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PASSING THE BOOK: CULTURES OF READING IN THE WINTHROP FAMILY, 1580–1730*

I

A FAMILY TRADITION

> 'Ye Eating teeth of time devours all things[:] a Hogshead of Ancient papers of Value belonging to our family lost at Ipswich, in New-Eng: a barrell full of papers &c. Burnt In a Warehouse at Boston'.
>
> John Winthrop FRS (1681–1747), note on fragment.[1]

The gravest ideological crisis in the early history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Antinomian Controversy of 1636 to 1638, turned on reading. At issue was the handling of

* Given the unusually large number of authors, it should be noted that the authorship of this article was fully collaborative; each of the authors accepts full accountability for what is presented here. Authorship is listed alphabetically by surname. The order does not reflect the contribution of any given author, as all contributed equally.

The authors are most grateful to the custodians of the collections that preserve the Winthrops' books and manuscripts: the New York Society Library, the New York Academy of Medicine Library, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Houghton Library of Harvard University, the Pelletier Library of Allegheny College, the British Library, the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Duke University and the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections of Princeton University Library. We owe special thanks to Erin Schreiner, who first called our attention to the Winthrops' books. She, Stephen Ferguson, Anne Garner, Arlene Shaner and Jane Westenfeld provided indispensable help and guidance.

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[1] A note written on an appropriately tattered scrap of paper by John Winthrop FRS: Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter MHS), Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, box lxii, folder 3. The manuscript reads: 'a Hogshead of'.

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Scripture: how to interpret the sacred text and apply its lessons to the present, but also, more precisely, how to determine who could read and teach it. Though elders and dissenters quibbled over the answers, all agreed on the right method for finding them. Only the Bible — and thus, only reading — could resolve central questions of authority and order. When the colonial leader John Winthrop fought with the radical laywoman Anne Hutchinson over her right to teach, the weapons deployed were deftly chosen biblical passages, honed on the whetstone of a lifetime's reading. Yet Winthrop's arsenal held more than the Bible: he studied and interpreted portents as intensely as Scripture in his eager effort to overturn his opponent's arguments. For Hutchinson, as for others whose fates were determined by the tilt of a Winthrop's judgment, reading could mean the difference between life and death.

Historians of New England have studied this episode in Winthrop's career in depth.[2] They have explicated the political situation in which he and his allies found themselves, and dissected every word that he exchanged with Hutchinson and others. But a new body of evidence now makes it possible to contextualize his thought and actions more precisely than ever before. Large numbers of annotated books that belonged to John's father, Adam, and other members of the Winthrop family survive in libraries across the north-east of the United States. These were among the family's most treasured possessions, carried with them from England to New England and carefully maintained, sometimes with great difficulty. The notes in their margins reveal how the Winthrops responded to a vast array of material, from alchemical recipes to political tracts. Once deciphered and read against other documents, such as letters and diaries, they show that the kind of reading that guided John in the Hutchinson trial, a reading founded on a particular approach to miracles and prodigies, was hardly an aberration. It was an application of one of several types of bookish attention that were communicated and adapted between the limbs of the Winthrop family tree. Whether the text at hand was an ecclesiastical chronology or an account of a

[2] See Lisa M. Gordis, *Opening Scripture: Bible Reading and Interpretive Authority in Puritan New England* (Chicago, 2003), ch. 7. Further literature on the controversy is cited below.

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monstrous birth, the Winthrops knew to look for signs of heavenly will, and they knew the mechanisms by which that will might redound to the profit or condemnation of themselves or others. Such patterns of discernment and assessment, iterated and inflected through successive generations, constitute a set of readerly habits that we seek to recover in the present article.

Our reconstruction does not stop there. We seek to explain the ways in which these reading habits, and others like them, could be passed from generation to generation; how they evolved in the process; and to what extent we can and cannot harmonize them with more thoroughgoing trends that historians have coaxed from the fragmented record of early modern reading practices. The intent is to add a new axis to the history of reading, to point the way towards a 'three-dimensional' enquiry that does more than establish points on a plane — how a given person or set of people read texts — but also plots the curves and correlations between them, to map how modes of reading travelled across time as well as space. It is one thing to characterize a readerly eye, or to compare it, in a relatively static fashion, to others of the same time and place. It is another matter to probe the interplay between readers, to trace the vectors that carried the spores of 'Zeitgeist' and 'tradition' and 'culture' into the practices of a given individual. That demands another step, one that pushes the student of reading into a terrain too seldom charted.

In the case of the Winthrops, the extra stride is made possible by the survival of an evidentiary cache (an ample family collection) particularly well suited for revealing signs of intergenerational interaction between readers. Its careful excavation shows not just how male and female Winthrops read, but how they learned to read, how they obtained their books, and how they lent them to others, annotated them, and made them, through the years, serve their ends. Texts were transformed into layered deposits of historical encounters that allow us to follow how one highly influential family brought European reading practices across the Atlantic — and continued to apply them, generation after generation, to understand the nature and society of the world in which they now moved.[3] The Winthrop books show that reading was in fact a family

[3] Insightful studies and descriptions of comparably erudite libraries from the northern colonies include Edwin Wolf 2nd, *The Library of James Logan of*

(cont. on p. 72)

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affair, shared and taught between husband and wife or father and son; that often family members were the channels along which culturally current methods of textual engagement were communicated to new readers. And they underscore that the history of reading, far from being a strictly cordoned sub-field or a specialized instrument, can and should be coextensive with investigations into wider political, social and intellectual contexts. The Winthrops' readerly habits supported everything from their religious convictions to their judicial deliberations to their political decision-making. Their investigation reminds us that, at some of colonial American history's most unsavoury moments, the stakes of reading could be high indeed.

II

FINDING AND LOSING BOOKS

The building of what would become one of colonial New England's most eminent book collections seems to have begun with Adam Winthrop (1548–1623).[4] Born and raised in Suffolk, Adam attended Magdalene College, Cambridge, worked as an attorney, and became a county magistrate. After his brother moved to Ireland, Adam took charge of the family estate, Groton Manor.[5] There the country gentleman reserved his

(n. 3 cont.)
Philadelphia, 1674–1751 (Philadelphia, 1974); Jon Butler, 'Thomas Teackle's 333 Books: A Great Library on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1697', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., xlix (1992); Hugh Amory, *Bibliography and the Book Trades: Studies in the Print Culture of Early New England*, ed. David D. Hall (Philadelphia, 2005), ch. 6; 'Mather Family Library', <http://www.americanantiquarian.org/matherlib.htm> (accessed 16 May 2018); Mark A. Peterson, '*Theopolis Americana*: The City-State of Boston, the Republic of Letters, and the Protestant International, 1689–1739', in Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault (eds.), *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500–1830* (Cambridge, Mass., 2009); Julius Herbert Tuttle, 'The Libraries of the Mathers', *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, xx (1910). See also Anthony Grafton, 'The Republic of Letters in the American Colonies: Francis Daniel Pastorius Makes a Notebook', *American Historical Review*, cxvii (2012). For the contrasting story of how a European family library served as cultural capital for more than two centuries, see Caroline R. Sherman, 'The Ancestral Library as an Immortal Educator', *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, xxxv (2007).

[4] We have no significant materials related to this culture of reading and collecting in the family before Adam.

[5] The fullest accounts of Adam's life, and useful accounts of his interactions with books, appear in Robert C. Winthrop, *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, 2 vols, 2nd edn

(cont. on p. 73)

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hours of *otium* for collecting and reading, annotating pages in a painstakingly clear and careful italic hand, in a manner he had perhaps learned in his student years at Cambridge. A lawyer by profession, he nevertheless moved in scholarly circles: every year he rode up to Trinity College to audit its finances. His books reveal little about how he obtained them. Unlike his offspring, Adam seems to have been more preoccupied with keeping track of the movements of his books once they were his than with registering how they came to him. In meticulous detail he noted in his diary who had borrowed and returned his books, just as he registered the sums of money he frequently loaned to both friends and relatives. Most probably, Adam benefited from his commitments at Cambridge and the Inner Temple to buy books. He steadily compiled dozens of them on a daunting variety of subjects, ranging from ecclesiastical history to law, from political theory to bibliography, from humanist pedagogy to hermeneutics. These included the usual suspects of Renaissance English scholarship — authors such as William Camden, John Jewel, Thomas Elyot, John Foxe, Thomas Smith and John Bale — as well as a rich assortment of Continental religious treatises and works from Graeco-Roman antiquity. Such learned fare was similar to that collected by better-known contemporaries such as Gabriel Harvey and John Dee.[6] Nor was Adam unique in his enjoyment of cheaply printed works in

(n. 5 cont.)
(Boston, 1869), i; Francis J. Bremer, *John Winthrop: America's Forgotten Founding Father* (Oxford, 2003).

[6] For Harvey's library, see Virginia F. Stern, *Gabriel Harvey: His Life, Marginalia and Library* (Oxford, 1979) (to be used with caution); Kristof Smeyers and Jaap Geraerts, 'Gabriel Harvey: His Library and the AOR Corpus', <https://archaeologyofreading.org/gabriel-harvey-his-library-and-the-aor-corpus> (accessed 16 May 2018). For John Dee's collection, see James Orchard Halliwell, *The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee, and the Catalogue of his Library of Manuscripts: From the Original Manuscripts in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and Trinity College Library, Cambridge* (London, 1842); *John Dee's Library Catalogue*, ed. Julian Roberts and Andrew G. Watson (London, 1990). For Adam Winthrop's sense that his own library and erudition could challenge comparison with those of more celebrated and public scholars, see his copy of William Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent: Conteining the Description, Hystorie, and Customes of that Shyre* (London, 1596), MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lvii. When Lambarde described Simonson's map of Kent, Adam wrote: 'Also John Norden hath made a Map of this shyre' (p. 220). And when Lambarde wrote of 'an auncient Treatise' that 'I my selfe have one exemplar, written out, as I suppose, in the time of King Edwarde the first', Adam commented, 'And I have another' (p. 530).

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English and lurid pamphlets aimed at less sophisticated readers. He owned contemporary items now less familiar, such as *The Triall of Witch-Craft* (1616) by his nephew John Cotta, dozens of almanacs, and more ephemeral publications, including George Wilson's mock-antiquarian pamphlet *The Commendation of Cockes, and Cock-Fighting*.[7] Adam's library thus both substantiates and enriches what we know of early modern book collecting.

The circulation of books as well as letters was subject to the rhythms and contingencies of daily life, but in the case of Adam's descendants it was also strongly embedded in a network of family members that included both sexes and more than one generation. His son John (1588–1649), who in 1630 would become the governor of Massachusetts and in time the family's most famous member, studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, before becoming a lawyer.[8] John Winthrop's interest in collecting began at an early age. Long before he would warn his fellow passengers on the voyage to Boston that their colony would be a 'city on a hill', scrutinized for any trace of impiety, he confessed to his childhood theft of two books in his private religious diary, the 'Experiencia', on which more below.[9] His correspondence with family members is replete with references to books on the move, and shows that the Winthrop women played active roles in the web of bookish exchange. In an affectionate letter to his third wife, Margaret Tyndal, John promised to send her 'a booke of the newes this weeke'.[10] On 3 October 1623, he sent two books to his son, one of which was intended for his aunt Lucy Downing.[11] Female Winthrops, from Adam's wife, Anne, onwards, eagerly requested books in their own

[7] Iohn [John] Cotta, *The Triall of Witch-Craft, Shewing the True and Right Methode of the Discouery, with a Confutation of Erroneous Wayes* (London, 1616), New York Society Library (hereafter NYSL), Win 78; George Wilson, *The Commendation of Cockes, and Cock-Fighting: Wherein Is Shewed, that Cocke-Fighting Was before the Coming of Christ* (London, 1607), MHS, Winthrop Library Pamphlets. The surviving almanacs are also part of the collection of the MHS: see n. 52 below.

[8] For the history of the Winthrop family from the time of John, see Richard Slator Dunn, *Puritans and Yankees: The Winthrop Dynasty of New England, 1630–1717* (Princeton, 1962).

[9] 'John Winthrop's Experiencia, 1616–18', in *Winthrop Papers*, 5 vols. (Boston, 1929–47) (hereafter *WP*), i, 193.

[10] *WP*, ii, 95.

[11] *WP*, i, 288–9.

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correspondence.[12] We cannot precisely identify the contents or even estimate the size of any female Winthrop's personal library, in part because we lack the evidence of annotations. Yet other clues show that the reading of female Winthrops encompassed everything from massive polemical treatises to bibles and shorter devotional works. As we shall see, what we can recover about their books and reading practices, though limited by the nature of their marginalia and the family's patriarchal bent, is extremely relevant to this story of family reading, across generations and the Atlantic, and between men and women.

More than any other source, John Winthrop's correspondence with his son John Jr (1606–76) shows how important the familial setting was for obtaining books. The younger John would follow his father across the Atlantic in 1631 and in time become governor of Connecticut, maintaining an active though not always successful interest in industrial ventures (including blast furnaces and grist mills), and drawing on his alchemical knowledge to provide chemical medicine to midwives throughout the colony.[13] But decades earlier, he was a student who read at Trinity College Dublin, travelled the Mediterranean, and found himself frequently in need of books. Whenever John Jr requested a text (and there were many such requests), his father turned to his family and his network in London. John's go-to book buyer was his brother-in-law Thomas Fones, whose daughter Martha would become John Jr's first wife. Fones worked as an apothecary in London, but also combed the book market to get both Johns the latest editions that they sought. More than once John Sr had to admit to his son that he had been unable to procure a specific book because Fones had been absent from London.[14] In one case, he was unable to acquire an Aristotle 'because your vncle Fones is not at London to buye it, and I know not whither you would have latine or Greeke'.[15]

[12] See, for example, *WP*, i, 29, Anne Winthrop's request for her French Bible; *WP*, i, 346, a letter from Margaret Winthrop to her husband, John Sr, in which she asks him to thank her son for her book; *WP*, ii, 93, a letter in which Margaret Winthrop asks John Sr to buy a psalter for their son since she is unable to procure one herself.

[13] See Walter W. Woodward, *Prospero's America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy, and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606–1676* (Chapel Hill, 2010). John Jr's eldest son, Fitz-John (1637–1707), also served as governor of Connecticut.

[14] *WP*, i, 276: 'I sent you some bookes by J. Nutton, I could not then buye the rest nor such clothe etc: which I would have sent you because your vncle Fones was not then in London, and I have no friend els that I can make bould with'.

[15] *WP*, i, 272.

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Winthrop often accompanied such notes with moralistic and spiritual exhortations. These were not just a concerned father's response to seventeenth-century college life in Dublin. John's letters introduced his son to the importance of books and underscored their capacity to make sense of the world — but also, in some cases, to sow confusion. For instance, when John Sr finally managed to unearth a copy of Vincenzo Cartari's *Imagines Deorum* (1581), a humanistic introduction to pagan mythology which was 'very deare and hard to get', and potentially seductive as well, he urged his son to read it 'with a sober minde and sanctified heart', much in the Puritan spirit for which both men would be remembered.[16] 'I purpose to send you by this bearer suche books as you write for', he wrote to his son on 31 August 1622, after reminding him that 'happinesse lyes not in meat drink clothes and bodyly refreshinges but in the favour of God'.[17]

While the foundations of the Winthrops' collection were laid by members of the family, many books came from other sources. The letters of John Jr, who by 1641 owned 'above a thousand' books, shed light on precisely how one generation of Winthrops succeeded in obtaining such a large quantity of books from all corners of the early modern market.[18] Both before and after he sailed for New England, he was part of a global network of scholars and alchemists who exchanged texts along with their correspondence. As Ronald Wilkinson showed in a pioneering study, John Jr's suppliers included the London merchant Francis Kirby, the alchemist and remonstrant Robert Child, the polymath Samuel Hartlib and John Jr's dearest friend, Edward Howes, a clerk of his uncle Fones and, like the younger Winthrop, a student at the Inner Temple.[19]

[16] *WP*, i, 311.

[17] *WP*, i, 272.

[18] *The Journal of John Winthrop, 1630–1649*, ed. Richard S. Dunn, James Savage and Laetitia Yeandle (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 341.

[19] Ronald Sterne Wilkinson, 'The Alchemical Library of John Winthrop, Jr. (1606–1676) and his Descendants in Colonial America', pts I–III, *Ambix*, xi (1963). Wilkinson offered a catalogue and description of several Winthrop books in part IV of the article: *Ambix*, xiii (1966). On John Jr's relationship with other alchemists with Anglo-American connections, see William R. Newman, *Gehennical Fire: The Lives of George Starkey, an American Alchemist in the Scientific Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994); Donna A. Bilak, 'The Chymical Cleric: John Allin, Puritan Alchemist in England and America (1623–1683)' (Bard Graduate Center Ph.D. thesis, 2013).

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It was Howes who served for decades as John Jr's chief supplier of books, many of which still survive. A year after Winthrop's departure, for instance, Howes extolled the virtues of the works of 'the famous and farre renouned English man of our tymes, Dr. Fludd'. He urged Winthrop to buy a set of Robert Fludd's expensively engraved works, and sent him 'a taste'.[20] John probably took his advice: there is a battered set of Fludd's books in the Winthrop Collection in the New York Society Library, although Winthrop did not annotate them.[21] The notes that Howes left in other books, such as Winthrop's copies of George Ripley's *Compound of Alchymy* and Dudley Digges's *Of the Circumference of the Earth*, attest to the enduring friendship between the two men: they shared a strong interest in the wonders of the world, and they discussed alchemy's hidden meanings in their letters.[22]

Other associates of Winthrop operated in a similar vein. When, for instance, Robert Child was back in England, John Jr requested that he acquire specific alchemical books. Winthrop's chemical collaborator (Child had, inter alia, invested a significant amount of money in John Jr's silver-mining projects) responded that he had been unable to track down many of the requested works. Instead he offered to send some copies from his own library in addition to a 'Catalogue of my Chymicall bookes' for Winthrop to peruse until Child returned to New England.[23] Child's copy of

[20] Katherine Shrieves, 'Mapping the Hieroglyphic Self: Spiritual Geometry in the Letters of John Winthrop, Jr, and Edward Howes (1627–1640)', *Renaissance Studies*, xxv (2011), 279 n. 9.

[21] The connection between the Howes correspondence and the Fludd books currently held by the NYSL is noted by Wilkinson, 'Alchemical Library of John Winthrop, Jr (1606–1676) and his Descendants in Colonial America', pts I–III, 37. The Fludd items in the NYSL collection are Win 102, 102a–b, 103, 167. As we shall see, John Jr tended not to annotate the text of his alchemical books.

[22] George Ripley, *The Compound of Alchymy: or, The Ancient Hidden Art of Archemie. Conteining the Right & Perfectest Meanes to Make the Philosophers Stone, Aurum Potabile, with Other Excellent Experiments. Divided into Twelue Gates*, ed. Raph Rabbards (London, 1591), Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, RS5 R48 591; Dudley Digges, *Of the Circúmference of the Earth: or, A Treatise of the Northeast Passage* (London, 1612), MHS, Winthrop Library. For an alchemical reading of their correspondence, see David R. Como, *Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil-War England* (Stanford, 2004); Neil Kamil, *Fortress of the Soul: Violence, Metaphysics, and Material Life in the Huguenots' New World, 1517–1751* (Baltimore, 2005); Shrieves, 'Mapping the Hieroglyphic Self'.

[23] *WP*, iv, 333. See William Jerome Wilson, 'Robert Child's Chemical Book List of 1641', *Journal of Chemical Education*, xx, 3 (1943). For Child more generally, see

(cont. on p. 78)

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Alexander von Suchten's *Antimonii Mysteria Gemina*, bearing the note 'Rob Child his book, 1636', was still in Winthrop hands in the nineteenth century.[24]

The Winthrops themselves also supplied books, even across oceans and borders. On more than one occasion, the Puritan minister Roger Williams, exiled to Rhode Island, asked John Jr for specific texts, hoping they were part of the latter's collection.[25] When Robert Child offered John Jr the aforementioned list of books, he hoped for one in return, so that he might 'know what excellent bookes are in [Winthrop's] hands'.[26] Similarly, on 16 March 1660, Samuel Hartlib sent John Jr a box with 'a great number of books and Mss. which perhaps will not be unwellcome, some of them treating of matters of the highest importance'. He also requested a list of Winthrop's books and said that he would send a catalogue of new publications: according to Hartlib, his 'friends and correspondents in severall countryes' would 'lett [him] know the best and most choycest of them' and even procure for Winthrop those harder to come by. In his response, Winthrop confirmed the arrival of these 'gifts more precious than gold'.[27] This was not just a metaphor. Books came in barrels and boxes and were consumed, along with firkins of butter, barrels of cloth and unknown quantities of pepper.[28] Such material and epistolary exchanges bespeak the transatlantic ties of Winthrop's network and reveal the friendships that sustained it over time. Books and papers, printed and manuscript publications, served these scholars'

(n. 23 cont.)
George Lyman Kittredge, *Doctor Robert Child, the Remonstrant* (Cambridge, Mass., 1919). On the publication of 'chymical books' in seventeenth-century England, see Lauren Kassell, 'Secrets Revealed: Alchemical Books in Early-Modern England', *History of Science*, xlix (2011).

[24] Alexander von Suchten, *Antimonii Mysteria Gemina: das ist, Von den grossen Geheimnussen des Antimonij in zweene Tractat abgetheilet. Derer einer die Artzeneyen zu anfallenden menschlichen Kranckheiten offenbahret der Ander aber wie die Metallen erhöhet und in Verbesserung uberzetzet werden. Mit mancherley künstlichen und philosophischen beyderseits derselbigen Bereitungen exempelweise illustrirt und zu Vindicirung seines Lobs und Ruhms publiciret worden* (Leipzig, 1604), NYSL, Win 240, title page.

[25] *Letters of Roger Williams, 1632–1682*, ed. John Russell Bartlett (Providence, 1874), 167–8, 205; compare p. 192.

[26] *WP*, iv, 333.

[27] G. H. Turnbull, 'Some Correspondence of John Winthrop, Jr., and Samuel Hartlib', *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3rd ser., lxxii (Oct. 1957–Dec. 1960), 41, 50.

[28] *WP*, ii, 94; Woodward, *Prospero's America*, [37].

