# REFORMATION

## Shattered World, New Beginnings

26.06.17 ❀ 15.12.17

ref500.uk

**UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**
**SENATE HOUSE LIBRARY**

# The Galleries

## 1 CULTURE

This gallery explores how individuals wrestled with the changes brought to society by the Reformation, with items revealing a story of immigration, iconoclasm, religious persecution and the dissolution of the monasteries. Explore the tensions felt by the ordinary people caught up in King Henry VIII's, and England's, great divorce from Rome and learn how, for the first time, religion, architecture and even public health became a matter of the state rather than the church.

## 2 SOCIETY

Before the Reformation, culture was inextricably bound up with church doctrine and practice, especially through the expression of religious ideas through everyday literature, music and art. In this gallery we examine how these creative practices evolved under the pressure of the sweeping changes of the Reformation. We see how the new religious ideas were changing not only how people worshipped, but also what they watched at the playhouse and hung on their walls.

## 3 COMMUNICATIONS

The Reformation heralded a new wave of communication, conversation and expression in London and beyond. Previously, communication had been primarily visual and oral, literacy being reserved for the priesthood or the nobility. With the Reformation, the printing press became key as Bibles were now required in English rather than Latin and pamphlets spread religious propaganda among the people. This gallery explores this communications revolution, which began in London in the sixteenth century.

## 4 NEW WORLD ORDER

Henry VIII's decision to divorce himself from Catherine of Aragon and his country from Catholicism had far-reaching implications in a world that was just taking its first steps towards globalisation. This gallery looks at how the Reformation transformed London's place in the world, examining how these tumultuous times affected trade, politics and geography. As merchants began to connect countries and cultures through products from the new world, their rulers built up their navies and began vying for power on the high seas.

*A warm welcome to Senate House Library and to our latest exhibition,* Reformation: Shattered World, New Beginnings, *which marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation and showcases a number of our treasures.*

Among the items on display is a first edition of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1549), one of the cornerstones of Reformation printing, and 'A *Nunnes Prophesie*', an anonymous pamphlet of 1615 that is one of only six recorded copies in the world.

The Library, housed in iconic Senate House, provides a rich research and learning environment for its members. Its two million books and 1,200 archival collections make it one of the largest academic libraries in the country focused on the arts, humanities and social sciences. Its unique collections include the Goldsmiths' Library of Economic Literature and the Harry Price Library of Magical Literature. The Library is also home to eleven Shakespeare folios and to the University of London Archive.

I very much hope that you are inspired by the collections that we hold here and that you enjoy the events programme that unfolds over the coming months.

**Jackie Marfleet**
**Senate House Librarian**

The exhibition *Reformation: Shattered World, New Beginnings* takes us into the tumultuous days of sixteenth-century England, and especially sixteenth-century London. The Reformation depended for its success on the speedy and widespread promulgation of print, and in the display we have let material evidence from the period, in the form of the printed word, speak, from the sermons that poured from London's Protestant presses to liturgies and weighty theological tomes. We have selected items to indicate what passed away with the new state religion and what replaced it. And alongside the preponderance of sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century books and pamphlets from Senate House Library's holdings, we see items ranging from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries in diverse formats and genres, from mediaeval manuscripts to music, the purely pictorial, and to private press books, from history to devotional works. We move from cheap duodecimo books to heavy folios, from plain text to extra-illustrated volumes, and from recycled manuscript waste to works intended from the time of their production as sumptuous collectors' items. A gamut of attitudes and behaviours confront us across the centuries, from praise and insult to the conviction of right, and nationalism.

Curating an exhibition on the English Reformation and its impact has been a tremendous privilege. May you, the viewer and the reader, enjoy the result.

**Karen Attar**
**Exhibition Curator**

# A World Shattered

Martin Luther was a monk and professor of moral theology at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. On 31 October 1517, he sent 95 theses disputing the power of indulgences to the archbishop of Mainz and, in line with university custom, probably posted them on the door of All Saints Church, Wittenberg. In doing so he sparked a movement that was to shatter the unity of the Catholic Church in Europe. His criticisms of ecclesiastical corruption, in particular the sale of 'indulgences'—certificates giving the purchaser a reduction in their period of suffering in purgatory after death—were reproduced in pamphlet form and disseminated widely, thanks to the revolutionary mechanisation of print technology. A network of theologians such as Jean Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli could now not only communicate or argue with each other more easily, but for the first time share their thoughts quickly with a wider public. The result was the Protestant Reformation.

