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978-1-107-03979-7 - Reading and Writing During the Dissolution: Monks, Friars,  
and Nuns 1530–1558

Mary C. Erler

Frontmatter

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## READING AND WRITING DURING THE DISSOLUTION

In the years from 1534 when Henry VIII became head of the English church until the end of Mary Tudor's reign in 1558, the forms of English religious life evolved quickly and in complex ways. At the heart of these changes stood the country's professed religious men and women, whose institutional homes were closed between 1535 and 1540. Records of their reading and writing offer a remarkable view of these turbulent times. The responses to religious change of friars, anchorites, monks, and nuns from London and the surrounding regions are shown through chronicles, devotional texts, and letters. What becomes apparent is the variety of positions that English religious men and women took up at the Reformation and the accommodations that they reached, both spiritual and practical. Of particular interest are the extraordinary letters of Margaret Vernon, head of four nunneries and personal friend of Thomas Cromwell.

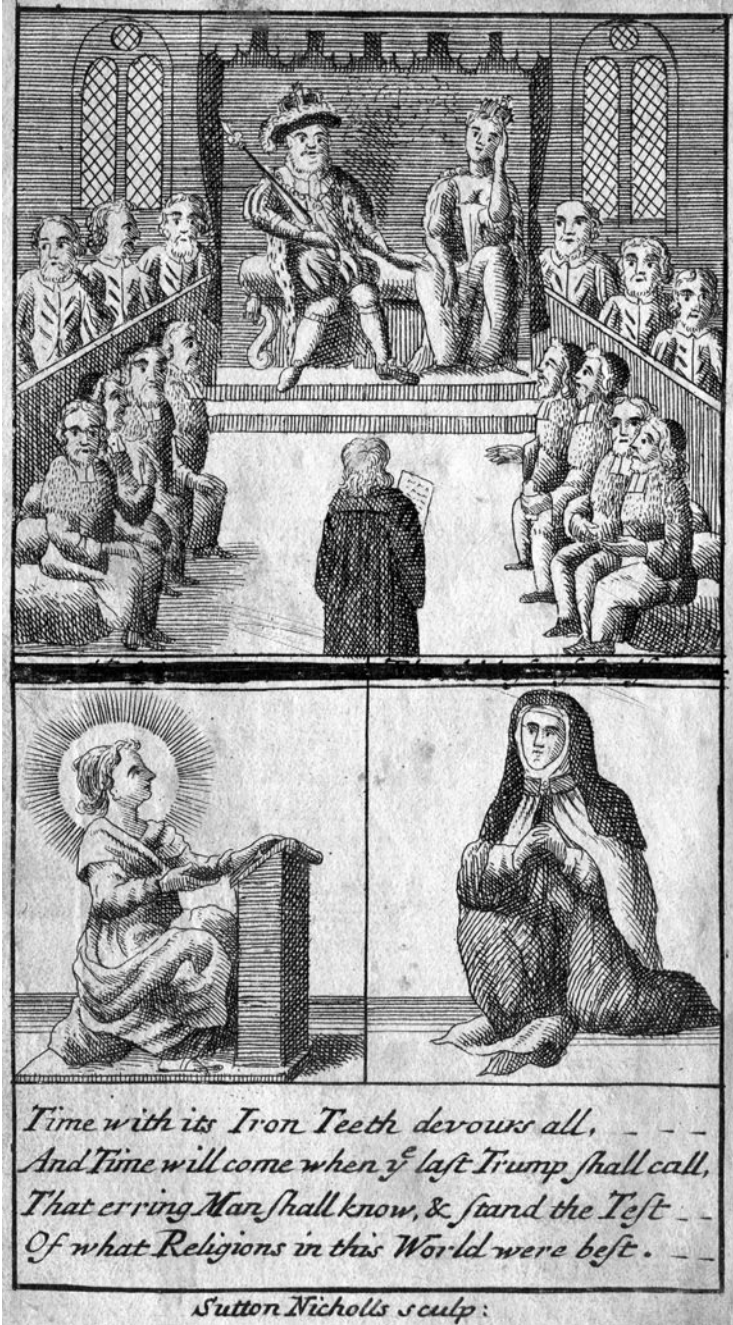
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*Time with its Iron Teeth devours all,  
And Time will come when ye last Trump shall call.  
That erring Man shall know, & stand the Test  
Of what Religions in this World were best.  
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In the sixteenth-century material quoted, spelling has been modernized except for surnames of individuals and for titles of published works, which retain their original forms.