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intellectual pursuits.[29] John Winthrop Sr even circulated his own works as scribal publications.[30]

Well into the eighteenth century, the Winthrops continued to gather books. The younger of John's two sons, Wait Still Winthrop (1642–1717), studied at Harvard, led the Massachusetts militia in King Philip's War, and as chief judge of the Massachusetts superior court was intimately involved in the infamous witch trials at Salem. He too practised chemical medicine. And he enlarged the book collection, often marking his books with telltale signatures incorporating a symbol also favoured by his father: the alchemical *monas hieroglyphica* devised by the English natural philosopher John Dee (see Plate 1). This marking was also deployed by Wait's son John (1681–1747), who graduated from Harvard in 1700, becoming the first in the family to finish a degree (in 1734 he would be elected a fellow of the Royal Society).[31] In addition, the portions of the Winthrop collection that remain show traces of extended family linked to Wait. These included his brother-in-law Joseph Browne, and John Richards, the New England politician involved in the Salem witch trials, who was married to Wait's sister Anne.[32] A

[29] David D. Hall, *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-Making in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Philadelphia, 2008); Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993).

[30] Hall, *Ways of Writing*, 29–30.

[31] H. G. Lyons, 'John Winthrop (Junior), F.R.S.: Governor of Connecticut 1660 to 1676', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, iii (1941), 115. Winthrops would continue to collect books into the nineteenth century. John Winthrop (1714–79), the Hollis professor of mathematics and astronomy at Harvard, and his wife, Hannah, kept a record of their lives in multiple almanacs, now available in digital form as part of the Colonial North America project at Harvard University: <http://colonialnorthamerican.library.harvard.edu> (accessed 16 May 2018). James Winthrop (1752–1821) left his large library to Allegheny College, Meadville, Pennsylvania: Edwin Wolf 2nd, 'Observations on the Winthrop, Bentley, Thomas and "Ex Dono" Collections of the Original Library of Allegheny Collection, 1819–23', <https://sites.allegheny.edu/lits/library/special-collections/original-library-of-allegheny-college/catalogue-pages-and-observations> (accessed 16 May 2018).

[32] At least four books in the NYSL once belonged to Browne: Win 110, Win 230, Win 263 and Win 269. The MHS has at least one of his books: Giulio Cesare Vanini, *Amphitheatrum Aeternae Providentiae Divino-Magicum: Christiano-Physicum, nec non Astrologo-Catholicum. Aduersus Veteres Philosophos, Atheos, Epicureos, Peripateticos, & Stoicos* (Lyon, 1615), Winthrop Library. The NYSL has one of Richards's books: Samuel Annesley, *The Morning-Exercise at Cripple-Gate: or, Several Cases of Conscience Practically Resolved, by Sundry Ministers* (London, 1661), Win 14. Henry Wotton, *Reliquiae Wottonianae: or, A Collection of Lives, Letters, Poems. With Characters of Sundry Personages, and Other Incomparable Pieces of Language and Art* (London, 1651), MHS, Winthrop Library, was also his, and is signed by John Richards.

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substantial number of books, many richly annotated, and many on alchemical topics, came from the library of the Reverend Samuel Lee to bolster the collection towards the turn of the eighteenth century. When Lee's collection was put up for auction in Boston by the bookseller Duncan Cambell in 1693, its sales catalogue became the first booklist to be printed in colonial New England.[33]

Buying books in Boston was not always so convenient. Katherine Grandjean has shown that English immigrants to the colonies had to adjust to a completely new system of communication, with different expectations and fewer set systems for the circulation of news. Couriers, for instance, might be Native American, or be paid in trade goods rather than shillings.[34] But difficulties in communicating and acquiring books were not unique to New England. Correspondents in the Winthrop family all knew the frustrations and contingencies of sending letters, books and other goods over long distances — whether from Groton Manor to Trinity College Dublin, or from St Paul's, London, to Connecticut. In fact, the sea that bore the Winthrops to New England and the rivers that transported their news and books proved as treacherous as the routes back home in England. In 1642 privateers took one of John Jr's chests off the coast of the Netherlands, 'conteyning in it apparell, books, & other n[i]c[et]ies appertaining soly to him'.[35] Seventeen years later John Jr, writing to Samuel Hartlib, mourned the loss of a 'manuscript of Sir Thomas Norton De motu perpetuo; which was of his owne hand writing . . . it was in Latine, and had beene formerly in the possession of famous Dr. Dee'.[36] Books could be lost as easily as they were acquired.

[33] *The Library of the Late Reverend and Learned Mr. Samuel Lee: Containing a Choice Variety of Books upon All Subjects, Particularly Commentaries on the Bible, Bodies of Divinity, the Works as Well of the Ancient, as of the Modern Divines, Treatises on the Mathemeticks, in All Parts. History, Antiquities; Natural Philosophy, Physick, and Chymistry; with Grammar and School-Books. With Many More Choice Books Not Mentioned in This Catalogue* (Boston, 1693).

[34] Katherine Grandjean, *American Passage: The Communications Frontier in Early New England* (Cambridge, Mass., 2015), ch. 2; on pay for Native Americans, see pp. 57–8.

[35] Sir William Boswell to the Chevalier de Vic, 1 Nov. 1642, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 5th ser., i, 323.

[36] John Winthrop Jr to Samuel Hartlib, Hartford, 16 Dec. 1659, in Turnbull, 'Some Correspondence of John Winthrop, Jr., and Samuel Hartlib', 37.

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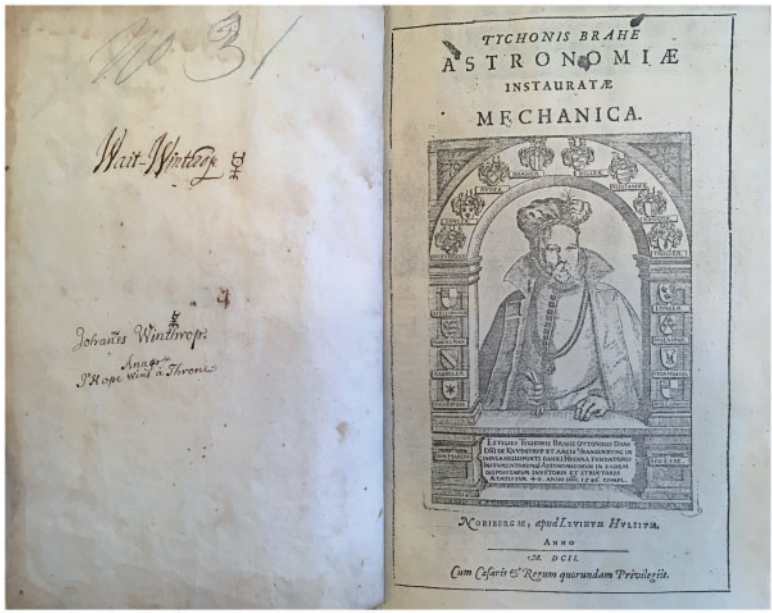

1. Flyleaf signed by Wait Still Winthrop and John Winthrop FRS. Tycho Brahe, *Astronomiae Instauratae Mechanica* (Nuremberg, 1602). New York Society Library, Win 45. The title page of this copy is a facsimile. John FRS has included an anagram based upon his name: 'I hope wins a throne'.
Courtesy of the New York Society Library.

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III

LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE

The secondary literature on the Winthrops offers few details about how the male members of the family developed their skills as readers. We know that they learned their Latin in what was becoming the normal way for gentry sons. Adam Winthrop attended John Dawes's private grammar school at Ipswich, and in 1567 matriculated at Magdalene College, Cambridge, as a fellow-commoner.[37] His son John was tutored by John Chaplin and may have attended the new grammar school at Bury St Edmunds, while his grandson John Jr did attend this school before leaving for Dublin and later studying law at the Inner Temple.

One book survives from this very early period: the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives' *De Ratione Dicendi*.[38] This book was given to Adam by Henry Foljambe, who wrote, on the verso of the flyleaf, 'Adam Winthrop is the owner of this book, passed on to him by Henry Foljambe, a man whose means are as slender as his affection is great'.[39] Winthrop responded by entering his own name, *Ad: Wintropus Grotonensis*, on the title page in elegant italic script. Multiplying signatures and other marks of ownership (in one extreme case, almost fifty of them in a single work) was a period style. Owners demonstrated their literacy and penmanship even as they turned books into extensions of themselves.[40] Adam and his progeny followed this custom by entering distinctive claims of possession in their books, sometimes on behalf of others. In Adam's copy of Vives, we seem to catch him in the act, learning to assert his ownership with the requisite elegance of form.

Even more important for Adam were the entries made by a previous owner of this book, Daniel Withipoll (see Plate 2). A member of a newly rich family in Ipswich, Withipoll signed and dated his Vives in 1560, well before it passed down to the schoolboy Adam. The Withipoll family took an interest in

[37] The details are established by Bremer, *John Winthrop*, 42–5.

[38] Juan Luis Vives, *De Ratione Dicendi Libri Tres: De Consultatione* (Louvain, 1533), Allegheny College, Pelletier Library, 808 V837 d.

[39] *Ibid.*, front flyleaf verso: 'Adamus Wintropus est huius libri possessor ex dimissione Henrici Foliambi tenuis facultatis amplissimae autem voluntatis viri'.

[40] Jason Scott-Warren, 'Reading Graffiti in the Early Modern Book', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, lxxiii (2010).

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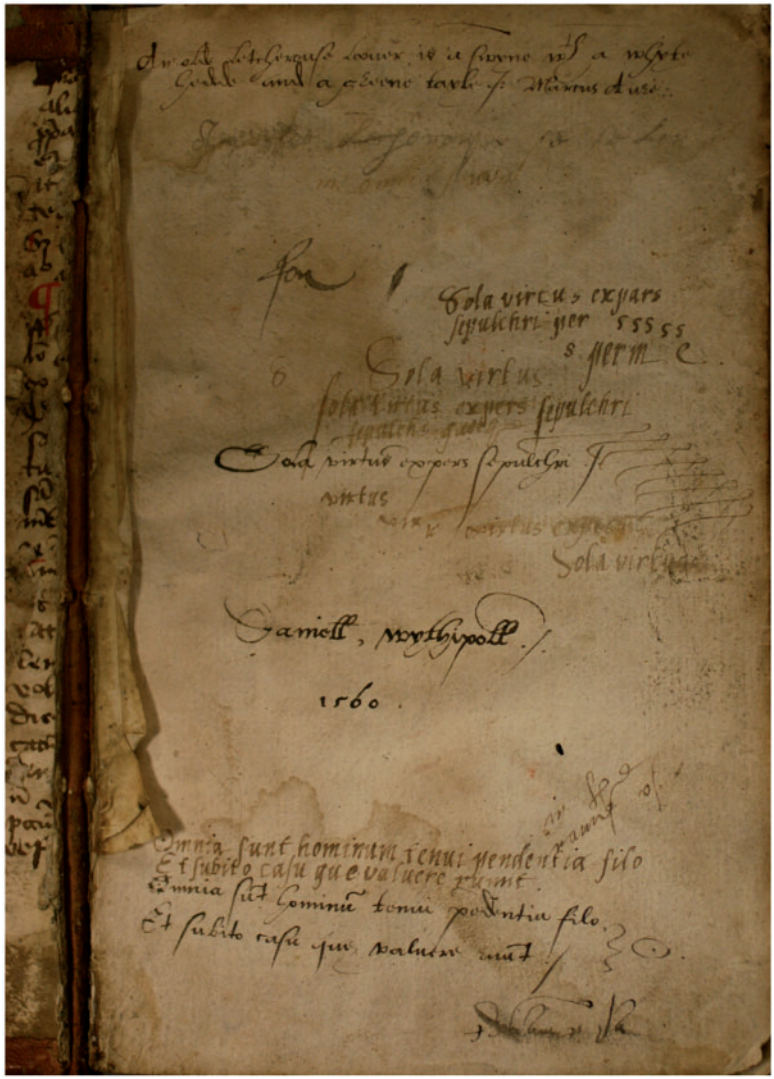

2. Flyleaf with notes by Daniel Withipoll and Adam Winthrop. Juan Luis Vives, *De Ratione Dicendi Libri Tres* (Louvain, 1533). Allegheny College, Pelletier Library, 808 V837 d. Courtesy of Pelletier Library, Allegheny College.

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adages, and their interest proved contagious.[41] Daniel loved classical mottoes and maxims. In the middle of the flyleaf he wrote, in Latin, 'Only virtue escapes the tomb'.[42] Someone, probably Adam, copied this out a number of times in different forms, with variations in spelling and script that suggest pen tests. Adam also entered on the title page, in what became his characteristic italic hand, a very similar sentiment: 'Virtue lives on after funerals'.[43] At the bottom of the flyleaf Daniel wrote, and Adam copied, a distich from Ovid:

> All that belongs to men hangs by a fine thread,
> And sudden disaster can destroy treasures.[44]

The young Adam seems to have been fascinated by Daniel's annotations, and to have emulated them as systematically as he could. Inscribing adages and quotations on flyleaves and title pages, and playing with their wording as he did so, became two of his characteristic forms of annotation. Other readers sometimes responded to his challenges. On the front paste-down of his copy of a massive book by the English bishop and controversialist John Jewel, Adam wrote, 'To the victor belong the spoils (*Vincenti dabitur*). Adam Winthrop'. A later owner, Thomas Shepard, crossed out Adam's name and did his best to improve on his inscription, writing, 'Read! Read! Something will stick'.[45]

Apparently, Adam passed his tastes on to his family. His grandsons John Winthrop Jr and Forth Winthrop also enjoyed entering mottoes in their books. On the flyleaf of a mathematical text, John Jr and a friend, Richard Saltonstall,

[41] Edmund Withipoll (d. 1582), who amused himself by waging war with the citizens of Ipswich, chose a Latin motto, which was inscribed on his tombstone: *mortui sine hoste* ('We are dead without an enemy'). This Latin tag was, as Diarmaid MacCulloch remarks, 'either an extraordinary piece of self-deception or a wry acknowledgement of the fact that his enemies in the town were not one but many': Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County, 1500–1600* (Oxford, 1986), 325.

[42] Vives, *De Ratione Dicendi*, flyleaf: 'Sola virtus expers sepulchri'.

[43] *Ibid.*, title page: 'Virtus post funera vivit'.

[44] *Ibid.*, flyleaf: 'Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo | Et subito casu quae valuere ruunt' (Ovid, *Ex Ponto* 4. 3. 35–6). Note the similar sentiment that Daniel entered on the title page of the Vives: 'Nullum certum portum petenti | Nullus suus est ventus'.

[45] Iohn Iewel [John Jewel], *A Defense of the Apologie of the Churche of Englande: Conteininge an Answeare to a Certaine Booke Lately Set Foorthe by M. Hardinge, and Entituled, A Confutation of &c.* (London, 1570), Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections, Oversize, (Exov) 5621.499.41 1570, front paste-down: 'Lege! lege! aliquid haerebit'.

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constructed a dialogue of competing maxims (see Plate 3). Saltonstall began,

> It is not because these things are hard that we do not try them,
> But because we do not try them, they are hard.[46]

John Jr riposted:

> It is not because these things are hard that they are beautiful
> But because they are beautiful, they are hard.[47]

These annotations capture a conversation that collapsed time and distance, testifying not only to the existence of relationships but also to the formalities through which such relationships were expressed: affection and erudite one-upmanship encapsulated within witty, tailored aphorisms.

These techniques were learned by emulation and example. Remarkably, John Jr seems to have been trained by his grandfather Adam. A copy of Allestree's almanac for 1620 includes a long inscription on its title page, in Latin and English (see Plate 4):

> John Winthrop Junior | is the owner of this book. | I am called John by name, my family name is Winthrop: I whom this book calls its owner.[48]
> Though that ye Sun doth shine most bright,
> Yet dooth the Moone, rule al the night.
> The Starres also their course doe keepe.

[46] Richard Norwood, *Trigonometrie: or, The Doctrine of Triangles, Divided into Two Bookes, the First Shewing the Mensuration of Right Lined Triangles; the Second of Sphericall, with Grounds and Demonstrations Thereof. Both Performed by That Late and Excellent Invention of Logarithmes, after a More Easie and Compendious Manner, than Hath Beene Formerly Taught* (London, 1631), NYSL, Win 179, flyleaf. Saltonstall first wrote, 'Adictissimus tui: Richardus Saltonstall' ('Richard Saltonstall, your most loving friend'), then the distich: 'Non quia difficilia, non aggredimur | Sed quia non aggredimur, difficilia'. Here Saltonstall was adapting Seneca, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* 104. 26: 'Non quia difficilia sunt, non audemus | Sed quia non audemus, difficilia sunt'.

[47] *Ibid.*: 'Non quia difficilia sunt pulchra | Sed quia pulchra difficilia'. John Jr may have been alluding to Erasmus' *Adagium* 1012, 'Difficilia quae pulchra'. He also signed his name and entered the favoured family symbol, John Dee's hieroglyphic *monas*. Forth Winthrop's copy of Seneca, *Flores: Ex Operibus Illius Singulari Iudicio Selecti* (Geneva, 1613), NYSL, Win 229, bears on its flyleaves a number of his signatures, each spelled differently, and adages, including 'Regina virtutum Justitia' ('Justice is the queen of the virtues'), shortened from Cicero, *De Officiis* 3. 28.

[48] Richard Allestree, *A New Almanack, or Annuall Calender, with a Compendious Prognostication thereunto Appending, Seruing for this Yeare of Our Lord 1620: Being Bissextile or Leape Year. Calculated and Properly Referred, to the Longitude and Sublimitie of the Pole Articke of the Famous Towne of Derby, & May Serue Generally, for the Most Part of Great Britaine* ([London], 1620), MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lxi, verso of title page: 'John Winthrop junior, est huius libri possessor. Nomine Johannes dictus, cognomine Wintrop sum: possessorem quem vocat iste liber'.

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When Men are laide, and fast doe sleepe.
But god alone, dooth rule them all,
And by his woorde they rise and fall.[49]

The rest of the almanac is full of notes recording the everyday life of the Winthrop family in Groton: visits, sermons, deaths, swarms of bees.[50] Such entries reflected common methods for annotating almanacs, so typical, in fact, that they could even be satirized in printed mock almanacs.[51]

What makes this example remarkable is the authorship of the notes. The poem is signed A.W.G. — Adam Winthrop of Groton. And both the poem and the notes in the text are written in his characteristic elegant italic hand. It seems clear that he was teaching John Jr why it mattered to keep a diary, and how to use an almanac as the armature for doing so. Henry Foljambe had named Adam as the possessor of a text by Vives. Adam did the same for his grandson.

Adam was himself practised in such techniques. Like many other men and women in early modern England, he kept elaborate records of his daily life, in a diary and in almanacs.[52] He transformed one almanac into a record of his entire life. Next to its calendar dates, he entered not the events of any particular year, but the most important things that had happened on those dates during his lifetime: from his own birth and marriage, to the deaths of Sir Philip Sidney, the earl of Leicester, Sir Edward Lewkenor and Elizabeth I, and the accession of James I.[53]

[49] *Ibid*. Adam Winthrop's preparation of this almanac for his grandson is an unusual case, although Adam Smyth notes that Sarah Sale's annotated almanacs responded to those of her deceased husband: see Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2010), 51.

[50] Allestree, *New Almanack, or Annuall Calender, with a Compendious Prognostication thereunto Appending, Seruing for this Yeare of Our Lord 1620*, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lxi; the entries are printed in *WP*, i, 243–7.

[51] Smyth notes several examples of these: *Autobiography in Early Modern England*, 21.

[52] Adam's diary is in the British Library, London (hereafter BL), Add. MS 37419, printed in *WP*, i, 39–145. The almanacs are in the MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vols. lx–lxiii, lxiii(a). For more on almanacs and autobiographical writings in early modern England, see Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England*. Smyth notes that approximately one out of seven almanacs he has seen has 'sustained handwritten additions' (p. 20) and shows that women and men of various social orders used them to document and shape their life stories.

[53] Edward Pond, *A New Almanacke and Prognostication for the Yeare of the Nativitie of Our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, M DC.III: Being the Third after Leape Yeare. Calculated and Rectified for the Latitude and Meridian of the Honorable Citie of London* (London, 1603), MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lxiii(a).

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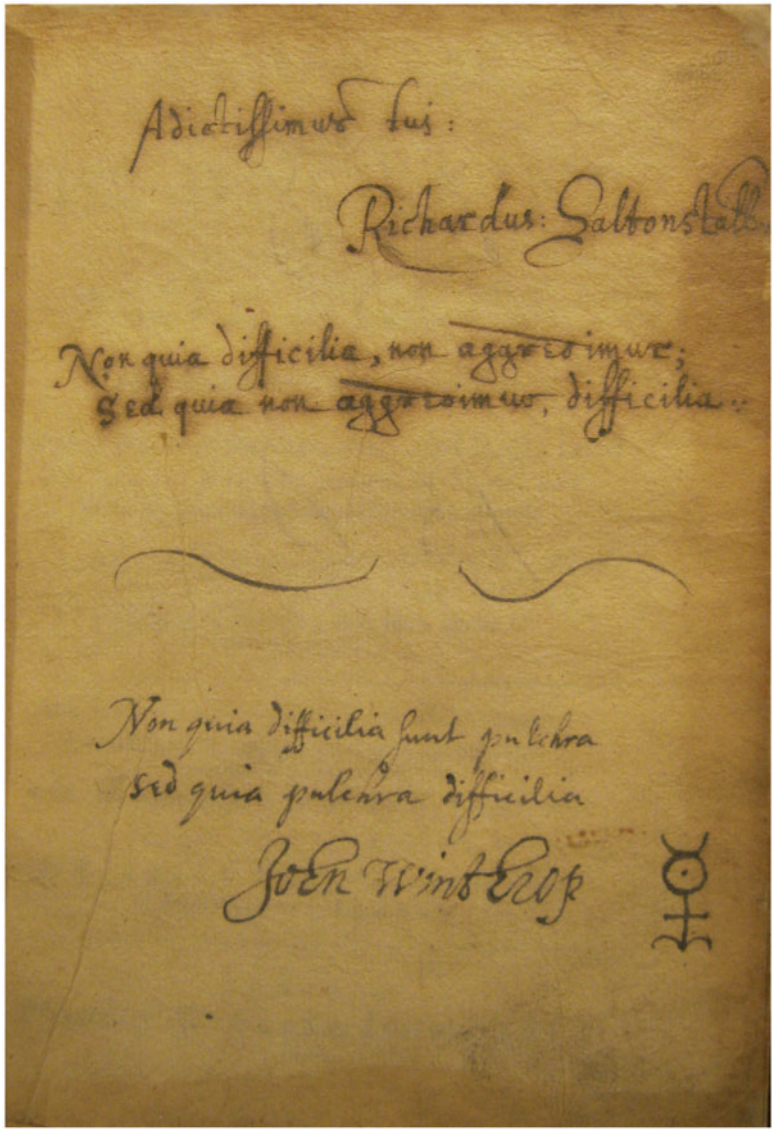

3. Flyleaf with notes by Richard Saltonstall and John Winthrop Jr. Richard Norwood, *Trigonometrie* (London, 1631). New York Society Library, Win 179. Courtesy of the New York Society Library.