At first, England was largely sheltered from the ensuing turmoil of doctrinal reformation and counter-reformation that swept across the continent; indeed, Henry VIII had authored *Assertio septem sacramentorum* (*In Defence of the Seven Sacraments*) in 1521, rejecting Luther's ideas and earning him the title 'Defender of the Faith' from the Pope. In England, the impetus for Reformation was very different: it came from Henry VIII's desire to wed Anne Boleyn and father a son to succeed him, even though he was already married to Catherine of Aragon. The Pope's reluctance to grant an annulment led to a radical solution: Henry overthrew the authority of Rome and established himself as the Head of the Church of England with the Act of Supremacy in 1534.

The consequences of taking England outside the family of Catholic states were profound. In particular, it had a major impact on London throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as it grew into one of the world's largest cities. Focusing on London during this period, *Reformation: Shattered World, New Beginnings* traces the impact of the Reformation on culture and society; the way its communications industry drove change; and the consequences of the emergence of a new world order.

# The Impact on London

London's position as a principal centre of commerce in northern Protestant Europe, as well its place at the heart of the English print industry, meant that new religious ideas spread rapidly. London became a magnet for migrants and refugees from the continent, swelling the existing foreign-born mercantile communities. In particular, Huguenots fleeing persecution in France arrived in large numbers, as well as settlers from the Low Countries escaping the Catholic counter-reformation. In consequence the city's population rose from around 50,000 in 1530 to over 200,000 by 1600. Yet there was a real concern that England's decision to break away from Rome would result in an economic, or even military, backlash from the Continent, and that important trading links would cease.

Henry VIII's wholesale dismantling of England's monasteries in the 1530s meant that many key London landmarks and buildings changed hands, since nearly half of all property had been owned by monastic institutions. Consequently the city developed a different cultural feel, with outbreaks of iconoclasm and destruction of religious images—organised vandalism—that many found distressing to witness. The knock-on effect of the dissolution of the monasteries was to shift their former role as providers of welfare (healthcare and shelter for vulnerable elements of society) into secular hands that were not always ready to take them on. As the century progressed, this contributed to a growing sense of insecurity as poor harvests also increased the number of 'sturdy beggars'. The resulting reaction against vagrants heralded the Elizabethan Poor Laws. London, given its rapid population growth, was particularly affected.

During this period, London was gripped by a particular intensity of change that was unique in England, created by the exceptional concentration of people living in one square mile. Tension rose on the streets as radical preachers from both sides of the religious divide used sermons to express their views, alongside ideological warfare by pamphlet—the equivalent to the explosion of social media and proliferation of 'alternative facts' today. A deep-rooted suspicion of popery pervaded society, with bans on foreign travel to Italy enforced. Punitive measures were imposed to ensure religious compliance: failing to swear the oath of supremacy, for example, carried terrible penalties, and people were shocked to hear stories of the arrest of bishops and the execution of clergy as the law was enforced.

In a time before universal literacy, and when even the capacity to travel beyond the village of one's birth was beyond many, religion provided a lens through which people understood the world around them, and a comfort that explained the hardships of daily life. Rapid changes in local religious practice, of which the destruction of the monasteries was a major part, profoundly affected people at an everyday level, a manifestation of the confusing theological arguments swirling around that fundamentally challenged long-held beliefs about eternal damnation and the fate of one's soul. While some embraced the new faith and others persisted with their traditional beliefs, some were unable to cope with having their familiar world shattered and suffered trauma that sometimes led to insanity.

Yet out of the darkness, as the stone edifices of familiar religious buildings were pulled down, came new forms of cultural expression. London witnessed its own renaissance in the fields of art, music, and literature. Language experienced a profound transformation with the rise of influential vernacular texts, including devotional works and personal Bibles. Over time, theatres and play-houses proliferated, resulting in an outpouring of new literary works by playwrights such as William Shakespeare, some of which are still with us today.

