England." In *An Ungovernable People: The English and their Law in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, edited by John Brewer and John Styles, 20–46. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980.
- Wrightson, Keith and David Levine. *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525–1700*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.