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In connecting great events to calendar dates, Adam followed a well-established tradition. The Lutheran Paul Eber's *Calendarium Historicum* (1550) replaced Catholic sacred time, defined by saints' days, with a Protestant version. Eber identified the biblical and historical events that had fallen on each day, and invited readers to insert their own doings below them, an invitation also offered by Reformed calendar-makers.[54] In starting a new almanac for John Jr, Adam pointed his grandson to the same tradition.

IV

MODELS FOR ANNOTATION

That the Winthrop books speak to more than the reading practices of a single family becomes obvious as soon as we reverse our glass and look to other models of reading and collecting available to the Winthrops. Perhaps the best known of all Renaissance annotators is John Dee, who crammed the margins of his books with learned notes, and transformed entries in printed ephemerides into a personal record: the so-called 'Diary'. Yet the Winthrops' reading practices remind us that many of the methods now associated with more famous early modern readers were neither isolated nor unique.[55] Adam's habits as an annotator often resemble those of more celebrated Cambridge men, such as Dee and Gabriel Harvey, and he may have adopted some of his practices while at university. His example suggests that the methods of these

[54] On Eber, see Else Mathilde Saleski, 'Historical Calendars and an Annotated Specimen: A Study of Conrad Pfister's Manuscript Notes in his Copy of the *Calendarium Historicum* of Paul Eber' (Cornell University Ph.D. thesis, 1914); Daniel Gehrt and Volker Leppin (eds.), *Paul Eber (1511–1569): Humanist und Theologe der zweiten Generation der Wittenberger Reformation* (Leipzig, 2014). For the long-term tradition of which this was a branch, see A. T. Grafton and N. M. Swerdlow, 'Calendar Dates and Ominous Days in Ancient Historiography', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, li (1988). For the immediate context, see Max Engammare, *L'Ordre du temps: l'invention de la ponctualité au XVIe siècle* (Geneva, 2004), trans. Karin Maag as *On Time, Punctuality, and Discipline in Early Modern Calvinism* (Cambridge, 2010).

[55] See especially William H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst, 1995); Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, '"Studied for Action": How Gabriel Harvey Read his Livy', *Past and Present*, no. 129 (Nov. 1990); Anthony Grafton and Joanna Weinberg, *'I Have Always Loved the Holy Tongue': Isaac Casaubon, the Jews, and a Forgotten Chapter in Renaissance Scholarship* (Cambridge, Mass., 2011).

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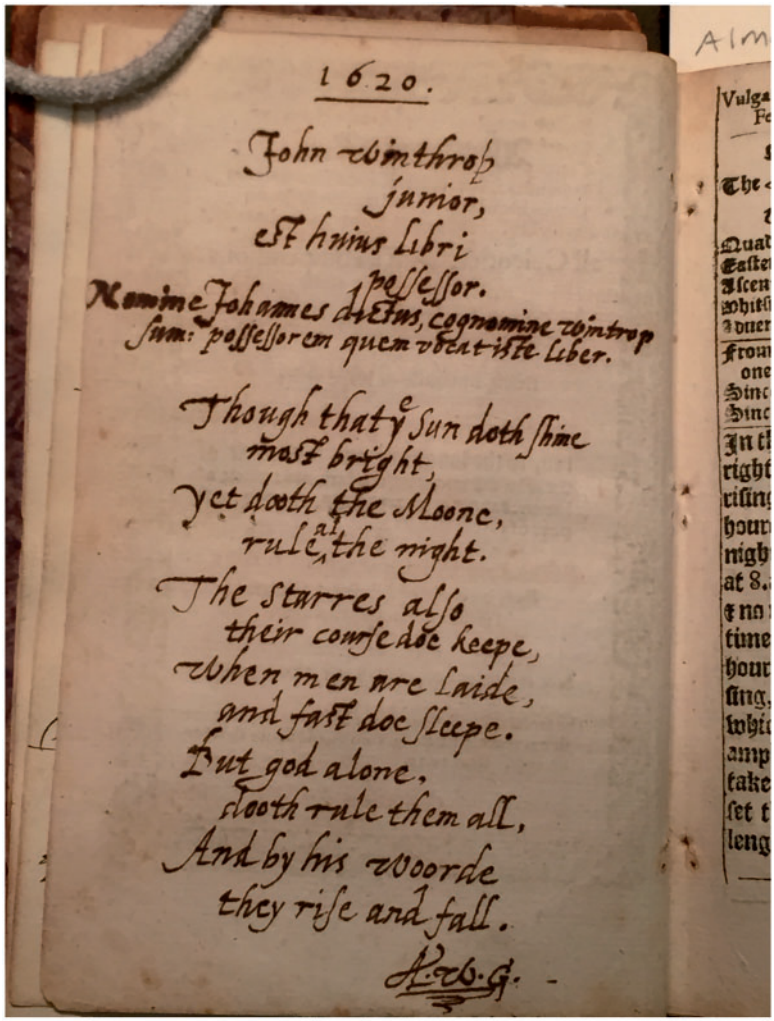

4. Title page verso with notes by Adam Winthrop, written on behalf of John Winthrop Jr. Richard Allestree, *A New Almanack, or Annuall Calender . . . for this Yeare of Our Lord 1620* ([London], 1620). Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lxi. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

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prodigious annotators enjoyed wider diffusion outside the unambiguously learned spaces of universities and courts. There are perhaps countless Adam Winthrops waiting to be uncovered in early modern Europe who remain anonymous or obscure.

Their methods arose in part from a shared concern with preservation. Pedagogues and scholars agreed that annotation, in margins or commonplace books, was the surest way to preserve one's reading of a text.[56] But annotation also preserved more complex forms of memory: it promised a means of mastering a textual tradition before it slipped away. The connection between systematic collecting and the concept of oblivion proved especially powerful in England in the middle decades of the sixteenth century. Fear of irreparable textual loss motivated Dee's own frenetic efforts as a collector. In 1556 he wrote to Queen Mary with a proposal for the erection of a national library: 'the whole stock and store thereof [of books, which Dee earlier referred to as 'jewels'] is drawing nigh to utter destruction and extinction . . . many a famous and excellent author's book is rent, burnt, or suffered to rot and decay'.[57] By collecting manuscripts and by establishing lists of unpublished sources, Dee sought to reassemble the scattered remnants of monastic culture and to gain control over the newer products of humanists. So did others, such as the Carmelite-turned-Protestant John Bale, who went into exile in Switzerland during Mary's restoration of Catholicism, and the Swiss scholar Conrad Gessner, whom he met there. These men compiled bio-bibliographical works of a new kind. Bale had already published one such reference work, his *Illustrium Maioris Britannie Scriptorum . . . Summariu[m]*, in 1548, but it was in Basel that he assembled his much-expanded *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Brytannie . . . Catalogus* (1557–9).[58] Gessner's *Bibliotheca Universalis*, first printed at Zurich in 1545, proclaimed itself a catalogue of every book ever written in Latin, Greek or Hebrew.

[56] Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven, 2010), ch. 2.

[57] *John Dee's Library Catalogue*, ed. Roberts and Watson, 194–5 (appendix 3).

[58] John Bale, *Illustrium Maioris Britanni[a]e Scriptorum: hoc est, Angliae, Cambriae, ac Scotiae Summariu[m], in quasdam Centurias Diuisum, cum Diuersitate Doctrinaru[m] atq[ue] Annoru[m] Recta Supputatione per Omnes Aetates a Iapheto Sanctissimi Noah Filio, ad Annum Domini M.D.XLVII* (Ipswich, 1548); John Bale, *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Brytanni[a]e, quam nunc Angliam et Scotiam Vocant, Catalogus* (Basel, 1557–9).

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Such catalogues, based on late antique and medieval precedents but greatly expanded in scope, were probably on Adam's shelves and often in his hands.[59]

John Bale was one compiler whom Adam read with particular attention. He used Bale to identify the authorship and other details of a text's composition, information which he then scribbled on the title page or flyleaf of the book in question. Thus, on the title page of *The Complaint of Roderyck Mors*, a pseudonymous polemic dating from the early 1540s, Adam noted that Bale had identified the true author as one Henry Brinklow, and he added the dates when, according to Bale, Brinklow had flourished.[60] At the end of the table of contents to Sir Thomas Elyot's *Image of Governance* (1541), Adam again turned to the trusty 'Mr. Bale', adding a neat text-box that contained an even wider range of biographical information.[61] On other occasions, he fished such details from his own capacious memory.[62]

[59] See especially Blair, *Too Much to Know*; Frederic Nolan Clark, 'Dividing Time: The Making of Historical Periodization in Early Modern Europe' (Princeton University Ph.D. thesis, 2014); Urs B. Leu, *Conrad Gessner (1516–1565): Universalgelehrter und Naturforscher der Renaissance* (Zurich, 2016); Paul Nelles, 'Reading and Memory in the Universal Library: Conrad Gessner and the Renaissance Book', in Donald Beecher and Grant Williams (eds.), *Ars Reminiscendi: Mind and Memory in Renaissance Culture* (Toronto, 2009).

[60] Henry Brinkelow [Brinklow], *The Complaint of Roderyck Mors, sometime a Gray Fryre, unto the Parliamenthouse of England his Naturall Countrye: For the Redresse of Certeyne Wicked Lawes, Euill Customes & Cruell Decrees* (London, [1560?]), NYSL, Win 169, title page: 'M^{r}. Bale maketh mention of th'author of this booke in the ende of his Centuries. claruisse ait anno domini 1540. varia condens' ['He says that he flourished in the year of the Lord 1540'].

[61] Note in T[homas] Eliot [Elyot], *The Image of Governance Compiled of the Actes and Sentences Notable, of the Emperour Alexander Seuerus: Late Translated out of Greke into Englyshe by Syr Thomas Eliot, Knight, in the Fauour of Nobylitie* (London, 1541), NYSL, Win 136, sig. b4^{r}: 'Sir Thomas Eliott Knight was the sunne of Sir Rich: Eliott Knight one of the Justices of ye common plees anno 12 H.8. [that is, in the twelfth year of the reign of Henry VIII] and was borne in Suffolke as M^{r}. Bale reporteth: he died at Carleton in Cambridshire the 25 day of Marche anno 1546 and in 37 yere of ye reign of Kinge Henry the eight. and lyeth buried in the Churche of Carleton aforesaide. Ex cen: 8. D. Balaei'.

[62] For instance, in his copy of Rodolph Gualter [Rudolf Gwalther], *Certaine Godlie Homelies or Sermons upon the Prophets Abdias and Ionas: Containing a Most Fruitefull Exposition of the Same*, trans. Robert Norton (London, 1573), NYSL, Win 122, after the dedicatory epistle written by the English cleric John Walker, Adam recorded that Walker was involved in the events leading up to the execution in 1581 of the Jesuit Edmund Campion: 'Dr Walker was Archdeacon of Essex in the reigne of Q. Eliz. & was one of them that disputed with Campion ye Jesuite, in the Tower of London' (sig. [a iv]^{v}). The conclusion to Walker's preface simply read, 'From Laighton'. Ever obsessive

(cont. on p. 92)

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Adam also used the techniques of writers like Bale and Gessner as models for his own bibliographic annotations. Here he followed in the footsteps of humanist luminaries who drew upon older methods to expound new practices of textual interpretation and hermeneutics. Scholars as diverse as Erasmus, Philipp Melanchthon and Flacius Illyricus advocated a directed form of reading that entailed discerning the so-called *scopus*, or goal, of a given text, and then using it to explicate individual passages or constituent elements.[63] Many Winthrop books indicate how bio-bibliography could serve precisely this purpose, bringing the overall aim or direction of a work into focus. To Adam Winthrop, bibliography itself functioned as a hermeneutic key that could help to unify a motley collection. Not only could it show a reader how to approach a book, but it also taught how one book might speak to another.

We can see how Adam wielded this key in his notes to the *Chronicon Carionis*, another text with a complex history. The Lutheran reformer Philipp Melanchthon had transformed a dry outline of history into one of the bulwarks of the new Protestant historiography, using it to expound such Protestant tropes as the Four Monarchies and the corruption of the medieval Church. He had compiled this universal history by reworking a chronicle originally written by the German astrologer Johannes Carion. Following Melanchthon's death, the chronicle was continued by another erudite astrologer, Melanchthon's son-in-law Caspar Peucer. Adam owned at least two copies of this work: a version of the original chronicle, and an augmented edition that included a continuation from the year 1532.[64]

(n. 62 cont.)
about such details, Adam added that Laighton was in Essex, and that Walker had written the letter in 1573.

[63] The literature on early modern hermeneutics, especially in sixteenth-century Protestant contexts, is extensive: see, for instance, Kathy Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and its Humanist Reception* (New Haven, 1997).

[64] Johannes Carion, Philipp Melanchthon and Kaspar [Caspar] Peucer, *Chronicon Carionis Expositum et Auctum Multis et Veteribus et Recentibus Historiis: In Descriptionibus Regnorum & Gentium Antiquarum, & Narrationibus Rerum Ecclesiasticaru[m], & Politicarum, Graecarum, Romanarum, Germanicarum & Aliarum, ab Exordio Mundi vsque ad Carolum Quintum Imperatorem* (Geneva, 1581), NYSL, Win 161; Johannes Carion and Philipp Melanchthon, *Chronicorum Libri Tres e Germanico in Latinum Sermonem Conuersi* (Frankfurt, 1555), MHS, Winthrop Library. The two books were associated with different Winthrop family members, the former with Adam

(cont. on p. 93)

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In his copy of the former, Adam inserted a lengthy note facing the title page, which displays the signature elements of his own hermeneutic style. Here he put together a short vignette on the text's composition and transformation, including both bibliographic and historical details. Above all, he sought to explain the complicated issue of the book's authorship. Why did the chronicle still bear the name of the original author, Carion, given that Melanchthon had effectively rewritten it? To answer this question, Adam turned to his other copy of the *Chronicon* and transposed some key information that Peucer had supplied in his preface:

> The *Chronicle* of Carion was expounded and augmented with many histories both ancient and modern by Philipp Melanchthon, and Caspar Peucer. When Iohannes Carion (as Peucer says) had begun to compile the *Chronicle*, he sent it to Philipp Melanchthon so that it might be corrected and edited prior to submitting it to the press. Because he approved of little of it, Melanchthon deleted the whole text at a stroke and wrote another, to which nevertheless he attached the name of Carion.[65]

Through this short note Adam was able to distil the complex transmission history of the *Chronicon Carionis*, producing an encyclopedia-like entry worthy of Bale or Gessner.

(n. 64 cont.)
Winthrop's wife, Anne, the latter with another of Adam's grandsons, Samuel Winthrop. An inscription at the top of the latter's title page reads, 'Samuel Winthrop hunc librum jam tenet patris dono 1642' ('Samuel Winthrop now possesses this book by the gift of his father. 1642').

[65] Carion and Melanchthon, *Chronicorum Libri Tres e Germanico in Latinum Sermonem Conuersi*, MHS, Winthrop Library, front flyleaf: 'Chronicon Carionis expositum, & auctum est, multis & veteribus & recentioribus historiis, a Philippo Melanthone, & Casparo Peucero. Cum Iohannes Carion (inquit Peucerus) ante annos quadraginta coepisset contexere Chronicon, & recognoscendum illud atque emendandum priusquam praelo subiiceretur, misisset ad Ph. Melanthonem: hic, quod parum probaretur, totum abolevit una litura, alio conscripto, cui tamen Carionis nomen praefixit'. Adam continues, 'Hermannus Bonnus (inquit Melanthonus) excelluit ingenio, eruditione, consilio, & virtute. Is ante annos 20 germanicum libellum, cui titulus est Chronicon Carionis, latine interpretatus est'. Compare Carion, Melanchthon and Peucer, *Chronicon Carionis Expositum et Auctum Multis et Veteribus et Recentibus Historiis*, NYSL, Win 161, sig. [** iii]$^{r-v}$: 'Nomen chronici Carionis retinui, quod mutare illud author primus sanctae beataeque memoriae Philippus Melanthon socer meus noluit. Occasio nominis huius inde extitit, quod cum Iohannes Carion mathematicus ante annos quadraginta coepisset contexere chronicon, et re[co]gnoscendum illud atque emendandum, priusquam prelo subiiceretur, misisset ad Philippum Melanthonem, hic, quod parum probaretur, totum aboleuit una litura, alio conscripto, cui tamen Carionis nomen praefixit'.

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Adam proved able to apply his ways of reading to texts and questions of many kinds. None of his descendants emulated all his practices.[66] They used the books in different circumstances and diverse combinations, leaving us evidence not of a single reading style, but of several. But all of them emulated his passion for collecting texts and for finding out about their histories. And for all of them, reading was not an activity that could be conducted in isolation from their political and moral convictions. As we shall see, while Winthropian reading had many faces — from the alchemical to the juridical, to the ecclesiastical, the devotional and the natural-philosophical — it always ran deeper than the text on the page.

V

READING ALCHEMICALLY

John Winthrop Jr learned from his grandfather, yet also took his reading practices in new and distinctive directions. For him, the provenance of a book, especially an annotated book, offered a precious link to the past, but also lent authority to contemporary practices — an orientation that seems to have been shaped, at least in part, by his interest in alchemy. Books on alchemy and chemical medicine gathered by John Jr and his descendants constitute both the largest and, in modern times, the most studied component of the Winthrops' collection.[67] These books offer a subtly different perspective on the family's reading habits, showing how Adam's grandson applied his early lessons in annotation to memorialize the time, place and

[66] John Jr owned at least one specimen of the advanced bio-bibliographical scholarship that so interested Adam. In 1631 he signed and entered his version of Dee's hieroglyphic *monas* in an edition of the first four books of the *Conics* by Apollonius of Perga, translated into Latin by the Venetian patrician and mathematician Giovanni Battista Memo (Venice, 1537). Dee had owned the book before him, having bought it in 1549 during his second, longer stay in Louvain. And he entered on the verso of the flyleaf a detailed analysis, based on the Apollonius and other sources, which he cited, of the relative chronology of Hellenistic mathematicians. On this book, formerly in the collection of Arthur and Charlotte Vershbow and now in the stock of an antiquarian bookseller, see *John Dee's Library Catalogue*, ed. Roberts and Watson, 82, item 74.

[67] See particularly Wilkinson, 'Alchemical Library of John Winthrop, Jr (1606–1676) and his Descendants in Colonial America', pts I–III, IV; Kamil, *Fortress of the Soul*; Woodward, *Prospero's America*; Bilak, 'Chymical Cleric'.

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circumstances of his own reading, and to reconstruct the practices of earlier readers.

In general, John Jr annotated more sparsely than his grandfather. When he did add notes, it was often as a reminder of past reading. For instance, he entered only a single note in his otherwise clean copy of Michele Poccianti's *Catalogus Scriptorum Florentinorum Omnis Generis* (1589), beside the entry for the Renaissance Neoplatonist philosopher Marsilio Ficino. Among other things, Ficino was famous for his translation of the *Hermetica* from Greek into Latin. As Poccianti enumerated the contents of the first volume of Ficino's collected works, John Jr's memory stirred. He noted, 'I saw this volume while I read some things from the book *On the Sun and On Light* in the library of the college of Edinburgh, when I was in Scotland in the year 1634'.[68] His reading reminded him of another book, another library. Although John Jr had previously spent time in Italy, it was in Scotland, during his first return to the British Isles after settling in North America, that he had read the great Florentine Neoplatonist.[69]

A consummate collector, John Jr was also fascinated by the provenance of his own books. His library profited from the disintegration of other collections, particularly that of his own preferred bibliographical exemplar, John Dee. Dee's omnivorous reading encompassed historical, ecclesiastical, philosophical and literary works as well as scientific material, and Winthrop was not alone in cherishing the relics of his extraordinary library: bibliophiles like Robert Cotton, for instance, whose collection would eventually form the nucleus of the British Library, acquired many of Dee's books.[70] However, John Jr was interested not only in Dee's books, but also in what, and how, Dee had written in them. Perhaps nowhere is his interest in the mechanics of marginalia more evident than in his copies of

[68] Michele Poccianti, *Catalogus Scriptorum Florentinorum Omnis Generis, Quorum, et Memoria Extat: Atque Lucubrationes in Literas Relatae Sunt ad Nostra Usque Tempora, M.D. LXXXIX* (Florence, [1589]), NYSL, Win 58, 122: 'vidi hoc volumen ubi aliqua perlegi ex libro de sole et de lumine in Bibliotheca collegij Edinburgi dum in scotia essem anno 1634. Joh: Winthrop'. Although *De Sole* and *De Lumine* were composed as separate tracts, Winthrop here conflates them into a single book.

[69] This note also allows us to track a precise moment of John Jr's itinerary on the first of several such return journeys across the Atlantic that continued until his death in 1676.

[70] See *John Dee's Library Catalogue*, ed. Roberts and Watson.

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two books by the iconoclastic Swiss physician Paracelsus, both extensively annotated by Dee.

In these books, Dee himself practised a form of bibliographical reading in the tradition of Gessner and Bale. In Paracelsus' *Baderbuchlin*, he signed and dated the title page 'Joannes Dee 1562', while on a blank page he added a bibliographical summary of another, better-known work of Paracelsus, the *Archidoxis*.[71] He then listed the contents of the first eight books of the *Archidoxis*, and also the title of the ninth book, the *practica*, which remained in manuscript.[72] The empty spaces of one book became the site for recording the contents of another, a technique similar to that employed by his contemporary Adam Winthrop.