# Prequel: The Beginnings

## 1.

### *Vom christlichen Abschied aus diesem tödlichen Leben des ehrwirdigen Herrn D. Martini Lutheri Bericht*

Justus Jonas
Wittenberg: G. Rhaw, 1546
G8.94 [Luther – App - Jonas] SR

Martin Luther was *persona non grata* with Henry VIII, who never forgave him for the obloquy Luther heaped on him in response to Henry's *Assertio septem sacramentorum*. Henry wrote an open letter to Luther, printed in two editions (Latin and English) by Richard Pynson in Fleet Street in 1527. Although Lutheranism never gained a substantial following in England, it was the earliest form of Protestantism to make an impact here, with Luther's insistence upon the biblical principle of justification by faith shattering Catholic Christianity in Britain as elsewhere. Shown here is a detailed account of Luther's death and funeral by another German reformer, Justus Jonas (1493-1555). Jonas, a friend, colleague and translator of Luther, accompanied Luther on his final journey from Halle to Eisleben, so was among the circle of supporters, doctors and minor nobility who watched Luther's passing: the death was significant because a 'good death' was seen as a sign of salvation, whereas a bad one might imply that the soul was hell-bound. Jonas's description was rushed into print. A flood of commemorative images followed Luther's demise. The one here, by Lucas Cranach the Elder, made Luther's image iconic and instantly recognisable.

## 2.

### *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*

1511 (19th-century copy)
MS817/2/30

Henry VIII was anxious for a male heir to secure the Tudor dynasty, begun just one generation earlier with his father's victory over Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth (1485). Following her marriage to Henry in 1509, Catherine of Aragon fell pregnant seven times but was beset by misfortune: miscarriage, still-birth (including the couple's oldest child, a daughter born in 1510), and early deaths, such that only Mary Tudor (b. 1516) survived to adulthood. This roll commemorates celebrations following the birth of their oldest son, Prince Henry, Duke of Cornwall, on 1 January 1511: bonfires, processions, and the distribution of free wine in the City of London preceded a great tournament at Westminster in Catherine's honour. Henry as 'Cueur Loyal' ('Sir Loyal Heart') participated as a challenger, watched by Catherine. Celebrations terminated abruptly with the baby's death on 22 February, aged 52 days. Catherine's ultimate failure to produce the desired son resulted in Henry's wish to annul what had begun as a very loving marriage and ultimately to join the Reformation. This is a nineteenth-century reduced copy of the roll held by the College of Arms, which measures about sixty feet by 14¾ inches (18m by 37cm).

Viue le noble
Roy Henry viij

a Description of the Solemn Il

**3.**
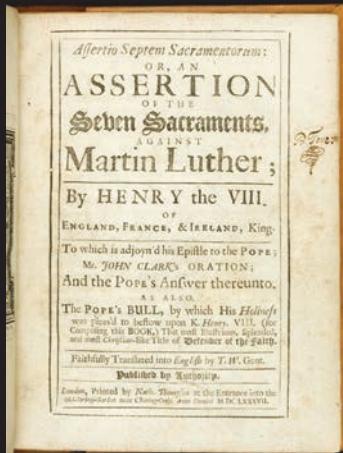
*Assertio septem sacramentorum, or,*
*An Assertion of the Seven Sacraments*
*against Martin Luther*

Henry VIII
London: N. Thompson, 1687
[B.S.] 502

In the early 1520s, nothing could have been further from Henry VIII's mind than seceding from the Roman Catholic Church. Thomas More and Bishop John Fisher helped him to refute Martin Luther's *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520) and defend the seven sacraments of the Church (reduced by Luther to two, baptism and the eucharist) in the *Assertio septem sacramentorum*. Henry further asserted the authority of the Pope as 'the Chief Priest and Supreme Judge upon Earth'. First published in 1521, the work ran through five editions in Latin and German in 1522-23; it is shown here in its first English translation. In it Henry vituperated Luther for malice, evil, impudence, and described him as a serpent and a hideous monster, full of venom. Luther answered by abusing Henry as a pig and a drunkard. Henry dedicated the *Assertio* to Pope Leo X, who rewarded him by bestowing upon him the title 'Fidei defensor', 'Defender of the Faith': a title formally conferred  by Cardinal Wolsey at a grand ceremony at Greenwich Palace in 1522. Although Henry later disowned the book, the title remained, and the initials 'F.D.' remain beside the head of the monarch on English coins today.