## *Abbreviations*

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| AC                                   | J. A. and J. Venn, <i>Alumni Cantabrigienses: A Biographical List of All Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office at the University of Cambridge from the Earliest Times to 1900, Part I (to 1751)</i> , 4 vols., Cambridge, 1922–27 |
| Bindoff, <i>House of Commons</i>     | S. T. Bindoff, <i>The House of Commons 1509–1558</i> , 3 vols., London, 1982  |
| BL                                   | British Library   |
| BRUC                                 | A. B. Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500</i> , Cambridge, 1963  |
| BRUO                                 | A. B. Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500</i> , 3 vols., Oxford, 1957, 1958, 1959  |
| BRUO 1501–1540                       | A. B. Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford A.D. 1501 to 1540</i> , Oxford, 1974  |
| Cook, <i>Letters</i>                 | G. H. Cook (ed.), <i>Letters to Cromwell and Others on the Suppression of the Monasteries</i> , London, 1965  |
| CP                                   | G. E. C. (ed.), <i>The Complete Peerage</i> , 13 vols. in 14, London, 1910–49   |
| CPL                                  | William Henry Bliss <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland: Papal Letters</i> , 12 vols., London, 1893–1933  |
| CPMR                                 | Philip E. Jones (ed.), <i>Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls Preserved among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall A.D. 1458–1482</i> , 6 vols., Cambridge, 1961   |
| CUL<br>Dugdale,<br><i>Monasticon</i> | Cambridge University Library<br><br>William Dugdale, <i>Monasticon Anglicanum</i> , 8 vols., London, 1817–30  |

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| EEBO                       | Early English Books Online: <a href="http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home">http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home</a>   |
| EETS                       | Early English Text Society  |
| Ellis                      | Henry Ellis (ed.), <i>Original Letters Illustrative of English History</i> , 3rd ser. 4 vols., London, 1846   |
| Green, <i>Letters</i>      | Mary Anne Everett Wood Green (ed.), <i>Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain</i> , 3 vols., London, 1846   |
| ISTC                       | Incunabula Short Title Catalogue: <a href="http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc/index.html">www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc/index.html</a>  |
| <i>JEH</i>                 | <i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>  |
| Kingsford, <i>Stow</i>     | C. L. Kingsford (ed.), <i>John Stow's Survey of London</i> , 2 vols., London, 1972  |
| <i>L&amp;MCC</i>           | C. J. Kitching (ed.), <i>London and Middlesex Chantry Certificate, 1548</i> , London Record Society 16, London, 1986  |
| LMA                        | London Metropolitan Archive   |
| <i>LP</i>                  | J. S. Brewer <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , 22 vols. in 38, London, 1862–1932  |
| ODNB                       | <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , Oxford University Press: <a href="http://www.oxforddnb.com">www.oxforddnb.com</a>  |
| PCC                        | Prerogative Court of Canterbury   |
| Smith, <i>Heads</i>        | David M. Smith (ed.), <i>Heads of Religious Houses England and Wales, Vol. III: 1377–1540</i> , Cambridge, 2009   |
| <i>STC</i>                 | <i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland &amp; Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475–1640</i> , A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, 2nd edn. rev. and enlarged, W. A. Jackson, F. S. Ferguson, K. F. Pantzer, 3 vols., London, 1976–91 |
| TNA                        | The National Archives   |
| <i>TRP</i>                 | Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (eds.), <i>Tudor Royal Proclamations</i> , 3 vols., New Haven and London, 1964–69  |
| <i>VCH</i>                 | <i>Victoria History of the Counties of England</i>  |
| Wright, <i>Suppression</i> | Thomas Wright (ed.), <i>Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries</i> , Camden Society 26, London, 1843  |