John Jr clearly read Dee's note with interest. Directly below, in a note dated July 1640, he catalogued the ways in which Dee had used the book (see Plate 5):

> This above written and the name on the top of the frontisspice of this booke, and ye writing in the middle of the fro[n]tispice, and the severall notes in the margent through the whole booke, was written by that famous Philosopher and Chimist John Dee, with his owne hand. this J. Dee was he y^{t} wrote the philosophicall treatise called *Monas Hieroglifica*; also *Propaideumata Aphoristica*, also the learned preface before Euclides *Elementes* in English in folio. He was warden of Manchester. I have divers bookes y^{t} were his wherin he hath written his name and many notes &c: for which they are worthyly the more esteemed.
>
> John Winthrop.[73]

Here, John Jr composed a bio-bibliographical note not on the author of the text, but on its annotator. In one sense, this echoes the introductory tags that Adam, following Bale's practice, inserted in his own books, by incorporating details of

[71] Theophrastus Paracelsus, *Baderbüchlin: Sechs köstliche Tractat, Armen vnd Reychen, nutzlich vnd notwendig, von Wasserbädern. Woher die selbige warm, vnd andere Wasser kalt, vnnd auss was Vrsach sy sollicher gewaltiger Kräfften, das ihr Vrsprung mit wachsender Arth auss der Erdtglobel, gleich wie die Kreuter vnnd Böwme von ihrem Samen, mit schönem Bericht, wie mennigklich ihrs Brauchs sich Behelffen mag* (Mühlhausen, 1562), NYSL, Win 189, title page. The *Baderbuchlin* is a compilation of *Von den natürlichen Bädern* and *Von den natürlichen Wassern*: Paracelsus, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Karl Sudhoff and Wilhelm Matthieszen (Munich, 1922–33), pt 1, vol. ii.

[72] John Dee, note on Paracelsus, *Baderbuchlin*, NYSL, Win 189, flyleaf recto: 'Archidoxis Theophrastiae pars prima. Novem libri de misterijs Naturae Theoph. Bombast de hohenh. Saevij Heremitae, Naturalium rerum docti Paracelsi Magni Philosophi industriosissimi'.

[73] Note by John Winthrop Jr in Paracelsus, *Baderbuchlin*, NYSL, Win 189. On his interest in notes by Dee and other authors, see, for example, Wilkinson, 'Alchemical Library of John Winthrop, Jr (1606–1676) and his Descendants in Colonial America', pts I–III, 38–9; Sherman, *John Dee*, 84–5.

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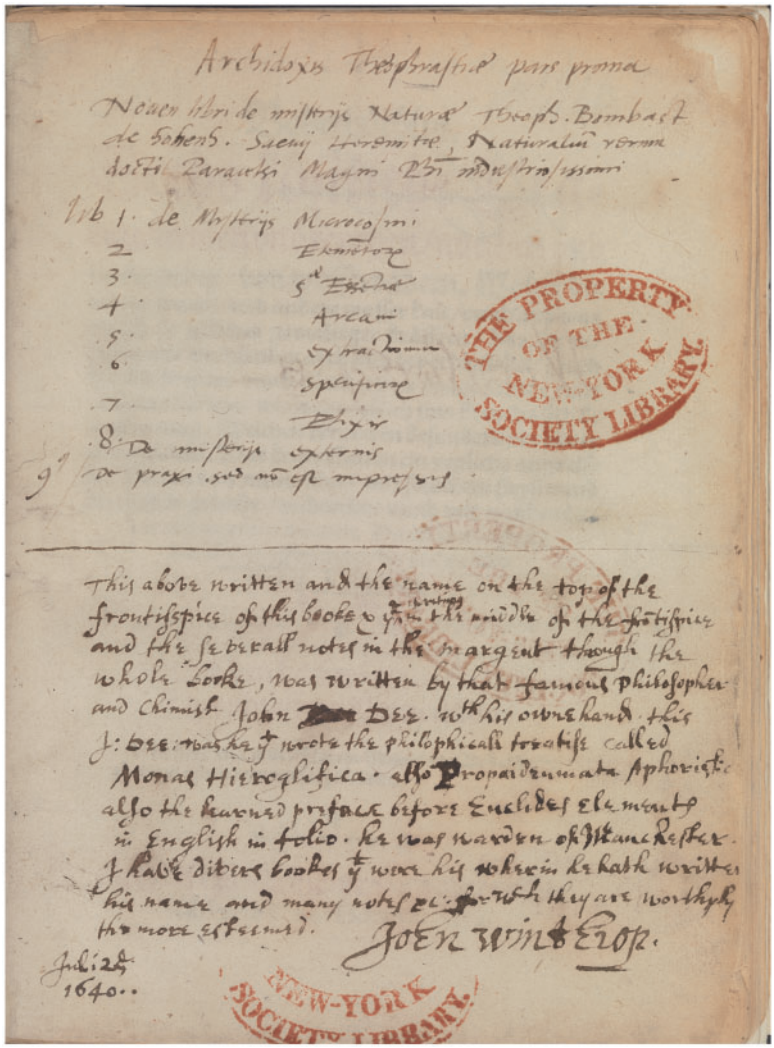

5. Flyleaf with notes by John Dee and John Winthrop Jr. Theophrastus Paracelsus, *Baderbuchlin* (Mühlhausen, 1562). New York Society Library, Win 189. Courtesy of the New York Society Library.

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Dee's life and works, from his tenure as warden of Christ's College, Manchester, to his famous 'Mathematicall Praeface' to the *Elements* of Euclid. Yet John Jr proved himself an even more intent cataloguer when it came to the whereabouts of Dee's annotations, the frequency and copiousness of which he clearly relished. He further insisted that Dee had written all this 'with his owne hand'. In the same month, John Jr added a similar note to another of Dee's Paracelsian books, *Das Buch Meteororum* (1566), once more emphasizing the affective bond he felt for the 'famous Philosopher and Chimist'. He remarked, 'this booke was his [Dee's] while he lived'. Winthrop even inserted himself into this story, claiming to own 'divers other bookes both printed & some manuscripts y^{t} came out of his [Dee's] study', annotated with 'both his name & notes: for which they are farre the more pretious'.[74] The loss, mentioned above, of another item from Dee's library, the manuscript supposedly written in the hand of the great fifteenth-century alchemist Thomas Norton, must have come as a particular blow.

John Jr clearly regarded Dee's books as among the chief treasures of his library, but he also owned books by other important alchemists, including a copy of Basil Valentine that, as he scribbled on the flyleaf, the 'famous philosopher & naturalist' Cornelis Drebbel 'usuall[y] carried w[i]th him in his pockett'.[75] Sometimes, the identity of a previous owner was less certain. John Jr also possessed a copy of the German alchemist Henricus Nollius' *Naturae Sanctuarium* (1619) which he 'sophisticated', as an old-fashioned bookseller might say. Finding a book on sale at The Hague that had supposedly been

[74] Paracelsus, *Das Buch Meteororum* (Cologne, 1566), NYSL, Win 188, first flyleaf recto. Winthrop's reference to 'divers other bookes both printed & some manuscripts' is tantalizing. We currently know of only three other Dee books in the Winthrop collection: Gerardus [Gerhard] Dorn, *Chymisticum Artificium Naturae, Theoricum & Practicum: Cuius Summarium versa Pagella Clariùs Indicabit: Liber Planè Philosophicus, in Gratiam Omnium Verae Philosophiae Naturalis Studiosorum Aeditus* ([Frankfurt?], 1568), NYSL, Win 86; Johannes [Johann] Rivius, *Opera Theologica Omnia, in Unum Volumen Collecta, Libris Constans XXVI*, ed. Georgius Fabricius (Basel, 1562), NYSL, Win 210; Apollonius of Perga, *Opera* (Venice, 1537).

[75] Basilius Valentinus [pseud.], *Von den natürlichen vnnd vbernatürlichen Dingen: Auch von der ersten Tinctur, Wurtzel vnd Geiste der Metallen und Mineralien, wie dieselbe entpfangen, ausgekochet, geboren, verendert vnd vermehret werden* (Leipzig, [1603]), NYSL, Win 254, note on flyleaf. Unusually, John Jr records the provenance of this book, which 'after his [Drebbel's] death was given me by his sonne in law Mr Abram Keffler'.

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owned by Nollius, he 'plucked out' the page on which Nollius had written, took it with him (he does not say whether he paid for it) and bound it into his own book, noting, 'That which is written here in the following page seems to have been written in Nollius' own hand . . . as it seems it was formerly in the possession of Nollius himself'.[76] In the space of this single note, John Jr used the word *videtur*, 'it seems', twice. Although the tone is less confident than in his notes on Dee and Drebbel, it is clear that such associations, even if tentative, mattered deeply to him.

John Jr's concern with provenance is bound up with the very nature of alchemy and alchemical medicine. Lacking a consistent institutional base, practitioners tended to emphasize the prestige of past adepts, whether medieval authors like Thomas Norton or more recent celebrities like Dee's former scryer Edward Kelley, or the precocious German chemist Johann Rudolf Glauber.[77] Such authority could be feigned, however, and John Jr's correspondence reveals his own attempts to distinguish serious adepts from plausible frauds. On the one hand, he and his friend Howes were ultimately unimpressed by the 'misticall' speech of the alchemist and minister Dr John Everard, whom they visited in 1635.[78] Yet when Samuel Hartlib published Gabriel Plattes's *Caveat for Alchymists* (1655), in which Plattes characterized Edward Kelley as a charlatan, Winthrop defended the English alchemist in a letter to Hartlib, citing reports of Kelley's successful transmutations at the court of Rudolf II. These, he argued, showed that Kelley's results 'were not cousening projections but reall'.[79]

[76] Henricus Nollius, *Naturae Sanctuarium: quod est, Physica Hermetica. In Studiosorum Sincerioris Philosophiae Gratiam, ad Promouendam Rerum Naturalium Veritatem, Methodo Perspicua & Admirandorum Secretorum in Naturae Abysso Latentium Philosophica Explicatione Decenter in Vndecim Libris Tractata* (Frankfurt, 1619), New York Academy of Medicine Library, Special Collections, flyleaf verso: 'Quod hic scriptum est in sequenti pagina videtur proprio [for propria] Nollij manu scriptum: eam cartam ex[c]erpsi ex libro quodam Hagae qui ibi venalis erat, qui vt videtur fuit quondam in possessione ipsius Nollij. Joh: Winthrop'.

[77] Both John Jr and his son Wait sought copies of Glauber's books. John Jr requested copies in Latin and High Dutch, but Wait preferred English translations. In a letter from 1695, Wait asked his brother Fitz-John Winthrop to procure for him the latest English edition of Glauber's works, some of which he already had in Latin. See Wilkinson, 'Alchemical Library of John Winthrop, Jr (1606–1676) and his Descendants in Colonial America', pts I–III, 44–5, 49.

[78] Como, *Blown by the Spirit*, 415–25; Woodward, *Prospero's America*, 46–9.

[79] Gabriel Plattes, 'Caveat for Alchemists', in Gabriel Plattes, *Chymical, Medicinal, and Chyrurgical Addresses: Made to Samuel Hartlib, Esquire* (London, 1655); John

(cont. on p. 100)

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In an environment where promise was often tinged with uncertainty, it was essential to read closely and well. Success in alchemy rested not only on practical skill, but also on skill in reading: construing obscure and highly technical writings in order to translate them into workable practices. Authorities often claimed not to have entrusted all their secrets to a single work, but to have dispersed clues across their writings.[80] Their books had to be read together, and on multiple levels, something that Dee understood well. Even when reading Paracelsus' *Baderbuchlin*, nominally a study of mineral waters, he was alert to many possible layers of meaning, noting on the title page, 'I assert that this concerns not only common baths, but also the most secret hot-springs of philosophers'. He endorsed the note with his initials: 'J.D.'[81]

Dee's annotations, and those of the other, unknown readers whose notes adorn the Winthrop collection, provided a multitude of examples of alchemical reading to John Jr and his chemically-inclined descendants, suggestive of the context within which even parsimonious Winthrop annotators, like Wait, read. The chemical books of Samuel Lee alone offered a wealth of sophisticated marginal commentary for a discerning reader.[82] During the latter half of the seventeenth century, these books were studied by a serious scholar of alchemy, almost certainly Lee himself, whose terse annotations (usually just chemical symbols pencilled in the margins) silently unpacked and translated the authoritative texts.[83] Take George Ripley's

(n. 79 cont.)
Winthrop Jr to Samuel Hartlib, 16 Dec. 1659, in Turnbull, 'Some Correspondence of John Winthrop, Jr., and Samuel Hartlib', 38, cited in Wilkinson, 'Alchemical Library of John Winthrop, Jr (1606–1676) and his Descendants in Colonial America', pts I–III, 43–4.

[80] On the relationship between alchemy and reading, see, for example, William R. Newman and Lawrence M. Principe, *Alchemy Tried in the Fire: Starkey, Boyle, and the Fate of Helmontian Chymistry* (Chicago, 2002); Lauren Kassell, 'Reading for the Philosophers' Stone', in Marina Frasca-Spada and Nick Jardine (eds.), *Books and the Sciences in History* (Cambridge, 2000); Jennifer M. Rampling, 'Transmuting Sericon: Alchemy as "Practical Exegesis" in Early Modern England', *Osiris*, xxix (2014).

[81] Paracelsus, *Baderbuchlin*, NYSL, Win 189, note on title page: 'Agi hic assero, non de vulgaribus solum Balneis, sed de secretissimis etiam Philosophorum Thermis. J.D.'

[82] It seems likely that Wait Winthrop purchased these books for the library, if we follow Wilkinson's hint that he was residing in Boston when Lee's library came up for sale.

[83] In addition to annotations throughout the book, this reader typically pencils in dates at the end of his books. Thus, Lee's copy of Arnaldus de Villanova [pseud.],
(cont. on p. 101)

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vaguely worded advice in his *Medulla Alchimiae* (1476) that 'our stone' is a substance 'sound and not corrupt, obtained from its mine by a martial man'.[84] Over a century later, John Dee interpreted Ripley's key ingredient as antimony, as did the influential alchemist George Starkey (a correspondent of John Jr) in the 1650s. By Lee's time, any reader familiar with alchemical literature might have identified Ripley's mysterious stone as the regulus of antimony, drawn from its 'mine' (antimony ore) through the agency of the 'martial man' (iron).[85] Sure enough, in Lee's copy, the annotator added the symbol for antimony alongside this passage. As the alchemical 'philosophers' repeatedly warned their own hapless readers, nothing was exactly what it seemed: grand designs might be cloaked in unpromising outward signs, and vital ingredients concealed by baffling cover names. It is surely not coincidence that the three family members most interested in alchemy, John Jr, Wait and John Winthrop FRS, all adopted the *monas* as part of their signature — as a symbol, perhaps, of their own aspirations, simultaneously philosophical and pragmatic.[86] Although Dee intended his *monas* to encapsulate the deepest secrets of nature,

(n. 83 cont.)
Omnia, quae Exstant, Opera Chymica. Videlicet, Thesaurus Thesaurorum: seu, Rosarius Philosophorum, ac Omnium [S]ecretorum Maximum Secretum. Lumen Nouum, Flos Florum, & Speculum Alchimiae (Frankfurt, 1603), Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yna31 603a, is dated 26 Aug. 1663; Basilius Valentinus [pseud.], *Currus Triumphalis Antimonii* (Toulouse, 1646), New York Academy of Medicine Library, Rare Book and Manuscript Collection, RB, dated 28 Dec. 1664 (the same year in which Lee acquired the book, according to his note on the endleaf: 'Samuel Lee tenet 1664. de Sa[muel] Thinsen[?]'); Martinus Rulandus, *Lexicon Alchimiae: sive, Dictionarium Alchemisticum* (Frankfurt, 1612), NYSL, Win 220, dated 1 Feb. 1671/2. Like John Dee and other alchemical readers, the author of these pencil annotations did not restrict his reading to alchemical books: he also appears to have had a taste for classical texts, as seen in several books possibly from the Lee collection, annotated by a seemingly identical hand, including the works of Aelian, Ausonius and Claudian.

84 Georgius Riplaeus, *Medulla Philosophiae Chemicae*, in Georgius Riplaeus, *Opera Omnia Chemica, quotquot hactenus Visa Sunt, quorum aliqua jam primùm in Lucem Prodeunt, aliqua MS Exemplarium Collatione à Mendis & Lacunis Repurgata*, ed. Ludovicus Combachius (Kassel, 1649), Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yna31 649r, 175: 'ut quidam consulit, quaeratur à sua minera integra non corrupta per hominem Martialem: Hic est lapis noster'.

85 Similar examples of 'antimonial' reading are detailed in Newman, *Gehennical Fire*, 125–33; Rampling, 'Transmuting Sericon', 30–2.

86 For an example of a book in which two Winthrops — in this case, Wait and John Winthrop FRS — both inscribed their names with accompanying *monades* on the same page, see Tycho Brahe, *Astronomiae Instauratae Mechanica* (Nuremberg, 1602),
(cont. on p. 102)

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it also incorporated the symbols for metallic ingredients, so that later readers sometimes interpreted the alchemical hieroglyph as yet another practically grounded cover name.[87]

The Winthrops' interests were often, even mostly, practical. John Jr and Wait were public figures deeply involved in the government and defence of their colonies, even though their annotations offer relatively few insights into how they viewed these activities. In particular, we know little about how the Winthrops' experiences in New England inflected their ways of reading. Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society while in London in 1661–3, John Winthrop Jr never compiled the natural history of New England that his metropolitan friends hoped he would provide, but he regularly sent the society marvels, natural and human: 'stuffed rattlesnakes, native wampum, a flying fish, a starfish, twelve-row Indian corn . . . a bow, arrows with a variety of points, a dog-skin quiver'.[88] Like other members of colonial elites in the Atlantic world, he studied the ways in which both Native American and white settlers exploited natural resources. In January 1660/1, for example, he wrote to Samuel Hartlib about the uses of Indian corn, a barrel of which he had just sent to England: 'they used to make a most ordinary and pleasant food thereof called sampe which [is] easy of disgestion and very diuretique'. When samp was most popular, he continued, 'it was rare to heare of any troubled with the stone, and its [*sic*] rare also among the Indians who use it constantly'.[89] Any New Englander, male or female, Winthrop informed Hartlib, would know how to make samp from the corn, which unfortunately

(n. 86 cont.)
NYSL, Win 45, flyleaf (Plate 1). The copy of John Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica* (Antwerp, 1564), MHS, Winthrop Library, has no annotations.

87 Peter J. Forshaw, 'The Early Alchemical Reception of John Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica*', *Ambix*, lii (2005), 263.

88 Woodward, *Prospero's America*, 293–4.

89 Turnbull, 'Some Correspondence of John Winthrop, Jr., and Samuel Hartlib', 63; see also pp. 58–9. In December 1662 Winthrop addressed the Royal Society on corn. For contrasting views on John Jr's hopes of exploiting the natural products of New England, see Matthew Underwood, 'Unpacking Winthrop's Boxes', *Common-Place*, vii, 4 (July 2007), <http://common-place.org/article/unpacking-winthrops-boxes> (accessed 16 May 2018), who discusses Winthrop's discourse on corn; Woodward, *Prospero's America*, 293–6. For a parallel case from another part of the Atlantic world, see Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca, NY, 2008), 132–8.

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never arrived.[90] But his books show little sign of this sort of engagement with local practices.

Such absences remind us that the recording and survival of marginalia are always matters of chance. What we do have is a considerable number of the family's books on alchemy and chemical medicine, some of them copiously annotated and cross-referenced, even if not always by the Winthrops themselves. These books show us highly abstruse texts being studied for practical meaning, and medieval sources (like Ripley) read in light of seventeenth-century chemical knowledge — readings that undoubtedly diverge from the intentions of their original authors, but which, for that very reason, illuminate the preoccupations of early modern Winthrops. Chemical books were perused by the same readers who studied Scripture, the law, and secular and ecclesiastical history, and vice versa. As we return to the early days of the collection, and study other ways of reading besides the alchemical, we notice just how often the Winthrops read for the present in the past. In the words of John Dee, annotating another text of Ripley, *liber librum aperit*, 'the book opens the book'.[91] In the Winthrop family, one book indeed opened another.

VI

READING POLITICALLY AND JURIDICALLY

Chemical books were not the only texts that the Winthrops studied for practice. The male members of the family often served in public office, whether as political leaders in Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut, or as judges in cases that have come to be viewed as defining moments in colonial American history, from John Winthrop's role in the Antinomian Controversy to Wait's involvement in the Salem witch trials. The execution of the Winthrops' public duties was deeply bound up with ways of private reading, and the implication of the two did not begin in New England. Decades earlier, in Suffolk,

[90] Turnbull, 'Some Correspondence of John Winthrop, Jr., and Samuel Hartlib', 59, 63.

[91] 'George Ryppley's Bosome Book or Vade Mecum', Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Ashmole 1486, pt V, 1. On this reading, see Jennifer M. Rampling, 'John Dee and the Alchemists: Practising and Promoting English Alchemy in the Holy Roman Empire', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, xliii (2012), 504.

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Adam Winthrop was already bringing his own readerly habits to bear on his experience as a lawyer and magistrate.

This form of reading, political and civil, is well established as a central mode for the English elite in the later sixteenth century, as studies of Gabriel Harvey and others have made clear.[92] The connection between Harvey and Adam is not wholly arbitrary. Adam owned a book by Harvey's patron: the *De Republica Anglorum* (1583) of another successful Cambridge man, Elizabeth's ambassador to France, Sir Thomas Smith.[93] Adam's notes show him approaching this text much as Harvey might have done (see Plate 6). Harvey embellished books that mattered to him with introductory remarks in which he explained how he had interpreted them, making clear that the approach to a given text was a matter of informed choice. In his copy of Livy, now in Princeton, he carefully explained how he had approached the early history of Rome when reading it as a sort of political coach to Sir Philip Sidney:

> from all points of view, applying a political analysis, just before his embassy to the emperor Rudolf II . . . We paid little attention to the annotations of Glareanus and others. Our consideration was chiefly directed at the forms of states, the conditions of persons, and the qualities of actions.[94]

Adam also believed it could be useful to set out strikingly explicit directions for the study of a text. On the verso of a blank leaf in his

[92] See Jardine and Grafton, 'Studied for Action'; Nicholas Popper, 'The English Polydaedali: How Gabriel Harvey Read Late Tudor London', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, lxvi, 3 (2005). Harvey's copy of James I's *The Essayes of a Prentise, in the Divine Art of Poesie* (Edinburgh, 1585), Magdalene College, Cambridge, Old Library, L.26, bears on its title page Harvey's boldly written signature, his initials and an inscription (reminiscent of Winthropian practices) naming the friend who had given him the book. Sometimes he added a date, often an inaccurate one, or played with printers' marks and other design elements. For much further information on Harvey's practices as an annotator, see *The Archaeology of Reading*, <http://archaeologyofreading.org> (accessed 16 May 2018).