**4.**

*England's Reformation (from the Time of*
*K. Henry VIII to the End of Oates's Plot):*
*A Poem in Four Cantos*
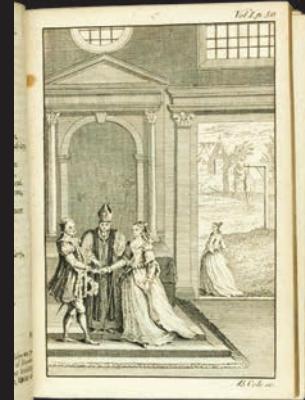
Thomas Ward
London: [s.n.], 1747
[G.S.C.] 2382

Thomas Ward (1652-1708) was a Roman Catholic convert who researched key documents relating to the religious history of England while in Rome with a commission in the Pope's guards. Although unfinished, his poem on the English Reformation was his most popular work. Ward modelled the verse on Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* and chose to write burlesque in order to appeal to the spirit of his own age. The argument at the beginning of the first canto makes clear Ward's allegiance, referring to 'the true Religion's Alteration', to abbeys falling, bloodshed, 'rapine, sacrilege, and theft', and feuds bred by Marian exiles. Ward's summary of the cause of the Reformation exemplifies the poem's style:

When Old King Harry youthful grew,
As Eagles do, or Hawks in Mew,
And did, in spite of Pope and Fate
Behead, Rip, and Repudiate
Those too-too long liv'd Things, his Wives,
With Axes, Bills, and Midwives Knives:
When he the Papal Power rejected,
And from the Church the Realm dissected,
And in the Great St. PETER's Stead,
Proclaim'd himself the Church's Head.
When he his antient Queen forsook,
And buxom Anna Boleyn took,
Then in the Noddle of the Nation
He bred the Maggot, Reformation.

## 5.

### *The Life of Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal Archbishop of York*

George Cavendish
Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1893
[S.L.] III [Kelmscott Press -1893]

Cardinal Wolsey (1470/71-1530) was, as Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor for many years, the most powerful man in England apart from the king himself. He fell out of royal favour for failing to secure the annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, which would have enabled him to wed Anne Boleyn. Seeing Wolsey as obstructive, the Boleyn family used its influence against him, and he died on his way to London to answer a charge of treason. George Cavendish, the author of this book, was a gentleman usher in Wolsey's household from some point before 1522 until Wolsey's death. Probably writing between late 1554 and June 1558, he drew upon personal observation and experience in what has been acclaimed as the first separate biography in the English language. His record is the most important single contemporary source for Wolsey's life and offers a detailed picture of the divorce proceedings. The book circulated in manuscript before being printed in a garbled form in 1641. The private press edition shown was transcribed from Cavendish's autograph manuscript and is, as it claims in the foreword, the first edition to present the text in the exact form in which Cavendish left it.

## 6.
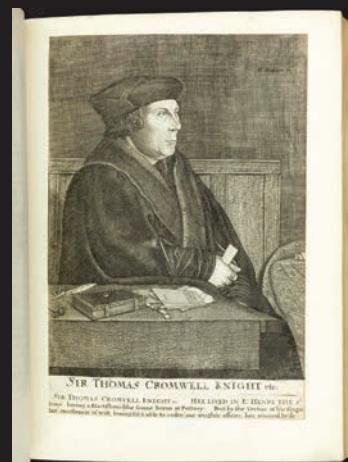
### *A Biographical History of England from Egbert the Great to the Revolution*

James Granger
London: T. Davies, 1769-1774
[Rare] Cc [Granger]

James Granger (1723-1776) produced his *Biographical History of England* as a catalogue of engraved portraits. He categorised famous Englishmen from royalty (class I) down to 'persons … chiefly of the lowest order of the people' (class XII). Thomas Cromwell (1485?-1540) appears under category II for the Henrician period, 'Great officers of state and of the household'. As Henry VIII's chief minister, Cromwell was significant in forwarding the early days of the English Reformation. Granger's brief sketch highlights Cromwell's administration of the dissolution of the English monasteries. In addition, Cromwell engineered Henry's divorce of Catherine of Aragon and later the downfall of Anne Boleyn; drafted legislation reinforcing royal supremacy over the church; helped (using the printing industry) to discredit the papacy; attacked the cult of saints and use of images; and was behind the publication of the Great Bible (1539), the first English-language Bible to be made available in all parish churches. Contemporary opinion of Cromwell and posterity alike have ranged from regarding him as an agent of Satan (Cardinal Pole) to leading a life devoted to advancing 'the right knowledge of the gospel and reform of the house of God' (John Foxe).

