This innovative study explores the history of puritanism and the history of reading in the long seventeenth century. Drawing on a wide range of significant but understudied source materials, it seeks to advance our understanding of puritan or ‘godly’ culture by examining the place of reading within that culture between c.1580 and 1720. In contrast to long-standing claims about the connections between advanced Protestantism and emergent individualism and interiority, the book demonstrates the importance of communal and public forms of reading in the practice of godly piety. Andrew Cambers employs a novel framework, based around the spaces and places of early modern reading, to offer a revised understanding of the nature of puritanism and of the practice and representation of reading during the period. Moving beyond existing interpretations, Godly Reading opens up fresh discussions and debates about the nature of early modern reading and religion.

Andrew Cambers has taught at the Universities of Oxford, Exeter and Lancaster and is editor of The Life of John Rastrick, 1650–1727, Camden Fifth Series, Volume 36 (2010).
This is a series of monographs and studies covering many aspects of the history of the British Isles between the late fifteenth century and the early eighteenth century. It includes the work of established scholars and pioneering work by a new generation of scholars. It includes both reviews and revisions of major topics and books, which open up new historical terrain or which reveal startling new perspectives on familiar subjects. All the volumes set detailed research into our broader perspectives, and the books are intended for the use of students as well as of their teachers.

For a list of titles in the series go to www.cambridge.org/earlymodernbritishhistory
For Alice and Jack
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Abbreviations

BL British Library, London


Actes and Monuments (1583) John Foxe, Actes and Monuments of Matters most Speciall and Memorable, Happenyng in the Church, with an Uniuersall History of the same (London, 1583)

HEHL Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA

TNA, PRO The National Archives, Public Record Office, London


Original spelling has been retained in quotations, except in the cases of ‘i’ and ‘j’ and ‘u’ and ‘v’, which have been modernized. Punctuation and capitalization have generally been left in early modern style, saving a few instances where the absence of punctuation renders long quotations unreadable. Standard contractions have been silently expanded. Dates before September 1752 are in the Old Style, except that the year is taken to begin on 1 January. Emphases in quotations and extracts are in all cases as they appear in the original.
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