[93] Thomas Smyth [Smith], *De Republica Anglorum: The Maner of Gouernment or Policie of the Realme of England* (London, 1584), NYSL, Win 232.

[94] Gabriel Harvey, note in *T. Livii Patavini Romanae Historiae Principis Decades Tres cum Dimidia* (Basel, 1555), Princeton University Library, Ex PA6452.A2 1555q, fo. 55^{r}: 'Hos tres Liuij libros, Philippus Sidneius aulicus et ego intimè contuleramus, qua potuimus politica analysi ultro citroque excussos . . . Summus noster respectus erat ad rerumpublicarum speties; et personarum conditiones, actionumque qualitates. De Glareani aliorumque annotationibus parùm curabamus': first quoted in Jardine and Grafton, 'Studied for Action', 36. Compare, most recently, Lisa Jardine, '"Studied for Action" Revisited', in Ann Blair and Anja-Silvia Goeing (eds.), *For the Sake of Learning: Essays in Honor of Anthony Grafton*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 2016), ii, 1001–4.

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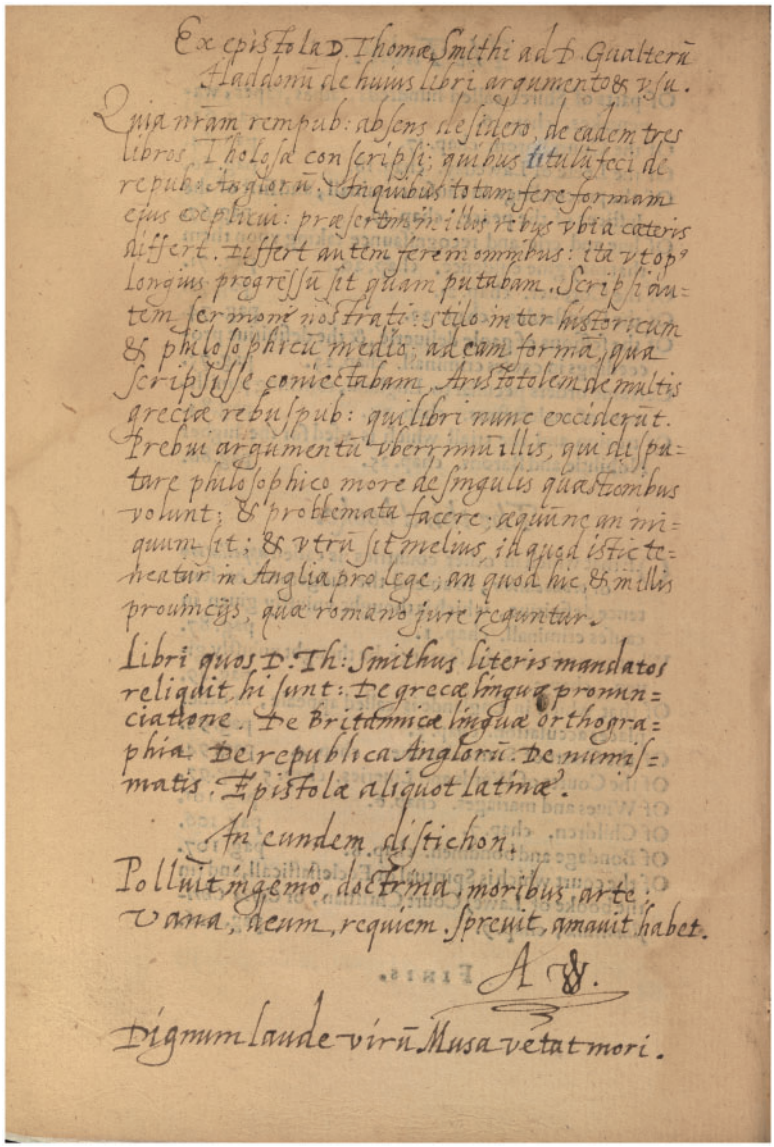

Ex epistola D. Thomæ Smithi ad D. Gualterū
Haddonū de huius libri argumento & vsu.

Quia nrām rempub: absens desidero, de eadem tres
libros Tholosæ conscripsi; quibus titulū feci de
repub: Anglorū. In quibus totam fere formam
eius explicui: præsertim in illis rebus vbi a cæteris
differt. Differt autem ferem omnibus: ita vt op⁹
longius progressū sit quam putabam. Scripsi au=
tem sermoni nostrati: stilo inter historicum
& philosophicū medio, ad eam formā, qua
scripsisse coniectabam, Aristotelem de multis
greciæ rebuspub: qui libri nunc exciderūt.
Prebui argumentū vberrimū illis, qui dispu=
tare philosophico more de singulis quæstionibus
volunt; & problemata facere; æquū ne an ini=
quum sit; & vtrū sit melius, id quod istic te=
neatur in Anglia pro lege, an quod hic, & in illis
prouincijs, quæ romano jure reguntur.

Libri quos D. Th: Smithus literis mandatos
reliquit, hi sunt: De grecæ linguæ pronun=
ciatione. De Britannicæ linguæ orthogra=
phia. De republica Anglorū. De numis=
matis. Epistolæ aliquot latinæ.

In eundem distichon.

Polluit ingenio, doctrina, moribus, arte:
Vana, deum, requiem, spreuit, amauit habet.

A &.

Dignum laude virū Musa vetat mori.

6. Flyleaf with Adam Winthrop's copy of Sir Thomas Smith's letter to Walter Haddon: 'Ex epistola D. Thomae Smithi ad D. Gualterum Haddonum de huius libri argumento & vsu'. Thomas Smyth [Smith], *De Republica Anglorum: The Maner of Gouernment or Policie of the Realme of England* (London, 1584). New York Society Library, Win 232. Courtesy of the New York Society Library.

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copy of Smith, he entered a fascinating letter from the author to his friend Sir Walter Haddon. In this case, Smith's letter played the role of an introduction perfectly. It lucidly identified the genre and explained the goals of his book:

> I have set out more or less the entire form [of the English commonwealth, he explained], especially in those respects in which it differs from the rest. But it is different in almost every way, so that the work became longer than I had thought it would. I wrote it in our language, in a style midway between historical and philosophical, in accordance with the form in which, I conjectured, Aristotle wrote on many of the Greek commonwealths: those books are no longer extant. I have offered ample material for discussion to those who like to debate in a philosophical way about individual questions, and to make formal problems about what is fair and what unfair, and which is better, what is taken as law in England, or what is taken as law in those provinces that are ruled by Roman law.[95]

Here Smith tells us that he has emulated books that no longer exist: the 158 accounts of individual constitutions from which Aristotle drew the empirical foundations for his *Politics*. He also makes clear that he has wavered between empirical and prescriptive styles, which could also serve as a description of Aristotle's form of exposition. And he suggests one way to read his book: to turn it into questions for discussion about the common and civil law. Smith also suggested other contexts for his work in parts of the letter that Winthrop did not copy, perhaps because they were less explicitly concerned with interpretation. In an earlier section, Smith made it clear that his book had some connection with the contemporary debate between Haddon and the Portuguese scholar and cleric Jerónimo Osório about the legitimacy of English laws and institutions and the Reformation.[96]

[95] Walter Haddon, *Lucubrationes passim Collectae et Editae*, ed. T. Hatcher (London, 1567), 305–6, copied in Smyth, *De Republica Anglorum*, NYSL, Win 232, sig. A4^{v}: 'Ex Epistola D. Thomae Smithi ad D. Gualterum Haddonum de huius libri argumento. Quia nostram rempublicam absens desidero, de eadem tres libros hic Tholosae conscripsi: quibus titulum feci de republica Anglorum: In quibus totam fere formam eius explicui: praesertim in illis rebus, ubi a caeteris differt. Differt autem fere in omnibus: ita ut opus longius progressum sit quam putabam. Scripsi autem sermone nostrati: stylo inter historicum & philosophicum medio: ad eam formam, qua scripsisse coniectabam Aristotelem de multis greciae rebuspublicis, qui libri nunc exciderunt. Prebui argumentum uberrimum illis, qui disputare philosophico more de singulis quaestionibus volunt & problemata facere: aequumne an iniquum sit: & utrum sit melius, id quod istic teneatur in Anglia pro lege, an quod hic, & in illis provincijs, quae romano iure reguntur'.

[96] Haddon, *Lucubrationes passim Collectae et Editae*, ed. Hatcher, 304–5.

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Adam's notes on the text itself reveal how attentively he read the user's manual that Smith had provided. He inscribed the motto of a famous serjeant-at-law, Sir James Dyer, on the verso of the title page: 'Without the law, the mob destroys itself. Adam Winthrop'.[97] And he found in Smith's book multiple reasons for viewing the English state with some complacency. In I. 16 Smith laid out the conditions under which, in England, but not in France, a woman could hold office: 'in such cases as the authoritie is annexed to the bloud and progenie, as the crowne, a dutchie, or an erledome for there the bloud is respected, not the age nor ye sexe'. Adam drew the larger moral, that Elizabeth's reign was legitimate, in his summary: 'In what cases women may beare rule over men'.[98] Smith described the origins of English chivalry, whose traditions, as Frances Yates showed in some of her greatest work, Elizabeth deftly exploited to her own ends.[99] Adam noted these passages with interest.[100]

De Republica Anglorum was by no means the only book that Adam read with forensic questions in mind. He took a very serious interest in the Essex preacher George Gifford's *Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes*, a sharply polemical dialogue that set out to show that witches, though they really existed, could not and did not harm others.[101] Rather, Gifford argued, 'cunning folk' were the truly dangerous figures, whose powers must be destroyed.[102] Adam followed the arguments that Gifford's protagonists put forward intently, pen in hand. Manicules and other marks made clear his interest in the nature and quality of the evidence that would be sufficient to condemn a witch. Where one

[97] 'Plebs sine lege ruit'.

[98] Smyth, *De Republica Anglorum*, 19.

[99] Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1975).

[100] See Smyth, *De Republica Anglorum*, 21–5; for example Adam's note on p. 25: 'The order of knightes of the gartir'.

[101] George Gifford [Giffard], *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes, in which Is Laide Open how Craftely the Diuell Deceiueth Not Onely the Witches but Many Other and So Leadeth Them Awrie into Many Great Errours* (London, 1593), MHS, Winthrop Library Pamphlets.

[102] Cunning men and women were generally seen as innocent practitioners of arts who helped, rather than harmed, ordinary people. Gifford's treatment of them as the true villains was as innovative and distinctive a feature of his work as was his deconstruction of the evidence normally used to convict witches. See Alan Macfarlane, 'A Tudor Anthropologist: George Gifford's *Discourse* and *Dialogue*', in Sydney Anglo (ed.), *The Damned Art: Essays in the Literature of Witchcraft* (London, 1977).

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of the speakers described having served on a jury that condemned a witch to die, Adam entered both a manicule and a summary: 'Euidence giuen to a Jury against a witche'.[103] When the same character stated that 'The holy scriptures doe command that witches should be put to death', Adam took note, entering a large manicule and boldly writing the words 'Witches must be putt to death' (see Plate 7).[104] Yet he also paid attention to the counter-argument that obtaining a conviction was 'the hardest matter of all'.[105] And he carefully noted each example that Gifford's characters cited, whatever its bearing on the larger point at issue. What fascinated him, so far as his annotations reveal, was less the particular argument made in the text than its precise examination of the evidence presented to the jury.

Like Harvey, finally, Adam not only watched, but also judged, the great men and women who ruled his world. For all his interest in religious reform, he revered Queen Elizabeth and William Cecil, recording their deaths with every sign of sorrow, and followed the progress of James I from Scotland to London with every evidence of hope. In time, however, he was disappointed, presumably both with the rise of Laudianism in the Church and with the ever-increasing sense of corruption in the state. Adam's political and historical books include a suggestive pair of texts, published and bound together, which he must have bought in the last year of his life: Machiavelli's *Prince*, in Latin, and the monarchomach classic the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*.[106] Reflecting, perhaps, on the double lesson of the *Prince* and the *Vindiciae*, Adam inscribed his reflections on the condition of England on the flyleaf of the Machiavelli: 'Here will be the true work of art: that if a commonwealth has become corrupt, you can endure what you cannot change'.[107] This apparently simple sentiment was layered, as Adam's axioms so often were. The phrase 'the work of art' came from Ovid's *Art of Love*.[108] But

[103] Gifford, *Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes*, MHS, Winthrop Library Pamphlets, sig. L3^{r}.

[104] *Ibid.*, sig. H^{v}.

[105] He enters a manicule: *ibid.*, sig. H2^{r}.

[106] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Princeps* (Frankfurt, 1622), bound with *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* (Frankfurt, 1622), NYSL, Win 151.

[107] 'Hic erit Artis opus, si Status Reipub. corruptus sit: ut feras, quod mutare nequeas'.

[108] Ovid, *De Arte Amandi* 2. 13–14: 'Nec minor est virtus, quam quaerere, parta tueri: | Casus inest illic; hoc erit artis opus'.

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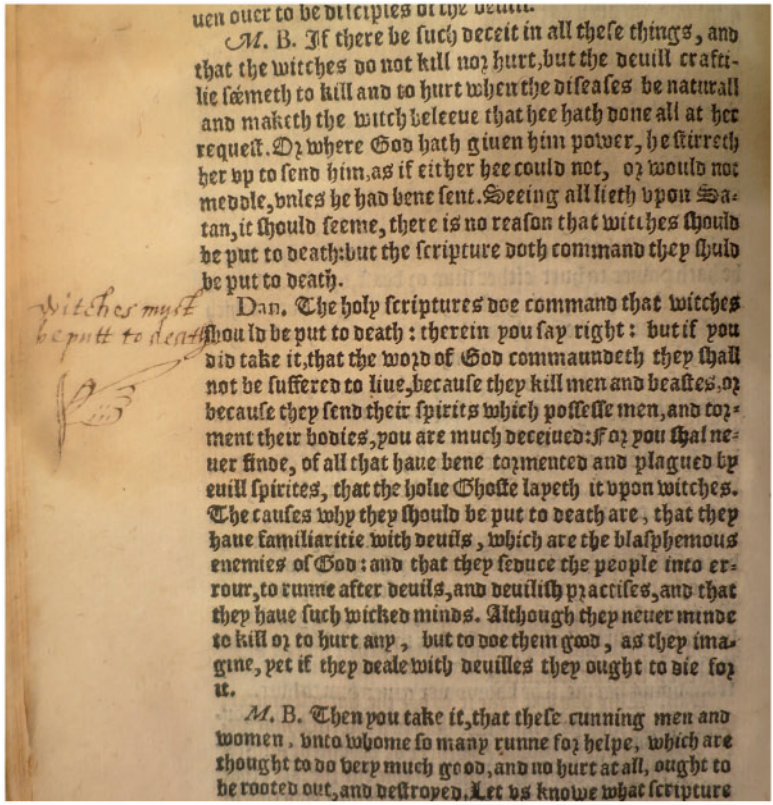

uen ouer to be disciples of the deuill.

M. B. If there be such deceit in all these things, and that the witches do not kill nor hurt, but the deuill craftilie seemeth to kill and to hurt when the diseases be naturall and maketh the witch beleeue that hee hath done all at her request. Or where God hath giuen him power, he stirreth her vp to send him, as if either hee could not, or would not meddle, vnles he had bene sent. Seeing all lieth vpon Satan, it should seeme, there is no reason that witches should be put to death: but the scripture doth command they shuld be put to death.

Witches must be putt to death

Dan. The holy scriptures doe command that witches should be put to death: therein you say right: but if you did take it, that the word of God commaundeth they shall not be suffered to liue, because they kill men and beastes, or because they send their spirits which possesse men, and torment their bodies, you are much deceiued: For you shal neuer finde, of all that haue bene tormented and plagued by euill spirites, that the holie Ghoste layeth it vpon witches. The causes why they should be put to death are, that they haue familiaritie with deuils, which are the blasphemous enemies of God: and that they seduce the people into errour, to runne after deuils, and deuilish practises, and that they haue such wicked minds. Although they neuer minde to kill or to hurt any, but to doe them good, as they imagine, yet if they deale with deuilles they ought to die for it.

M. B. Then you take it, that these cunning men and women, vnto whome so many runne for helpe, which are thought to do very much good, and no hurt at all, ought to be rooted out, and destroyed. Let vs knowe what scripture

7. Adam Winthrop's marginal manicule and note on George Gifford, *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes, in which Is Laide Open how Craftely the Diuell Deceiueth Not Onely the Witches but Many Other and so Leadeth Them Awrie into Many Great Errours* (London, 1593). Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Library Pamphlets. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

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Adam had found it reconfigured for political purposes in another work. Gaspar Facius, like many political writers in the years around 1600, liked to couch his thoughts in the form of commentary on classical texts. Reflecting on an incident in Livy's history of Rome, he wrote, 'This will be the true work of art: that if a commonwealth has become corrupt, you can endure the one person whom you cannot alter'.[109] Facius' *Politica Liviana* appeared in 1613. Even as an old man, then, Adam was still reading cutting-edge texts. As always, he read actively. By changing a single word, he turned Facius' aphorism about a difficult ally into a general condemnation of the late Jacobean state. Even in the worst of times, history could explain what had gone wrong and offer rules for living with it. And even in the worst of times, understanding history meant making books talk to one another as well as to their readers. 'Politick' reading could at least offer that much consolation.

VII

READING ECCLESIASTICALLY

Scholarship and piety combined when Adam looked to the history of Christianity. This may have been one of the interests he owed to his Ipswich teacher John Dawes, whose English translation of Johann Sleidan's *Commentaries*, an early history of the Reformation, appeared in 1560.[110] Dawes, Adam recalled, had also 'translated (as I hearde him saie) the Ecclesiasticall storie of Eusebius out of greeke into Englishe, wch amongst other thinges he lost at the taking of Calice [Calais]'.[111] Adam owned the ancient Church histories of Eusebius and Socrates, which he lent to his cousin Humphrey Milford, and at least one of the modern polemical works of the fierce defender of the Church of

[109] Gaspar Facius, *Politica Liviana: In qua Primo Regnum Romanum quibus Pacis & Belli Artibus Partum, Auctum & Multiplicatum Sit sub Regibus* (Leipzig, 1613), 74: 'Hic erit artis opus si status Reipubl. corruptus sit ut feras quem mutare nequeas'.

[110] *A Famouse Cronicle of Oure Time, Called Sleidanes Commentaries, Concerning the State of Religion and Common Wealth, during the Raigne of the Emperour Charles the Fift* (London, 1560).

[111] From the manuscript life of Dawes, presumably by Adam, entered on the verso of the flyleaf of Dawes's translation of Heinrich Bullinger, *A Hundred Sermons upo[n] the Apocalips of Iesu Christe: Reveiled in Dede by Thangell of the Lorde, but Seen or Receyved and Written by Thapostle and Eva[n]gelist S. John* (London, 1561), Harvard University, Houghton Library, STC 4061.

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England John Jewel.[112] It is not easy to say how he read these books. Adam certainly valued them. When Lady Mildmay returned his copy of Jewel's *Defense of the Apologie of the Churche of Englande* (1570), he marked the event in his diary.[113] But only a few annotations, in a variety of hands, appear in his copy of the book.

A more precise and vivid impression of how Adam envisioned the history of Christianity, especially in England, comes from an unexpected source: his copy of William Lambarde's *A Perambulation of Kent*.[114] This pioneering county history, drafted in 1570 and first published in 1576, brought together a vast amount of information about Kentish history and topography, harbours and churches, and legal and religious traditions, not to mention the Anglo-Saxon texts that Lambarde also studied intensively.[115] As a substantial, prosperous farmer, a member of the local gentry and a man of business for Cambridge colleges, Adam seems the natural reader for a book like this.[116] In fact, he was fascinated by its revelations about everything from Lambarde's own biography and charitable bequests to his discussions of Kentish law and customs. Adam the man of business took a serious interest in what Lambarde had to say about the rise of London to domination of English trade, noting, 'the Ships & mariners are gone to London: & al the Merchants followe them'.[117] And Adam the antiquary added

[112] For the ancient ecclesiastical historians, see Adam's diary: *WP*, i, 71.

[113] For the loan of this book to Lady Mildmay, see *ibid.*, 72.

[114] Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lvii. On Lambarde, see Rebecca Brackmann, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England: Laurence Nowell, William Lambarde, and the Study of Old English* (Cambridge, 2012).

[115] A surviving scribal manuscript of *A Perambulation of Kent* with many notes and inserts by Lambarde reflects the revisions that the author made after Matthew Parker and William Cecil read his work, and before publication: Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone, MS U47/48/Z1. Warm thanks to Alexandra Walsham for drawing our attention to this manuscript.

[116] MacCulloch, who had not seen the book, made this natural inference about Adam's interest in it in *Suffolk and the Tudors*, 117.

[117] Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lvii, 130. The full passage reads: 'In the tyme of Kinge Ed: 4. the Port of Sandwiche had 95 ships & 1500 Saylers, & yealded to him 16000^{li} yerly for Custome. And in the tyme of King James it yeelded 2926^{li}. But nowe by reason of a Charter granted by his Matie to the Merchant adventurers of London, the Kinges Custome is come to nothinge. For there trading being taken awaie, the Ships & mariners are gone to London: & al the Merchants followe them. Ex relatione Baronum in Parleamento anno 18 Jacobi regis'.

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an interesting new fact to his author's description of the church of St Mary in Castro at Dover, which, Lambarde thought, had been built by good King Lucius in the second century: 'Henry Howarde Erle of Northampton, was buried here'.[118]

What Adam picked out as the thread that interested him most in Lambarde's rich tapestry was not economic or political or antiquarian information, in the strict sense, but the history of the Church in England.[119] During the early years of the Reformation, abbeys and churches in Kent had been the object of some of Thomas Cromwell's most forceful direct efforts to expose the superstition and corruption of the old Church. The abbey of Boxley, near Maidstone, founded in the twelfth century, had a famous triumphal crucifix, or rood. The eyes of its figure of Jesus moved, and pilgrims came in large numbers to see this happen. After the monasteries were dissolved, the rood was paraded through city after city. On 12 February 1538, Bishop Hilsey of Rochester broke it to pieces in public, exposing the wires that had worked the device. Eventually it was burned at Paul's Cross.[120] Lambarde claimed that he would tell the tale as he found it in the sources, 'in suche sorte onely, as the same was sometime by themselves published in print for their estimation and credite'. He also made clear that he believed that this sorry tale of clerical deception 'yet remaineth deepely imprinted in the mindes and memories of many on liue, to their everlasting reproche, shame, and confusion'.[121] Adam marked the vivid pages Lambarde devoted to the story with beautifully legible running heads: 'The roode of grace | A proper story'.[122]

[118] *Ibid.*, 158. From this reference and others it is clear that Adam was still reading this book late in life, two decades after it was printed, and filling its margins with new material. For the dates, see Lisa Ford, 'A Body in Motion: The Afterlives of the Tomb of Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton', *Material Culture Review*, lxxiv–lxxv (Spring 2012), <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/mcr/article/view/20456/23621> (accessed 16 May 2018). On the legends about King Lucius, see Felicity Heal, 'What Can King Lucius Do for You? The Reformation and the Early British Church', *English Historical Review*, cxx (2005).