## 7.

### *Thomae Mori Angli … omni quae hucusque ad manus nostras pervenerunt, latina opera*

Thomas More
Louvain: P. Zangrius, 1566
[D.-L.L] (XVI) Bc [More] fol.

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) was invaluable to Henry VIII in the early days of the European Reformation for refuting works seen as heretical. Over one third of the collection of More's Latin works, published in the Catholic stronghold of Louvain, is devoted to More's *Responsio ad Lutherum* ('Response to Luther'), a text originally printed in London by Richard Pynson, the King's Printer, in 1523. Luther's reply to Henry VIII's *Assertio septem sacramentorum* (shown) was too scurrilous to enable the king to reply decorously, and therefore More, under the pseudonym 'William Ross', undertook the challenge. The *Responsio* is both a personal attack on Luther and a detailed rebuttal of his arguments. It hinges on the doctrine of 'sola scriptura' ('Scripture alone'), which in its emphasis exclusively on the word of God denies the value of church tradition: More argued for the dual role of scripture and tradition. The work foreshadows More's *Dyalogue* of 1529, which confronts the Lutheran teaching of William Tyndale and portrays Tyndale as he had portrayed Luther: as licentious, heretical, and a forerunner of the Antichrist. Later More would be beheaded for refusing to condone Henry VIII's divorce and accept the legality of his marriage to Anne Boleyn.

## 8.

### *The History of the Reformation of the Church of England: in Two Parts. The First Part. Of the Progress Made in it during the Reign of K. Henry the VIII*

Gilbert Burnet
Second edition
London: R. Chiswell, 1681
[Rare] f PS3E Bur

Gilbert Burnet's voluminous *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* constitutes the first attempt to write an account of the English Reformation from authentic sources. Burnet began his research in 1677 in answer to a new French translation of Nicholas Sanders's *De origine et progressu schismatia Anglicani libri tres* (1585), which saw the English Reformation as illegitimate, a political act executed by a corrupt king. Burnet conceded Henry VIII's faults but argued that flawed princes could still be instruments of divine providence. Lack both of time and of attention to detail led to numerous mistakes. But Burnet's defence of the Reformation met with tremendous acclaim (all the more so because the Popish Plot came to light while Burnet was writing), with thanks from both Houses of Parliament, the conferral of the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Oxford, and several editions of the text and abridgements. Burnet's dedication to Charles II outlines the Reformation as an ongoing process: begun under Henry VIII, advanced under Edward VI, sealed with the blood of Marian martyrs, brought to a full settlement under Elizabeth I, defended by James I, overthrown under Charles I, and restored by Charles II's restoration to the throne.

CULTURE

*I know of no good prayers but those in the*
*Book of Common Prayer.*
Samuel Johnson

*I could never yet see a Bible well translated into English,*
*but I think that, of all, that of Geneva is the worst.*
James I

*Lord, open the eyes of the King of England.*
William Tyndale

# ① Gallery One: Culture

Prior to the Reformation, culture was inextricably bound up with church doctrine and practice, especially in the expression of religious ideas in daily life through literature, music and art, centred on the parish church with its vividly decorated walls, painted religious images and liturgy accompanied with music. Doctrinal reform therefore had a dramatic impact on all these aspects of culture, as new traditions replaced old. Iconoclasm stripped out images, whitewashed paintings and destroyed relics in churches. New forms of secular expression, often influenced by imported Humanist ideas from the Italian Renaissance, took their place.

One of the pivotal changes brought about by the Reformation related to language. Previously all church services and texts were conducted and written in Latin, something now increasingly limited to Catholics. In contrast, the Protestants insisted that the language of communication with God should be a language that everyone could understand, not just the priests and educated laity. Thanks to the rise of new communications technology, highly influential religious texts such as the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1549 and a succession of translations of the Bible, culminating in the King James Version of 1611, were printed in English and circulated in vast numbers. This, in turn, had an enormous impact on the development of the English language.

From the 1530s, playwrights and players contributed to the formation of a culture in England that was more inspired by secular influences. New ideas spawned by the Reformation were incorporated into their work, in contrast to passion plays and performances designed to reinforce the Christian message. Authors and playwrights such as Edmund Spenser, Nicholas Udall, John Bale, and, ultimately Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, and William Shakespeare brought tragedy, history, comedy, satire, and drama to thousands of people through published prose and verse, as well as directly through performances in the burgeoning theatre scene around London. Some of the new secular cultural forms that the Reformation inspired were met with strong criticism from more radical Protestant groups, often called Puritans.