[119] The surviving manuscript, Kent History and Library Centre, MS U47/48/Z1, shows that this was a central theme of Lambarde's work from the first, and one that his revisions of the original text brought into even sharper focus.

[120] Peter Marshall, 'The Rood of Boxley, the Blood of Hailes and the Defence of the Henrician Church', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xlvi, 4 (1995).

[121] Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lvii, 227.

[122] The note quoted in the text appears *ibid.*, 228, 229; at pp. 227 and 230, Adam writes, 'The story of ye roode of Grace'.

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In Lambarde, Adam found a repository of historical facts that pointed to a larger thesis: Christianity had degenerated since ancient times, reaching a nadir in the later Middle Ages, and only the Protestant Reformation had saved it. Adam decorated the margins of his book with other facts that supported this argument: for example, the histories and sufferings of pious Protestant martyrs, instances of clerical misconduct, and evidence that even the most respected of medieval England's monastic historians had been too credulous.[123] 'Bede', wrote Adam at one point, was 'a writer of vaine miracles'.[124]

More importantly, Adam made it clear, by entering parallels in the book, that he connected Lambarde's book with a more explicit Protestant history of the Church, one that shared Bede's interest in citing documents, but rejected him and his history as a tale of the corruption of the native British Church by Augustine's Roman mission. With great relish, Lambarde told a long story about William Courtenay, a fourteenth-century archbishop of Canterbury. This proud prelate became 'as hote as a toste' when his vassals brought him their 'rent hay and littar' not in carts but on horseback, and imposed a humiliating penance — a savage insult, as Lambarde remarked, to 'ouer simple men, for so small a fault (or rather for no fault at all)'.[125] In the margin Adam wrote, 'Mr Foxe. Abr:dactes, pag: 307'. He was identifying a parallel in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, first published in 1563: not in one of the enormous complete editions, but in the handy 'abridged' version of 1589.[126] Foxe told the story, in the version Adam read, in less detail and with less colour than Lambarde. But he too condemned Courtenay for his pride. Unlike Lambarde, moreover, Foxe contextualized the anecdote in a way that highlighted its larger meaning. It appeared immediately after he described the corruption of Pope Alexander V, the impact of

[123] *Ibid.*, 221: 'In this Towne Thomas Hatten, a preacher, was burned for Christs ghospel anno 1530. And in Q Maries time 7 were burned there'; 366–7: 'A monckishe skirmishe or Tragical combat betweene the monckes of Rochester and ye bretheren of stroude'. This was not a unanimous view: some Protestants, such as Matthew Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, read Bede with considerable respect and admiration.

[124] *Ibid.*, 397.

[125] *Ibid.*, 180–1.

[126] *An Abridgement of the Booke of Acts and Monumentes of the Church: Written by That Reuerend Father, Maister Iohn Fox: And now Abridged by Timothe Bright, Doctour of Phisicke, for such as Either through Want of Leysure, or Abilitie Haue Not the Vse of So Necessary an History* (London, 1589), 307.

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Wyclif's and Hus's writings, and the pride of a later archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel. Reading Lambarde and Foxe together, Adam understood Courtenay's rage not simply as a tale about the prestige — and vanity — of the archbishops, but as evidence for the corruption of the late medieval Church.[127]

Lambarde took a more explicit position on another story. The bishop of Rochester told his listeners of a divine revelation: King Richard, Stephen Langton (the archbishop of Canterbury) and a chaplain had just been released from Purgatory, 'and in that day there issued no moe, but these three, out of the place of paines'. In this case, Lambarde pointed the moral: 'If the Bishops, the great torches of that time, were thus dimmer, how great were the shadows? What light was to be looked for at the little candels, the soule Priestes, and seely Syr Johns?'[128] The bishop's error, he made clear, was a symptom of a much larger decay.

Here, too, Adam found the opportunity for what he would have seen as a deeper reflection. He entered in the margin not a simple reference, but a summary of a similar event with a more dramatic outcome. This was a Protestant anecdote of a standard form: a revenge story, in which the villain was immediately punished for his sins by the hand of providence.[129] Adam had a taste for this kind of history, one which Foxe, as well as chroniclers like John Stow and Raphael Holinshed, had shared. As Alexandra Walsham has recently shown, they narrated the past in the most dramatic terms: 'A vehicle of ethical instruction secondary only to the text of the Bible, history . . . was a theatre of divine judgements in which the Lord was simultaneously the director, leading actor, and author of the dramatic script itself'. Though their religious positions varied, English chroniclers told tales of vice suitably punished, and eagerly described crowd-pleasing executions. All

[127] On the making of *Acts and Monuments*, see Elizabeth Evenden and Thomas S. Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (Cambridge, 2011). The fullest study of Foxe's place in the Eusebian tradition is still Thomas S. Freeman, '"Great Searching out of Bookes and Autors": John Foxe as an Ecclesiastical Historian' (Rutgers University Ph.D. thesis, 1995). See also Gretchen E. Minton, '"The Same Cause and Like Quarell": Eusebius, John Foxe, and the Evolution of Ecclesiastical History', *Church History*, lxxi (2002).

[128] Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lvii, 240–1. The phrase about the shadows is in Latin in the original: 'Ipsae tenebrae quantae?'

[129] On this genre, see Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2001), ch. 2.

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of them appreciated oddities and wonders, especially those that clearly showed providence at work.[130] In this case, too, Adam drew on Foxe. Another priest had preached a sermon that revealed the free and easy way in which the old Church had promised believers release from Purgatory:

> The like sermon preached one Nightingale parson of Crondal in Q. Maries time: who havinge receyved a Bul of Cardinal Poole [Reginald Pole], toulde his parishioners the next Sunday, in the pulpit that he was absolued by the Cardinal from al his synnes, and by the virtue of the said Bul was made as cleane from Syn as he was that night he was borne.

Unlike the bishop of Rochester, Nightingale paid the just price for his false claim: 'immeadiately he fel doune dead in the pulpit'.

In this case Adam did not use the abridged version of Foxe, as the page number he cited shows: 'Recorded by Mr Foxe in th'actes & Monumentes. Fol. 1478'. The story of Nightingale appears, told at considerable length, on page 1,478 of the full edition of the *Acts and Monuments* published in 1576. A spectacular woodcut portrays the priest as he collapses before his stunned, rosary-clutching flock (see Plate 8). It seems likely that Adam, who recorded lending books but not borrowing them, had both that and the abridgement on his shelves. Foxe dramatized the story effectively. He even cited the witnesses from whom he had the tale: 'Testified by Rob. Austen of Cartham which both heard and saw the same, & is witnessed also by the whole countrey round about'.[131]

Adam abridged what he found in Foxe. But he took care to show that he accepted the martyrologist's interpretation of the story. Nightingale's sermon revealed how corrupt the Church had become by the sixteenth century. His sudden death, however, gave the story a second and deeper point. Providence shaped history, not only in its grand lines, but also day by day: and God's revenge for evil conduct took place visibly, in real time. The intensity of Adam's interest in Foxe is not surprising. He had a family connection to the martyrologist. Adam's elder brother William, who had lived through the Marian years in London, had actively resisted the restoration of Catholicism

[130] Alexandra Walsham, 'Providentialism', in Paulina Kewes, Ian W. Archer and Felicity Heal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Holinshed's Chronicles* (Oxford, 2013), 427. See also Annabel Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles* (Chicago, 1994), ch. 7.

[131] We cite the 1576 edition of Foxe from John Foxe's *The Acts and Monuments Online*, <http://www.johnfoxe.org> (accessed 16 May 2018).

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and knew some of the leaders of the resistance. One of his friends, the Oxford-educated polymath John Philpott, was executed in 1555. William received some of his papers, and provided them to Foxe for use in the *Acts and Monuments*.[132]

Two points emerge. Adam read his two copies of Foxe as so many others did, with sharp attention. If either copy survived, the contours of his reading of the ecclesiastical past would probably emerge with greater clarity. Yet it seems certain that he accepted Foxe's interpretation of history. Reading ecclesiastically, for Adam, meant scrutinizing the record for the action of God's hand, and finding it.

VIII

READING AS A FAMILY

The Winthrops, like most other families that shared their religious views, spent much of their lives as readers with the Bible and other devotional works. Reading the Bible was a powerfully personal experience, which Adam felt and savoured.[133] In his copy of Rudolf Gwalther's homilies on the Minor Prophets, Adam noted a long discussion of the effects of proper scriptural reading: 'A comparison betwene fire & the worde of god'.[134] He also divided Gwalther's text into component parts, showing his interest by numbering the author's analogies.

The 'fire' of the 'word of God' could burn as well as warm. Adam's son John had a much more fraught approach than Adam to his own reading: it could be 'like hell to mee' to think of a Bible verse or to read his own emotions for possible signs of his own reprobation.[135] He recorded and reflected upon his religious life in the 'Experiencia'. Some foundational experiences returned to haunt him. One incident in particular 'mett with me at every turne', disturbing his 'conscience'. As a boy, he had 'spied 2 small books lye cast aside' and 'stole them'.[136] Augustine's *Confessions*, with its unforgettable description of the teenage

[132] Ronald H. Fritze, 'Philpott, John', *Oxford DNB*.
[133] Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford, 2013).
[134] Rodolph Gualter [Rudolf Gwalther], *Certaine Godlie Homelies or Sermons upon the Prophets Abdias and Ionas*, 67.
[135] *WP*, i, 157.
[136] *WP*, i, 193.

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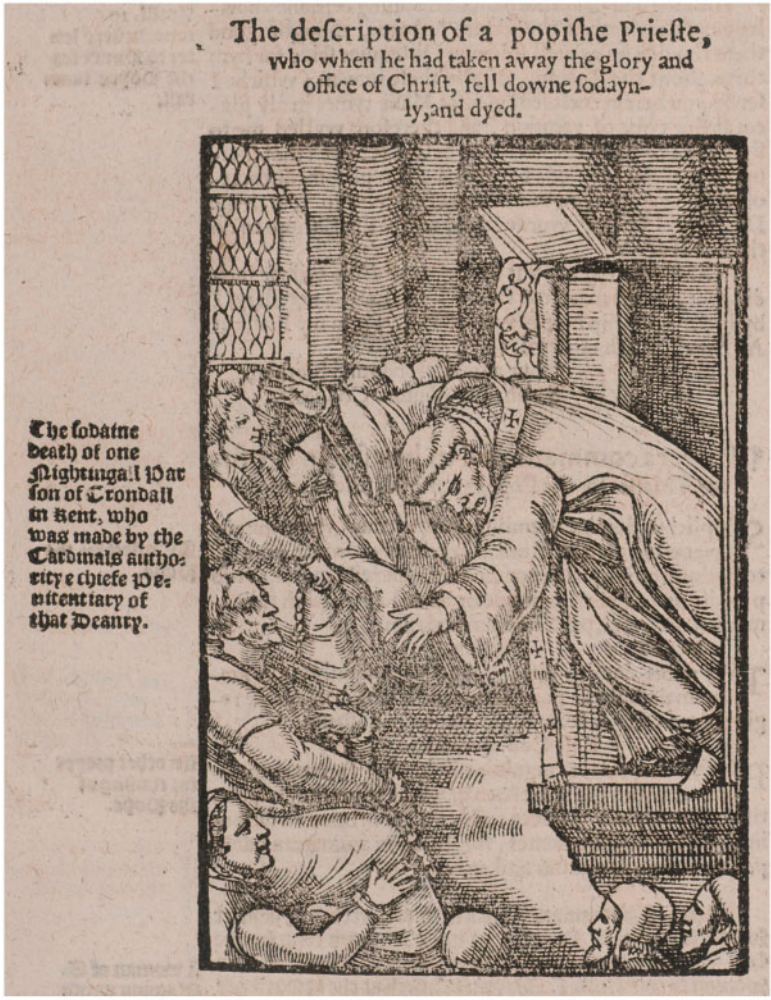

8. The providential death of Nightingale, parson of Crondal. John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church*, 3rd edn (London, 1576), 1,478. Scheide Library, 19.3. Courtesy of the Scheide Library.

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Augustine's theft of pears and the remorse that ensued, was surely a model for the 'Experiencia'.[137] But it is telling that John stole books: good books could be as repellent as bad books could be alluring. Reading both abetted and prevented sin, just as writing made the experience of sin and grace legible.

Adam shared his passion for listening to the Bible, and interpretations of it, with the members of his family. Most of what we know about the reading interests and practices of the women in the family comes from the same domain. They were also serious sermon-goers, who probably took in Scripture as much by ear as by eye.[138] Like the men, they knew their texts. When John Winthrop's second wife, Thomasine, was dying in childbed, he recalled:

> Then she prayed me to reade by hir, when I asked hir where, she answeared, In some of the holye gospells, so I beganne in John the 14, and read on to the ende of the 17th Chapter. And when I pawsed, at the ende of any sweet sentence, she would saye this is comfortable . . . After, she desired me againe to reade to hir the 8th to the Romans, and the 11th to the Hebrews, whereby she received great comfort, still callinge to reade on, then I read the 116 psalm this is a sweet psalm (said she).[139]

John and Thomasine would continue their 'readinge etc, untill late in the night'.[140] Both were intimately familiar with the Bible in such a way as to make this a compilatory, composite reading session. Their conversation was riddled with textual references, either to verses or to other written texts. To men and women who shared such deep, tacit knowledge of sacred texts, every reference conjured up more than the words actually spoken. In the morning, John assured his wife of 'the happie estate she was entringe into', in the company of the 'prophets and apostles and saints of God, and those holye martirs (whose stories when I asked hir if she remembred she answered yea)'.[141] John also read aloud from the stories of the martyrs — presumably a copy of Foxe's book

[137] Augustine, *Confessions*, ii, 4–9.

[138] See David Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York, 1989); David D. Hall, *Cultures of Print: Essays in the History of the Book* (Amherst, 1996); David D. Hall and Alexandra Walsham, '"Justification by Print Alone?" Protestantism, Literacy, and Communications in the Anglo-American World of John Winthrop', in Francis J. Bremer and Lynn A. Botelho (eds.), *The World of John Winthrop: Essays on England and New England, 1588–1649* (Boston, 2005); Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590–1640* (Cambridge, 2010).

[139] *WP*, i, 188.

[140] *WP*, i, 189.

[141] *Ibid.*

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— though he found it hard to contemplate the martyrs as piously as he should and as Thomasine apparently did. He confessed in his 'Experiencia' that while it was easy 'to think gloriously' of martyrs who were 'glorious in worldly respects' (learned or eminent), it was 'no easye thinge to reade the histories of such as were vile, and base, and had no other ornament but naked truethe, without some contemptible thoughts'.[142] While Adam read Foxe's book for its tales of divine vengeance, John struggled with its portraits of martyrs without external qualifications, from the illiterate Welsh fisherman Rawlins White to the outspoken Anne Askew.[143] Yet he knew it would have meaning for Thomasine.

Andrew Cambers and others have shown that women in families like the Winthrops — families that shared their status as new members of the gentry, lived in country estates, and tended towards Puritanism — read with as much intensity and engagement as any man. They read throughout their estates: not only in the bedroom, where John read to the dying Thomasine, but in closets, kitchens, halls and gardens.[144] The Winthrops only occasionally noted their location of a reading, but when they did so it provided crucial context in which reading carried a particular charge.

Female reading could align closely with male. Some women worked their way through complex and demanding works of polemical theology, adding their own notes.[145] Elizabeth Isham read to her sister and mother in times of deep sorrow, much as

[142] *WP*, i, 192. On the practices of devotional reading, see Peter Stallybrass, 'Books and Scrolls: Navigating the Bible', in Jennifer Andersen and Elizabeth Sauer (eds.), *Books and Readers in Early Modern England: Material Studies* (Philadelphia, 2002); Matthew P. Brown, *The Pilgrim and the Bee: Reading Rituals and Book Culture in Early New England* (Philadelphia, 2007), ch. 2.

[143] On Foxe and English martyrology, see Evenden and Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England*; David Loades (ed.), *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 1997); David Loades (ed.), *John Foxe: An Historical Perspective* (Aldershot, 1999); Thomas S. Freeman, 'The Importance of Dying Earnestly: The Metamorphosis of the Account of James Bainham in "Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*"', in R. N. Swanson (ed.), *The Church Retrospective* (Woodbridge, 1997); Patrick Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays* (London, 1994), ch. 6.

[144] Andrew Cambers, *Godly Reading: Print, Manuscript and Puritanism in England, 1580–1720* (Cambridge, 2011).

[145] Andrew Cambers, 'Readers' Marks and Religious Practice: Margaret Hoby's Marginalia', in John N. King (ed.), *Tudor Books and Readers: Materiality and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge, 2010); Julie Crawford, 'Reconsidering Early Modern Women's Reading: or, How Margaret Hoby Read her de Mornay', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, lxxiii (2010).

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John Winthrop read to his wife, picking the 'places' that she thought would help them.[146] Like John, she imitated Augustine's *Confessions*, and his account of his theft of pears, in her own 'Booke of Rememberance'.[147] The women in Adam's circle also read on their own.[148] Some showed curiosity about the erudite books that Adam favoured: but they apparently did not practise his active, pen-in-hand style of reading. His sister Lady Mildmay borrowed his copy of Jewel's polemical *Defense of the Apologie of the Churche of Englande*, a vast book, complicated in layout. Almost every page is stuffed with quotations from early ecclesiastical writers, a quality that its early annotators noticed and appreciated.[149] It is possible that Lady Mildmay savoured Jewel's sharp arguments and rich learning. But the details escape us.

Of another woman in his circle we know more. A younger Lady Mildmay (born Amy Gurton, she grew up only a few miles from Adam's estate, and may indeed have lived with him and his wife as a girl) borrowed 'good bookes' from Adam and corresponded with him about her reading. Amy did not name the texts she read at his recommendation, but she vividly described her response to an account of his sister's death:

> I have read with great comforte a true description of the gratious life and blessed deathe of your woorthie sister. I doute not but her praires have, and will be effectuall to drawe goddes blessinges uppon her posteritie: I praie God perfitt his woorke of grace, where it is begunne in any of us: that wee maye walke as shee hathe given us an example.[150]

[146] Elizabeth Isham, 'Booke of Rememberance' (*c.*1638), Princeton University Library, Robert H. Taylor Collection, RTC01 (no. 62), fos. 12^{r-v}, 22^{r}. On Isham, see Anne Cotterill, 'Fit Words at the "Pitts Brinke": The Achievement of Elizabeth Isham', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, lxxiii (2010); Isaac Stephens, 'Confessional Identity in Early Stuart England: The "Prayer Book Puritanism" of Elizabeth Isham', *Journal of British Studies*, l, 1 (2011); Isaac Stephens, *The Gentlewoman's Remembrance: Patriarchy, Piety, and Singlehood in Early Stuart England* (Manchester, 2016).

[147] Isham, 'Booke of Rememberance', fo. 10^{v}. As the editors of the online edition of the text point out, Isham even took her term for desire, 'lickerishness', from the translation of the *Confessions* by William Watts (London, 1631): Elizabeth Clarke and Erica Longfellow, 'Introduction to the Online Edition: "[E]xamine My Life". Writing the Self in the Early Seventeenth Century', <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/projects/isham/texts> (accessed 16 May 2018), n. 43.

[148] The female Winthrops may well have formed their own networks for reading as well, though the surviving evidence does not reveal their presence: see Femke Molekamp, *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England: Religious Reading and Writing* (Oxford, 2013).

[149] This copy is now at Princeton University Library: see n. 45 above.

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This correspondence evidently mattered to Adam, since he transcribed it into his now lost commonplace book.[151] Reading women were a vital component of the godly extended household.

Adam's second wife, Anne, the daughter of the minister and landowner Henry Browne, was a fluent writer. She maintained an active correspondence with her husband, who travelled often, and others. A holograph letter that she wrote to Adam, away in London, around 1581 expresses warm affection, encloses 'fyve payer of hoses', and asks for 'a pound of starche'. It also shows that Anne continued to improve her accomplishments as an adult. In a postscript she moved into French, which the editors of the Winthrop Papers render as assured, if imperfect: 'Je vous rende grace de la bien souuenance que vous aues de moy bible françois. Je vous prie de l'enuoyer en brêf par la Rouillier' (see Plate 9).[152] In the original, Anne had written, 'Je vous rende grace car la ben souuenance', before she, or someone else, improved her sentence.[153] The French Bible does not survive. But Anne's signature also appears in a couple of Adam's Latin books, though it is not entered in her handwriting.[154] It seems likely that Anne and her husband spent time together among books, and certain that they shared pious interests.

Two points are clear. From the sixteenth century onwards, male Winthrops took a keen interest not only in the messages they found in the Bible and other religious texts, but also in those that the women in their family and larger circle uncovered there. But the Winthrop women did their reading within a framework of patriarchal control, one considerably tighter than those established by the male members of other Puritan families. Attitudes and practices in highly literate families varied, as E. Jennifer Monaghan has shown.[155] But some elite males, such

[150] *WP*, i, 266.

[151] See the remaining letters: *WP*, i, 264–7.

[152] *WP*, i, 29.

[153] Anne Winthrop to Adam Winthrop, *c.*1581, unnumbered letter, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, box lxii.

[154] Hieronymus Osorius, *De Vera Sapientia: Libri Vad Sanctissimum D.N. Gregorium III Pontificem Maximum* (Cologne, 1582), MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. xci, verso of title page: 'Ingenij cibus literae Anna Wintropp' (written by Adam). Carion, Melanchthon and Peucer, *Chronicon Carionis Expositum et Auctum Multis et Veteribus et Recentibus Historiis*, NYSL, Win 161, has a dedicatory inscription to Anne on the verso of the flyleaf.

[155] E. Jennifer Monaghan, *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America* (Amherst, 2005), 43–4, ch. 4.

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as Cotton Mather, tried to cultivate their daughters' taste for reading. Across New England, moreover, women often taught male as well as female children to read. So far we have found no evidence that the Winthrop women did so. We shall see later that the male Winthrops' attitudes and practices had troubling consequences outside their family.

IX

READING TIME AND NATURE

For early modern readers, Scripture was not the only source of evidence for supernatural intervention in human lives. It was common knowledge, especially after 1659, when Meric Casaubon published his edition of John Dee's diaries, that the great alchemist and collector had sought knowledge from angels, working with scryers who could see and speak with them.[156] One book that had belonged to Dee was a massive collection of theological writings by an innovative sixteenth-century German scholar and teacher, Johann Rivius.[157] A long section of Rivius' work (the only part that Dee annotated) dealt with angels and devils. At one point Rivius described the use of prayers for self-protection against diabolic onslaughts. Dee commented, 'This happened to me in January 1582, when I had set out to expel from my study a devil that was threatening me, because of Saul. See that history'.[158]

At some point this book of Dee's entered the Winthrops' library, to join the other volumes treasured by John Jr. The Winthrops probably could not have identified Saul as Barnabas Saul, one of Dee's scryers, who was 'strangely trubled by a spirituall creature abowt mydnight' on 9 October 1581 and was associated with him still in 1582.[159] They probably did not know

[156] See especially Deborah E. Harkness, *John Dee's Conversations with Angels: Cabala, Alchemy, and the End of Nature* (Cambridge, 1999); Stephen Clucas, 'False Illuding Spirits & Cownterfeiting Deuills: John Dee's Angelic Conversations and Religious Anxiety', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *Conversations with Angels: Essays towards a History of Spiritual Communication, 1100–1700* (Basingstoke, 2011).

[157] Rivius, *Opera Theologica Omnia*, NYSL, Win 210. The title page bears the signature of John Winthrop FRS, and the date 1697.

[158] *Ibid.*, 719. Dee underlines Rivius as follows: 'Sic ergo ibi: Castra metabitur angelus Domini, in circuitu timentium eum, et eripiet eos', and then remarks in the margin 'A[nn]o 1582 Januario hoc mihi evenit dum Diabolum minitantem mihi, propter Saulum ex Musaeo meo exterminare aggressus eram. vide historiam illam'.

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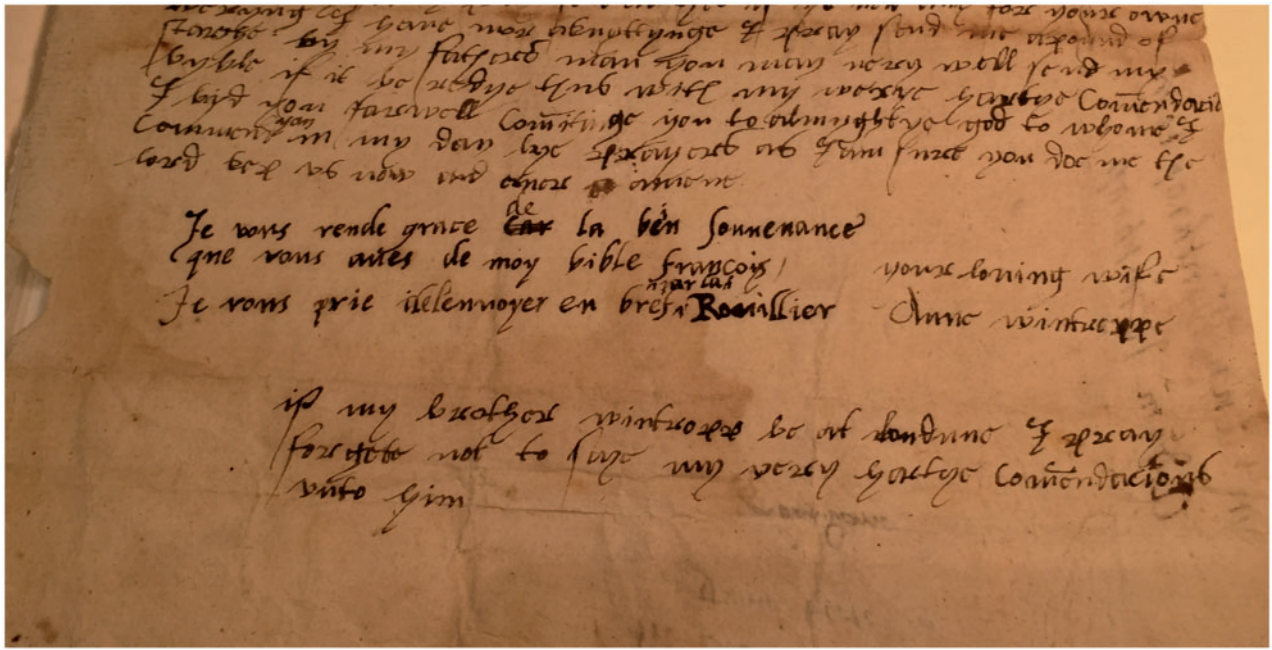

9. Anne Winthrop to Adam Winthrop, *c.* 1581, unnumbered letter, Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, box lxii. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

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that the devil in question was named Lundrumguffa and described in gruesome detail in what Dee called 'that history', his angel diaries.[160] Nor can we, as still later readers, know whether Dee's note was ever read by any of the Winthrops. But from it, and from other notes now lost, members of the family could have drawn a very powerful moral. A revered predecessor in the realms of alchemy and natural philosophy had experienced the presence of devils in the everyday world.

Although Dee's experience made for striking reading, such direct attention from the spirit world was not required for early modern readers to recognize supernatural intervention. Many English Protestants recorded (and some published) collections of incidents that showed providence at work. These often included revenge stories, which, as we have already seen, interested Adam deeply. But they also included tales of prodigies: natural happenings, from violent storms to monstrous births, that seemed to violate the order of nature. Sometimes these were sent as a warning, and followed, when they were not heeded, by disasters of all sorts.[161] Like revenge stories, prodigies fascinated Adam, as we can tell, not from his copies of the chronicles themselves, which do not survive, but from his notes in Lambarde. On a scrap of paper at the end of his copy, he noted that 'The 4 of Aug. 1585 at the ende of the towne of Mot[t]ingham in Kent the grounde began to sinke & 3 great elmes were swallowed up'.[162] After Lambarde's errata list, Adam inscribed a longer account of a marvel:

> The 6 of July 1574. in the Ile of T[h]anet a monstruous fishe did shoote it selfe on the shore, & there died. The lengthe of this fishe was 22 yardes: the nether iawe 12. foote, & his tongue 14 foote longe: some of his ribbes were 16 foot in lengthe; & betweene the eyes, he was 12 foote broade. &c.[163]

[159] Harkness, *John Dee's Conversations with Angels*, 19.

[160] For Lundrumguffa, see BL, Sloane MS 3188, fo. 129^{v}. We thank Stephen Clucas for alerting us to the name and identity of Dee's demon.

[161] See Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, ch. 4.

[162] In the seventeenth century, Thomas Fuller gave a more detailed account of this curious incident in his *History of the Worthies of England*, ed. P. Austin Nuttall, 3 vols. (New York, 1965), ii, 115, dating it to 4 Aug. 1585: 'in the Hamlet of Mottingham (pertaining to Eltham in this county) in a Field which belongeth to Sir Percival Hart. Betimes in the morning the ground began to sink, so much that three great Elm trees were suddenly swallowed into the Pit; the tops falling downward into the hole; and before ten of the clock they were so overwhelmed, that no part of them might be discovered, the Concave being suddenly filled with Water. The compasse of the hole was about eighty yards, and so profound, that a sounding line of fifty fathoms could hardly find or feel the bottom'.

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In this case he also named his source: 'Chronolog: London: anno 16. Eliz. R[egi]nae. pag: 314'. This was Adam's shorthand for the 1618 edition of John Stow's *Abridgement of the English Chronicle*. Stow recorded the event there without an explicit comment, but he also placed it in a series of similar stories. He told of a young woman and a girl who confessed that they had pretended to have sold their souls to the Devil, a young man who was carried away by and drowned in the run-off from a heavy rain, and 'strange impresions of fire and smoake' seen in the London air in November.[164]

A short note on wonders reveals more about Adam's reading: 'The 30th of July 1609. a yonge woman was delivered of a monster in olde Sandwiche'.[165] His source was probably a sensational pamphlet, *Strange Newes out of Kent, of a Monstrous and Misshapen Child*, published in 1609.[166] This not only described the baby in question as resembling a lump of flesh with deformed facial features, arms growing out of its shoulders with no joints, and fourteen toes on its feet, but also offered a vivid illustration on its title page (see Plate 10).

Adam's favourite chroniclers loved cheap print, which brought tales of the supernatural to less learned men and women. Their own works engorged these stories as they swelled to their final monstrous size, only to release them as they broke down again into pamphlets. Too big to be portable or readable, chronicles were cut apart so that the most impressive bits of their content could be made accessible to a larger, poorer public.[167] When Adam recorded the appearance of this prodigy, he emulated his favourite historians. They enlarged their texts in new editions; he

[163] Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lvii, sig. [Pp6]^{r}.

[164] John Stow, *The Abridgement of the English Chronicle, First Collected by M. John Stow, and after Him Augmented with Very Many Memorable Antiquities, and Continued with Matters Forreine and Domesticall, unto the End of the Yeare 1610 by E.H.* (London, 1618), 314–15.

[165] Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lvii, 139.

[166] *Strange Nevves out of Kent, of a Monstrous and Misshapen Child, Borne in Old Sandwitch upon the 10. of Iulie Last, the Like (for Strangenes) Hath Neuer Beene Seene* (London, 1609).

[167] Walsham, 'Providentialism'; Patrick Collinson, 'John Foxe as Historian', at *John Foxe's The Acts and Monuments Online*, <https://www.johnfoxe.org/index.php?realm=more&gototype=modern&type=essay&book=essay3> (accessed 16 May 2018).

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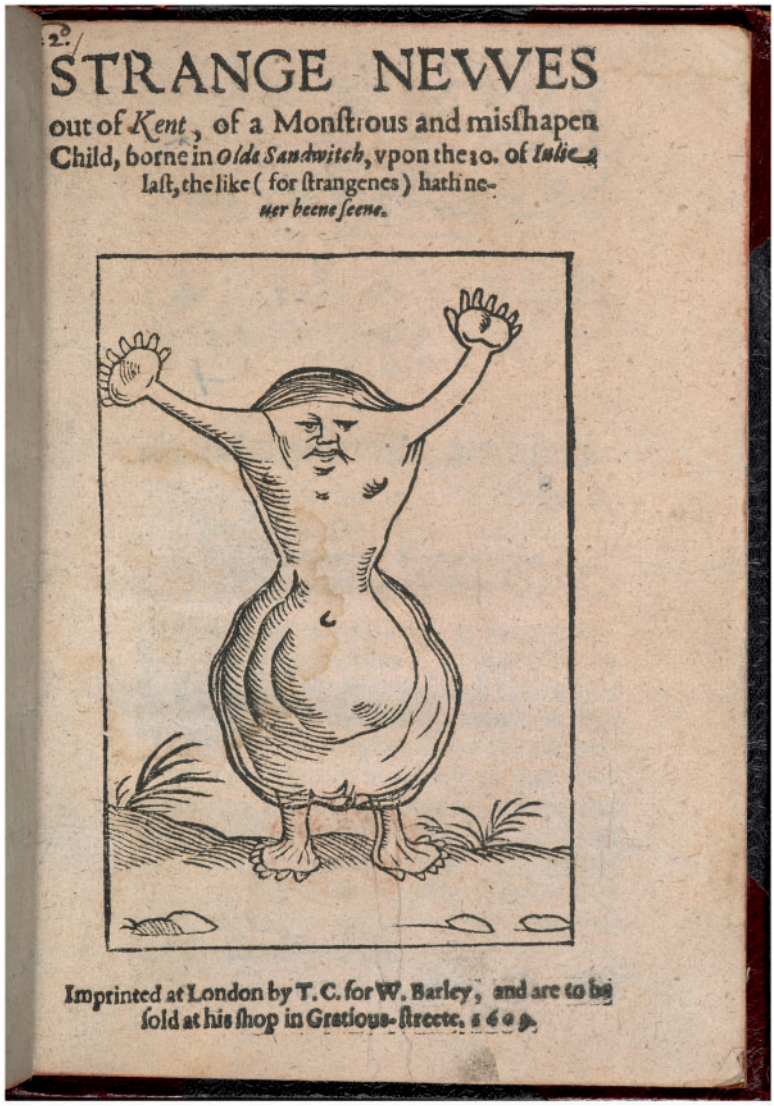
STRANGE NEVVES
out of *Kent*, of a Monſtrous and miſshapen
Child, borne in *Olde Sandwitch*, vpon the 30. of *Iulie*
laſt, the like (for ſtrangenes) hath ne-
uer beene ſeene.
Imprinted at London by T. C. for W. Barley, and are to be
ſold at his ſhop in Gratious-ſtreete. 1609.

10. Title page, *Strange Nevves out of Kent, of a Monstrous and Misshapen Child* (London, 1609). © British Library Board, C.31.b.16.

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filled the margins of existing books with material that his authors would have seized on just as eagerly.

Strange Newes out of Kent did more than record a birth. Following a tradition that went back to the ancient Near East, the author read the misshapen baby as a sign: 'Gods wonders (deare Countreymen of England) daylie shewed amongst vs, as well Celestiall as earthly, may, if any grace be within us, procure a continuall feare and trembling'. Fear and trembling were called for: 'God we see is highly offended with vs, in that he thus changes the secret workings of nature'.[168]

Reading, for Adam as for many others, often amounted to a form of compilation, as the annotating reader transferred materials from one book to the margins of another, or to a commonplace book. Compilatory reading of this kind often mingled multiple reports of very different origins. Nehemiah Wallington, for example, drew his *Historical Notices* from printed books and pamphlets, but also from letters and oral reports. Though he often identified his sources, he did not treat them as authorities of distinct kinds.[169] Adam, for his part, recorded reports of revenge stories from his own world in his journal, much as he entered the story of the elms of Mottingham along with revenge stories from Foxe in his Lambarde. He scanned the past and the present, in the real world and in his books, looking for the same kinds of story.

On 2 May 1603, for example, Adam noted in his diary that the son of a blacksmith had laughed at his father when a horse he was shoeing kicked him. Later the horse threw the son 'and clave his hed in sunder'. His script changing to the appropriate italic, Adam wrote, in Latin: 'a heavy judgment of God on the mocker of his father'. Three neat marginal trefoils highlighted the incident.[170] Half a year later, on 2 December 1603, Adam told how a falconer who had been at the alehouse fell into a deep dry well with two hawks on his wrist. He was found the next day, dead, as was one of the hawks. A manicule and the words 'a heavy

[168] *Strange Nevves out of Kent, of a Monstrous and Misshapen Child*, sig. [Aiii]$^{r-v}$.

[169] Nehemiah Wallington, *Historical Notices of Events Occurring Chiefly in the Reign of Charles I*, ed. R. Webb, 2 vols. (London, 1869); Paul S. Seaver, *Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London* (Stanford, 1985).

[170] *WP*, i, 81; BL, Add. MS 37419, fo. 27^{v}. Winthrop made his comment in Latin, perhaps to emphasize how seriously he took the event: 'grave iudicium dei in irrisorem patris sui'.

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judgment' made the meaning of the incident clear.[171] In the winter of 1608, Jane Dryfild left Groton for London: 'the night before she was in danger to haue been burned in hir bedde & as she rode through Boxford hir childe fell into the water at Boxford bridge'. 'These', wrote Adam: 'are the omens of evils'.[172] In each case, Adam saw the hand of providence at work as clearly as when it extinguished the corrupt preacher Nightingale.

Did Adam also see the prodigies he recorded as evidence of providence at work, even when no immediate judgement followed them? It seems likely that he did. Other readers who shared his high level of literary culture, Stephan Batman, for example, saw providence in every appearance of a monster, whether baby or dragon.[173] An entry in one of Adam's almanacs records what looks like a fearful response to a celestial omen: 'There was seene in ye skie a fearful sight'.[174]

The most direct evidence of Adam's views, however, comes from another of his books: his copy of his nephew John Cotta's *The Triall of Witch-Craft*. Cotta set out to explain how a physician could know when the supernatural is involved in his patient's suffering. He piled up arguments from the Continental natural philosopher Jean Fernel and anecdotes from historical works. And he drew a general conclusion. If the workings of the disease are hidden, or the natural remedies do not operate as they should, or if they accomplish more than they ought, then it is no natural illness.

Adam seems to have agreed with what he read. Manicules and summaries reveal how attentively he followed the arguments. Sometimes he checked Cotta's references. In one case, he verified a citation to Melanchthon against one of his two copies of Melanchthon's *Chronicon Carionis*.[175] He underlined passages

[171] *WP*, i, 83; BL, Add. MS 37419, fo. 29^{v}: 'graue iudicium'.

[172] *WP*, i, 97; BL, Add. MS 37419, fo. 36^{v}: 'Haec sunt malorum omina'.

[173] Konrad Lykosthenes, *The Doome Warning All Men to the Judgement: Wherein Are Contayned for the Most Parte All the Straunge Prodigies Hapned in the Worlde, with Diuers Secrete Figures of Reuelations Tending to Mannes Stayed Conuersion towards God. In Maner of a Generall Chronicle*, trans. Stephen Batman (London, 1581). See Rivkah Zim, 'Batman [Bateman], Stephan [Stephen]', *Oxford DNB*.

[174] Richard Allestree, *A New Almanack and Prognostication, for the Yeere of Our Lord God, 1621: Being First from Bissextile Yeere. Calculated and Properly Referred to the Longitude . . . of the Famous Towne of Derby* (London, 1621), MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lxiii, entry for 2 Sept.

[175] Cotta, *Triall of Witch-Craft*, 49: '*Melancton* out of *Carion* doth recite the mention of a woman, of the order of the *Druides* among the *Tungri*, who foretold *Dioclesian* that

(cont. on p. 129)

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of special importance, some of them disconcerting, like a story from Diodorus Siculus, told at second hand, about an oracle that spoke through the sexual organs of a young woman.[176] He carefully indexed the long series of authorities on whom Cotta had drawn.[177] Adam saw that Cotta had drawn his central arguments from historians whom he respected greatly.[178] The great summa of the new British antiquarianism, William Camden's *Britannia*, was one of Adam's favourite books, as his marginal references to it show. At one point Cotta referred to Camden's description of Cheshire, and Adam noted that this appeared in the *Britannia*.[179] The anecdote in question became a favourite of writers fascinated by the action of higher powers. Camden not only told a story of supernatural powers at work, but also offered an interpretation wholly in tune with Cotta's:

> A wonder it is that I shall tell you, and yet no other than I have heard verified upon the credit of many credible persons, and commonlie beleeved: that before any heire of this house of the Breretons dieth, there bee seene in a poole adjoining bodies of trees swimming for certaine daies together . . . I am no Wisard to interpret such strange wonders. But these and such like things are done either by the holie tutelar Angels of men, or else by the devils who by Gods permission mightilie shew their power in this inferiour world.[180]

(n. 175 cont.)
hee should be Emperour of *Rome*, when he had first killed a Boare, which prooued afterward one *Aper*, then an Vsurper, which in the Latine tongue signifieth a Boare'. Winthrop wrote 'lib: 3. p. 291', which identifies the relevant passage in the Geneva 1581 edition: see Carion and Melanchthon, *Chronicorum Libri Tres e Germanico in Latinum Sermonem Conuersi*, NYSL, Win 161, 291.

[176] Cotta, *Triall of Witch-Craft*, 28, partly underlined: 'Oracula edita sunt per pudenda puellae. Mornaeus de verit'.

[177] *Ibid.*, rear flyleaf: Adam writes, 'Authors cited in this bo[oke]'. His index includes Aristotle, Augustine, Camden, Livy, Peter Lombard, Pliny, Plato, Ptolemy, Psellus, Suetonius, Tertullian, Herodotus, the '*Malleus malificarum*', Diodorus Siculus, Melanchthon, Cicero, Ulpian and Polydore Vergil, among others.

[178] At p. 46, where a printed marginal note condemns theurgy, Adam adds a reference to a non-historical source, 'Cor: Agrippa de Theurgia ca. 46.', that is, Henry Cornelius Agrippa, *On the Vanity of the Arts and Sciences*, ch. 46, where a parallel argument appears.

[179] Cotta, *Triall of Witch-Craft*, 70. Adam writes, 'In his Britannia, p. [number not given]'.

[180] William Camden, *Britain: or, A Chorographicall Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands Adioyning, out of the Depth of Antiqvitie. Beavtified with Mappes of the Severall Shires of England*, trans. Philemon Holland (London, 1610), "Chesshire" <http://visionofbritain.org.uk/travellers/Camden/22> (accessed 16 May 2018). For the Latin text, see William Camden, *Britannia: siue, Florentissimorum Regnorum, Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniae, et Insularum*
(cont. on p. 130)

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Cotta summarized Camden's words with clear approval. Adam cited Camden's work in a marginal note and added a large manicule, showing how attentively he followed his nephew and the source he drew on.[181] He knew that the most learned men of his time believed that supernatural powers interfered in and reshaped nature. Cotta's book amounted to a massive and credible historical argument that Adam had every reason to accept. It also laid out a way by which one could descry the hand of the supernatural. Reading revenge stories, one could easily see God's hand at work. Reading accounts of prodigies, one looked for departures from the order of nature, and then for the distinctive events connected with them.

Adam, as we have seen, taught his male family members how to record what happened around them and how to study it for good fruit. In this realm, as in others, they mastered his practices, but also altered them to suit their tastes. Adam taught his son John to take a deep interest in sermons. But Adam contented himself with recording the texts they dealt with and offering summary judgements of their quality. By contrast, John kept a detailed notebook in which he analysed sermons' arguments in granular detail.[182] Similarly, John took his father's providentialism in a new direction. John, like his father, lived in a world of stories that could be read and interpreted. Unlike Adam, though, he recorded the deep messages that he saw encoded in the details of everyday life. John 'acknowledge[d] a speciall providence of God that my wife taking upp a measse of porridge, before the children or anybodye had eaten of it, she espied therein a greate spider'.[183] He 'perceive[d] that the Lo: will keepe faithfully his promises with his Children' when his wife, Margaret, gave birth to a healthy baby boy: after praying, he found 'sweet successe', for 'as I arose from prayer I heard the child crye'.[184] In a world in which God controlled all things, noticing a spider just in time or hearing one's child exhale its first breath immediately after prayer

(n. 180 cont.)
Adiacentium ex Intima Antiquitate Chorographica Descriptio. Nunc Postremo Recogn. & Adaucta (London, 1607), 462.

181 Cotta, *Triall of Witch-Craft*, 70.

182 John Winthrop, 'Notes on Sermons, 1627–1628', MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, box lxii.

183 *WP*, i, 165.

184 *WP*, i, 237.

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were not coincidences. They were full of import, and had to be interpreted within a larger providential schema. Winthrop not only kept a diary of his spiritual experiences (the 'Experiencia') in England, but began a hefty journal during his time as governor in Massachusetts, which doubled as an authoritative history of the colony. Both journals are reflective, with events or feelings described in the past tense.[185] Like Adam's almanacs, John's journals filled in and commented on the past. They show that recording and self-archiving practices were often continuous with, even if not identical to, practices of annotation.[186] But they also show that these practices evolved over time.

In addition to revealing God's special providence or faithfulness to his promises, events sometimes disclosed God's ecclesiology. In 1640 John Winthrop recorded in his journal a discovery that his son had made. A store-room containing his books had been entered by unwelcome visitors:

> About this time there fell out a thing worthy of observation. Mr. Winthrop the younger, one of the magistrates, having many books in a chamber where there was corn of divers sorts, had among them one wherein the Greek testament, the psalms and the common prayer were bound together. He found the common prayer eaten with mice, every leaf of it, and not any of the two other touched, nor any other of his books, though there were above a thousand.[187]

The furry little messengers of providence condemned the Anglican Book of Common Prayer as papist nonsense, while preserving the Word of God — although the actual volume is not so thoroughly eaten as Winthrop's journal suggests (see Plate 11).[188] The divergence between fact and record reveals that John read too much into some providential signs. This tendency would surface again during one of his greatest tests as governor: the so-called Antinomian Controversy.[189]

[185] Compare Winthrop's journal to the manuscript of Bradford's 'Of Plimmoth Plantation', for which, see Douglas Anderson, *William Bradford's Books:* Of Plimmoth Plantation *and the Printed Word* (Baltimore, 2003).

[186] See Elizabeth Yale, *Sociable Knowledge: Natural History and the Nation in Early Modern Britain* (Philadelphia, 2016), ch. 6; Matthew Lundin, *Paper Memory: A Sixteenth-Century Townsman Writes his World* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012).

[187] *Journal of John Winthrop*, ed. Dunn, Savage and Yeandle, 340–1.

[188] *The Booke of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England* (London, 1625), MHS, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lxiv.

[189] Stewart Mitchell, 'Two Winthrops and a Mouse, 1640', *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, xxxii (1933–7).

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X

READING ON TRIAL

John Winthrop had crossed the Atlantic, despairing that the existing state Church could be purified or its rejection of godliness reversed. But even in New England, 'godliness' proved a controversial concept, and Winthrop had little patience for those whose notions of it strayed from his own. In 1636 and 1637, he sought to quell the Antinomian movement in the colony: defiant, unruly opponents who rejected his and other elders' authority. The problem centred on the ministers John Cotton and John Wheelwright, and on Anne Hutchinson, a lay 'woman of a ready wit and bold spirit', as Winthrop described her in his journal.[190] It may have been Wheelwright's trial in March 1637, rather than Hutchinson's more famous one in November 1637, that marked the dispute's culmination.[191] Nonetheless, Hutchinson's trial 'provided her interlocutors with the raw materials for a highly convenient rewriting', and rereading, of the story.[192]

Some years later, Winthrop would make clear in his journal that he did not believe that God had created women to read independently. He noted that Ann Yale Hopkins, 'a godly younge woman & of speciall partes', who was married to the governor of Connecticut, had, 'by occasion of her givinge her selfe wholly to readinge & writinge', lost her reason:

> for if she had attended her houshould affaires, & suche thinges as belonge to women, & not gone out of her waye & callinge, to meddle in suche thinges as are proper for men, whose mindes are stronger &c: she had kept her wittes, & might have improved them vsefully & honorably in the place God had sett her.[193]

Hutchinson too had 'gone out of her waye & callinge', and in Winthrop's published account of the trial, reading served as a weapon against her. Printed in London in 1644, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned by the Synod of Elders in New England*

[190] *Journal of John Winthrop*, ed. Dunn, Savage and Yeandle, 193. For a good account, see Bremer, *John Winthrop*, 276–300.

[191] Michael P. Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636–1641* (Princeton, 2002), ch. 9.

[192] *Ibid.*, 170.

[193] *Journal of John Winthrop*, ed. Dunn, Savage and Yeandle, 570. See Monaghan, *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America*, 12–13; Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, 'John Winthrop's "City of Women"', *Massachusetts Historical Review*, iii (2001), 32.

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11. The 'eating teeth of time'. Mouse-nibbled copy of *The Booke of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments* (London, 1625). Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Family Papers, MS N-262, vol. lxiv. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

negotiated issues about texts and interpretation — who had the right to read, and in what context — in the form of a long disputation between Hutchinson and Winthrop.[194]

The task was to lead Hutchinson to condemn herself. Winthrop did not find it easy.[195] After trying to incriminate Hutchinson by citing her connections to already condemned ministers, he resorted to an insistence on gendered roles: 'We do not mean to discourse with those of your sex but only this; you do adhere . . . and do endeavour to set forward this faction and

[194] Winship, *Making Heretics*, ch. 9.

[195] *Ibid.*, 171; Valerie Pearl and Morris Pearl, 'Governor John Winthrop on the Birth of the Antinomians' "Monster": The Earliest Reports to Reach England and the Making of a Myth', *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3rd ser., cii (1990), 26. The extent to which Hutchinson was successful in defending her case, even in the first half of the trial, has perhaps been overstated.

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so you do dishonour us'.[196] Winthrop then moved on to the conventicles that Hutchinson had led. Scholars have rightly stressed that this part of the debate hinged on Winthrop's definition of such assemblies as 'public' and masculine, as against Hutchinson's contention that they were private and well within her role as a pious woman.[197] Yet the debate again operated on the level of reading and interpreting Scripture.

Winthrop's insistence that Hutchinson find a 'warrant', 'authority, or rule' for her meetings made for exegetical point–counterpoint, where citation was pitted against citation.[198] Hutchinson first invoked 'Tit[us] 2, where the elder women are to teach the younger'.[199] When Winthrop denied that Hutchinson's own practices conformed to what 'the Apostle there means', Hutchinson turned the question on him: 'Will you please to give mee a rule against it, and I will yeeld?' Winthrop bristled: 'You must have a rule for it, or else you cannot do it'. He called up 1 Timothy 2: 12, 'I permit not a woman to teach'.[200] Hutchinson then referred to another part of the verse ('neither to usurp authority over the man') to rebut him: 'That is meant of teaching men'.[201] Winthrop, however, suggested that Hutchinson would teach 'a man in distresse of conscience' who asked her 'counsell in private'. Hutchinson conceded this point while making another, subtly adapting Acts 2: 17, 'I will poure my Spirit upon your Daughters, and they shall

[196] 'The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson at the Court at Newtown', in *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636–1638: A Documentary History*, ed. David D. Hall, 2nd edn (Durham, NC, 1990), 314. This account is anonymous and differs slightly from Winthrop's version.

[197] Winship, *Making Heretics*, 171; Mary Beth Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York, 1996), ch. 8.

[198] Winthrop, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned by the Synod of Elders in New England*, 34–5.

[199] *Ibid.*; Titus 2: 3–5 (biblical quotations are from the 1560 Geneva Bible): 'The Elder women likewise, that they be in suche behaviour as becometh holines, not false accusers, not given to muche wine, but teachers of honest things. That they may instruct the yong women to be sobre minded, that they love their housbands, that they love their children, That thei be discrete, chast, keping at home, good and subiect unto their housbands, y^{t} the worde of God be not evil spoken of'.

[200] Winthrop, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned by the Synod of Elders in New England*, 35; 1 Tim. 2: 12: 'I permit not a woman to teache, nether to usurpe autoritie over the man, but to be in silence'.

[201] Winthrop, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned by the Synod of Elders in New England*, 35.

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prophesie, &c. If God give mee a gift of Prophecy, I may use it'.[202] Winthrop sought to refute this citation in two contradictory ways. Firstly, he insisted that true prophecy had been confined to 'those extraordinary times' of the early Church. Secondly, he argued that Hutchinson's 'gift of prophecy' could rightly be exercised only 'within [her] calling' in teaching her children. He accused her of instructing the ministers in her group. 'By what authority', he demanded, did she act as 'such a publick instructer'? 'Here is my authority', she began, pointing to Acts 18: 26, '*Aquila* and *Priscilla*, tooke upon them to instruct *Apollo*, more perfectly, yet he was a man of good parts, but they being better instructed might teach him'.[203] Winthrop was not satisfied, insisting that still her examples did not 'sute [her] practice'. 'Must I shew my name written therein?', Hutchinson retorted.

This debate was substantive: more so than may be apparent to non-Bible readers. Like so many debates about Church structure and identity, it revolved in part about ecclesiastical history.[204] Hutchinson and Winthrop disagreed in very consequential ways about the roles that women had played in early Christianity. They also disagreed about the extent to which the Church should try, in the seventeenth century, to emulate the Church as it had been in its earliest years. The citations that they hurled at one another were the code through which they raised and addressed these larger issues. In this context, books were both the backdrop and the ammunition. This reflected a form of reading that Winthrop shared as much with Hutchinson as with his second wife, Thomasine. Men and women could communicate through scriptural citations because the knowledge of that text was held in common.

So proceeded, stroke for stroke, the exegetical swordplay. In the end, though, Hutchinson appealed directly to revelation, which

[202] *Ibid.*; Acts 2: 17: 'And it shal be in ye last dayes, saith God, I will powre out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sonnes, and your daughters shal prophecie, and your young men shal se visions, and your olde men shal dreame dreames'. Note that Hutchinson quoted the verse as if it referred only to daughters: a polemical mis-citation.

[203] Winthrop, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned by the Synod of Elders in New England*, 35; Acts 18: 26: 'And he [Apollos] began to speake boldely in the Synagogue. Whome when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they toke him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly'.

[204] See Owen Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman: The Idea of Doctrinal Development* (Cambridge, 1957); Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2009).

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raised a new order of interpretative issue: was the voice she heard that of God or the Devil? Like a prophet, and explicitly comparing herself to Daniel, Hutchinson warned the court that she would be delivered. The court judges should therefore proceed carefully, lest they incur God's wrath.[205] Winthrop wrote:

> the Court and all the rest of the Assembly . . . did observe a speciall providence of God, that . . . her owne mouth should deliver her into the power of the Court, as guilty of that which all suspected her for . . . for here she hath manifested, that her opinions and practise have been the cause of al our disturbances, & that she walked by such a rule as cannot stand with the peace of any State.

'Bottomlesse revelations', Winthrop noted, were 'not subject to controll' and were thus harmful to the state.[206] Providence still directed his reading of the world around him, even in the court-room. God's 'speciall providence' revealed Hutchinson's malice. The court's providential observations were legitimate, Hutchinson's direct revelations a menace.

In fact, the bitter experience of this controversy also forced Winthrop to reread his own life narrative. In his 'Experiencia', he wrote that 'The Doctrine of free justification lately taught here . . . brought mee as low (in my owne apprehension) as if the whole work had been to begin anew'.[207] He prayed that Christ would 'wash away all those spotts' that defiled his conscience — the controversy was a blot in Winthrop's spiritual history. Yet Anne Hutchinson's fate was far more bitter. She was tried again by her Boston church, which excommunicated her, and commanded her 'as a Leper to withdraw [her] selfe out of the Congregation'.[208] Expelled from Boston, she moved to Roger Williams's settlement at Providence and settled in Pocasset (later Portsmouth). After her husband died, fearing that the Massachusetts Bay Colony would annex the Narragansett Bay area, Hutchinson took her large household to Dutch territory at New Netherland. There, in the summer of 1643, she and her family and servants were massacred by Siwanoy warriors.

[205] Winthrop, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned by the Synod of Elders in New England*, 38–9.
[206] *Ibid.*, 39.
[207] *WP*, iii, 344.
[208] 'A Report of the Trial of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson before the Church in Boston', in *Antinomian Controversy*, ed. Hall, 388.

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XI

CONCLUSION

Winthrop rejoiced when he learned the fate of the 'American Jezebel'. In fact, though, he had long since acquired powerful evidence that his conduct had been justified. Mary Dyer, one of Hutchinson's strongest supporters, miscarried in October 1637, bringing forth a baby with a face but no head, horns instead of a forehead and 'instead of toes . . . on each foot three claws, like a young fowl, with sharp talons'.[209] The baby's body was buried, but when gossip about the death spread, an elder examined her and she told the story. After some discussion, Winthrop had the body disinterred.[210] He noted in his journal that its discovery took place 'just when Mrs. Hutchinson was cast out of the church', and that its father, coming home at the same time, was publicly examined for 'divers monstrous errors' on the next Sunday.[211] When Winthrop published a documentary history of the Antinomian Controversy, he took care to include this story. He interpreted it as clear evidence that providence had sided with the Massachusetts Bay Colony's government and ministers.[212]

Hutchinson also miscarried, in the late spring of the next year. Reports about the birth soon began to circulate. Winthrop engaged Master John Clarke, a minister and medical man of Rhode Island who had treated Hutchinson, to draw up a report, which he incorporated into his journal:

> I beheld, first unwashed, (and afterwards in warm water,) several lumps, every one of them greatly confused . . . there was a representation of innumerable distinct bodies in the form of a globe, not much unlike the swims of some fish, so confusedly knit together by so many several strings, (which I conceive were the beginnings of veins and nerves,) . . . The small globes I likewise opened, and perceived the matter of them (setting aside the membrane in which it was involved,) to be partly wind and partly water. Of these several lumps there were about twenty-six, according to the relation of those, who more narrowly searched into the number of them.[213]

[209] *Journal of John Winthrop*, ed. Dunn, Savage and Yeandle, 254.
[210] *Ibid.*, 254–5.
[211] *Ibid.*, 255.
[212] Winthrop, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned by the Synod of Elders in New England*, 43–5.
[213] *Journal of John Winthrop*, ed. Dunn, Savage and Yeandle, 265.

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Still unsatisfied that he had all the details in hand, Winthrop sent Clarke further questions, which the latter answered with the same unsparing precision. In the end, Winthrop was certain: Hutchinson, like Dyer, had brought forth a monster.

Providence had not only caused the miscarriage, but also manipulated its form to communicate a particular lesson. Thomas Weld, who put the official history of the controversy, the *Short Story of the Rise, Reign, and Ruin of the Antinomians, Familists & Libertines*, through the press, included the tale of Hutchinson's monstrous birth in his preface:

> Mistris Hutchison being big with childe, and growing towards the time of her labour, as other women do, shee brought forth not one, (as Mistris Dier did) but (which was more strange to amazement) thirty monstrous births or thereabouts, at once . . . These things are so strange, that I am almost loath to bee the reporter of them, lest I should seem to feign a new story, and not to relate an old one . . . And see how the wisdome of God fitted this judgement to her sin every way, for look as shee had vented mishapen opinions, so shee must bring forth deformed monsters; and as about thirty opinions in number, so many monsters; and as those were publike, and not in a corner mentioned, so this is now come to bee known and famous over all these Churches, and a great part of the world.[214]

Thus, natural circumstance provided the equivalent of texts for Winthrop to interpret. He did so with great energy, spreading the stories of Dyer's and Hutchinson's disasters and his interpretations of them. Yet his descriptions of Dyer's monstrous progeny varied from account to account, suggesting both his excitement and how little attention he paid to the physical evidence on which he laid so much weight.[215] Weld was writing in Winthrop's spirit — and, perhaps, drawing on a communication from him — when he raised the number of globes brought forth by Hutchinson from the twenty-six observed by

[214] [Thomas Weld], 'The Preface', in John Winthrop, *A Short Story of the Rise, Reign, and Ruin of the Antinomians, Familists & Libertines, that Infected the Churches of New-England: And How They Were Confuted by the Assembly of Ministers There. As also of the Magistrates Proceedings in Court against Them: Together with Gods Strange and Remarkable Judgements from Heaven upon Some of the Chief Fomenters of These Opinions, and the Lamentable Death of Mrs. Hutchinson: Very Fit for These Times, Here Being the Same Errours amongst Us, and Acted by the Same Spirit. Published by One That Was an Eye and Eare-Witness of the Carriage of Matters There* (London, 1644), sigs. B3^{v}–B4^{r}. On this text, see *Antinomian Controversy*, ed. Hall, 199–200.

[215] 'Winthrop gives four different locations for the position of the mouth, three locations each for the back and the horns, and two for the site of the navel and the face': Pearl and Pearl, 'Governor John Winthrop on the Birth of the Antinomians' "Monster"', 29.

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witnesses to thirty, a number that better fitted their providential reading of the incident.

The same providential key was struck by Edmund Browne, a minister who arrived in New England in 1637, in an account he sent to an eminent friend, Sir Simonds D'Ewes: 'But as the Lord hath scattered these conceited persons, so hath he followed them strangely, and that in two monstrous births that one Mrs. Dyers and Mrs. Hutchinson had'.[216] Historians have tracked these discussions in detail. They have also connected Winthrop's accounts of these births both to the long tradition of reading monstrous births as portents, which underwent a massive revival in the sixteenth century, and to monsters' ever more regular appearance in contemporary pamphlets, as strife between religious groups grew sharper.[217]

Yet not everyone in Winthrop's larger world accepted his reading of these portents. Two early accounts described the monster without giving a theological gloss.[218] William Bradford of Plymouth Plantation, whose own history reveals little interest in portents, wrote to press Winthrop for more details about Hutchinson's birth. It is possible that he was sceptical.[219] Another well-informed observer certainly had his doubts. Winthrop's son John Winthrop Jr sent a letter about Hutchinson's monstrous birth and an earthquake to his friend and fellow religious enthusiast Edward Howes in London. The letter is lost, but Howes's brief reply, in the form of a question, shows an eloquent caution: 'When I had read [these reports], they seemed to me like Pharaoh's dreames; but whoe can tell certainely

[216] *Letters from New England: The Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1629–1638*, ed. Everett Emerson (Amherst, 1976), 230.

[217] See, for example, Anne Jacobson Schutte, '"Such Monstrous Births": A Neglected Aspect of the Antinomian Controversy', *Renaissance Quarterly*, xxxviii (1985); Robert Blair St George, *Conversing by Signs: Poetics of Implication in Colonial New England Culture* (Chapel Hill, 1998); Julie Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England* (Baltimore, 2005); Karyn Valerius, '"So Manifest a Signe from Heaven": Monstrosity and Heresy in the Antinomian Controversy', *New England Quarterly*, lxxxiii, 2 (June 2010). For the long-term background, see the classic studies of Katharine Park and Lorraine J. Daston, 'Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England', *Past and Present*, no. 92 (Aug. 1981); Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York, 1998).

[218] Pearl and Pearl, 'Governor John Winthrop on the Birth of the Antinomians' "Monster"', 22, 31–2.

[219] See Anderson, *William Bradford's Books*, 178.

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wherefore God sent them?'[220] John Winthrop thought he could: and in doing so he demonstrated the durability of a family tradition of reading and hermeneutics.

It is a historical irony that the strength of this tradition has been eclipsed by the Winthrops' post hoc exceptionality as one of America's founding families. As starring actors in the political history of colonial America and the religious history of English Puritanism and its transatlantic afterlife, the Winthrops have seldom been studied from the perspective of the history of reading. Indeed, this field was not yet a discernible category for the nineteenth-century Winthrops who curated the books and papers of their celebrated forebears. Just as John Jr treasured annotated books from Dee's library, so these later Winthrops would cherish their ancestors' signed and annotated books as unique 'association copies', testifying to a family history that they and other nineteenth-century New Englanders now canonized as national history. Rather than the Winthrops being evaluated as readers, their reading matter came to be valued because it was Winthropian.

As the history of books and reading has developed in recent decades, bringing increased attention to marginalia, the circulation of books and the formation of libraries, the Winthrops have remained relatively peripheral to the enterprise. While distinguished learned readers like Gabriel Harvey and John Dee have had their reading notes scrutinized, analysed and digitized, and in the process become exceptional figures in their own right, their contemporary Adam Winthrop has not drawn comparable attention. Nonetheless, Adam's annotated books, if more modest in scholarship, offer similar access to the modes of reading current within their shared Cantabrigian milieu, and hint at the existence of other such readers, or even families of readers, now lost, or still awaiting discovery. His ways of reading, passed on with his books to his children and grandchildren, also take us beyond the history of books and scholarship into areas that have traditionally been the domain of social historians. Individual Winthrops look less exceptional — if no less interesting — when viewed as the recipients of intergenerational practices.

[220] Edward Howes to John Winthrop Jr, 14 Apr. 1639, in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 4th ser., vi (1863), 505. On Howes, see Como, *Blown by the Spirit*.

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Rather, their books create a show-stone through which we may partly discern the shadowy figures of their less well-known and well-documented peers.

Together, the Winthrops and their books provide a remarkable case study of 'three-dimensional' reading in early modern cultures. They reveal how family members at different times and in different places, and often holding different opinions, nonetheless approached their subject matter, whether scriptural passage or real-world portent, in a way that was not abstract, but deeply conditioned by community and conscience. When we say that they 'read' nature and contemporary events, we do more than co-opt bookish language in pursuit of a loose analogy. To interpret their practices in that way would be to impose limits unrecognizable to the Winthrops themselves, and to risk disciplinary ghettoization in our own age. As has become increasingly clear from the work of David Hall, Mark Peterson and others, the social and religious history of the New England colonies is not distinct from the history of reading; nor can ways of reading be hived off from the political and spiritual life of any literate society. From Adam's forensic cross-referencing of portents and prodigies, to John's intimate exchanges with his dying wife, the Winthrops understood that personal reading was also political. To put the Winthrops back among their books, to examine not just how they read but how their reading practices were carried through the decades, is to see their public conduct, at the moments of greatest strain, in a new light.

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