Music and art underwent a similar transformation, although the latter was adversely affected by the iconoclasm that destroyed older forms of religious art. The Tudor court in London provided patronage for predominantly continental painters like Hans Holbein, under whose influence indigenous painters, such as Nicholas Hilliard, began to flourish. The English Renaissance therefore took a markedly different course from that in Italy, where emphasis was placed on the rediscovery of the ancient classics and a consideration of secular allegorical imagery. However, it was at this time, both in Italy and England, that the role of the patron became more important and influential, especially 'art for art's sake' rather than religious patronage designed to save one's soul.

In music the Reformation also found a creative outlet. During Henry VIII's lifetime, singing in church and during religious practice began to shift from Latin to the vernacular. This came at a time when composers began to write in a more chordal style that enabled words and speech to be more clearly identified by listeners. The trend was accentuated by a massive increase in psalm-singing singing in English in the latter decades of the sixteenth century. This undoubtedly paved the way for change within secular music as well, since composers now had a wider audience and new patterns with which to play.

## 1.

### Book of Hours (Sarum use)

Early 15th-century
MS906

Books of Hours were devotional volumes in Roman Catholic use, written primarily in Latin. Modelled on the devotions used at the eight canonical hours, specifically the Hours of the Blessed Virgin, they could also include a calendar, almanac, hymns, psalms, and meditations. Mediaeval bestsellers, they were especially popular in manuscript form from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, and appeared in 530 European editions in the incunable period, including four printed by Wynkyn de Worde in Westminster and six by Richard Pynson in London. Victims of the Reformation, their production ceased by the end of the sixteenth century, Edward VI having declared in an Act against Superstitious Books and Images (1550) that, together with other liturgical books, written or printed, in English or Latin, previously used 'for service of the Church', they should be 'clearly and utterly abolished, extinguished and forbidden for ever to be used or kept in this realm'. This manuscript Book of Hours from the early fifteenth century was produced in northern France for English use and follows the form used in Salisbury Cathedral from the twelfth century onwards. The calendar adds the names of two English saints, and later hands have added recipes and prayers in English.

## 2.

### *The Booke of the Common Praier and Administracion of the Sacramentes and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Churche, after the Use of the Churche of Englande*
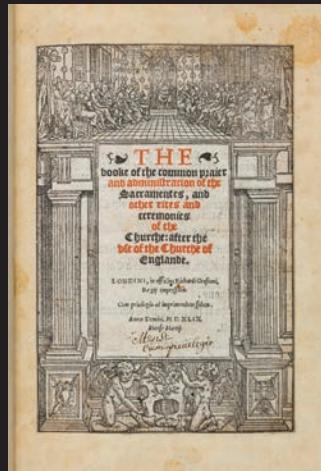
London: R. Grafton, 1549
First edition
[S.L.] I [Book of Common Prayer – 1549] fol.

*The Book of Common Prayer* is a key production of the English Reformation. It was largely the work of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry VIII and Edward VII. The work was initially as political as it was theological: as its use was mandatory, it signified state control over religion. The uniformity of English-language worship thus imposed across England, as opposed to the various preceding Latin rites, was intended to forge a common cultural identity to stifle rival allegiances, especially to the Roman Church. *The Book of Common Prayer* helped to spread the Scriptures in English, with the lectionary covering most of the Bible in the course of a year, and it removed saints and the dead from the liturgies. It was not uniformly welcomed: Puritans found it too traditional and Catholics, shocked by the appearance of the Mass in English, rioted. But it permeated English culture. One of the most frequently reprinted books in the world, it has undergone some 1,200 translations into more than 200 languages and dialects, accompanying the British Empire across the world. Its rites, especially its marriage service, have marked the lives of countless people; its language and cadences have saturated our consciousness.
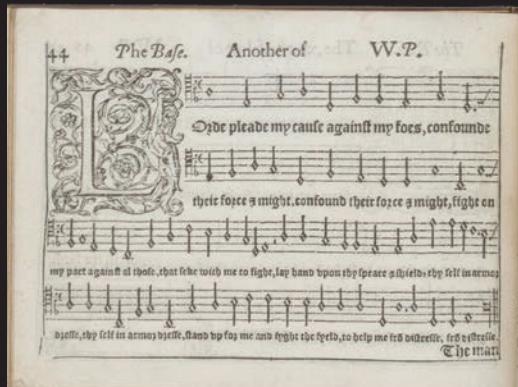
## 3.
### *Bassus of the Whole Psalmes in Foure Partes*

Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins
London: J. Day, 1563
[Littleton] 8 SR

The Book of Psalms, in Latin, chanted by a priest, formed the basis of the mediaeval church liturgy. Thomas Sternhold (d. 1549) and John Hopkins (d. 1570) brought them in paraphrased English to the multitudes: for the first time, psalms were sung by everybody on a weekly basis, helping, like the *Book of Common Prayer*, to unify the nation. They were England's best-known verses from 1562, when John Day, working over Aldersgate, published the first version to contain all 150 of the psalms, to the 1690s, being printed at the back of every edition of the Geneva Bible (after 1560) and most editions of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Whereas melodic plainsong had uneven lines, Sternhold and Hopkins's short metrical stanzas to simple and regular tunes facilitated communal singing. They transformed liturgical singing and influenced a wider range of English hymns. In America and Scotland they were sung until the mid-seventeenth century. In England they declined from the end of the seventeenth century, supplanted by the hymns of Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady (1696), and were condemned for literary demerit in the eighteenth century. Yet by 1852 they had appeared in more than a thousand separate editions.



## 4.
### Leaf from *The Golden Legend*

Jacobus de Voragine; translated by William Caxton
Westminster: Wynkyn de Worde, 1498
[Incunabula] 130

The *Legenda aurea*, or *Golden Legend*, is a thirteenth-century manual of ecclesiastical lore, containing a commentary on church services, homilies for saints' days, and above all the lives of saints, including stories about their posthumous miracles. Exceedingly popular in the manuscript period, it was translated or adapted into several vernacular languages and remained a staple of the early printing press. In England it existed in two translations, an anonymous prose version of about 1438 and William Caxton's version, adding English saints, in 1483; it also contributed to verse legendaries and provided a source for Chaucer's 'Second Nun's Tale' (the story of Saint Cecilia) within the *Canterbury Tales*. From 1483 until 1527 the *Golden Legend* was published about twice a decade in Westminster or London, by all three of the major early printers, William Caxton (two editions), Wynkyn de Worde (six editions, a leaf from the second of which is shown here), and Richard Pynson. But the work's clear Catholicity led to its demise, and more than 300 years elapsed before it was printed again.

## 5.

### *Twelfth Night*

William Shakespeare; designs by Lila di Nobili
London: Folio Society, 1966
[S.L.] III [Folio Soc. – 1950]

With the demise of the mediaeval miracle and morality plays, the English Reformation opened the way for the flowering of secular drama, culminating in the works of William Shakespeare. Although in the earlier days of the Reformation some religious plays appeared, notably by John Bale and Nicholas Udall, Elizabethan drama was almost entirely secular, thereby avoiding the volatility of religious language and the censorship to which Biblical drama was subject. Shakespeare's plays contain few echoes of the Reformation. *Twelfth Night*, however, written in about 1601 and first performed at London's Middle Temple in 1602, takes a crack at Puritans and the plain clothes they saw as a marker of moral rectitude and confessional identity. In the sub-plot of this play, the more roisterous members of Olivia's household label the surly steward Malvolio as a Puritan. By a hoax, they have him dress in most unpuritanical cross-garters and yellow stockings in a scene captured artistically by the Victorian Shakespearean illustrator John Gilbert among others. The illustration here is by the twentieth-century fashion illustrator and costume designer Lila di Nobili (1916-2002).

## 6.

### *Bildnisse: 24 farbige Handzeichnungen*

Hans Holbein the Younger; ed. by Wilhelm Waetzoldt
Leipzig: Insel, [1938]
VLkP HOL

The Reformation saw a shift away from religious art in Protestant countries, with less emphasis than before on Mary (portrayals of the Immaculate Conception and the Annunciation of the Virgin, for example), the saints, large set-piece scenes from the Bible, such as the Passion, and popes and senior clergy. A fall in ecclesiastical patronage led artists to diversify into secular types of art, such as history painting, genre painting, still lifes, and—the area for which Hans Holbein is best known—portraiture. Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/8-1543), court painter for Henry VIII from 1535, provided well-known visual records of some of the key players in the English Reformation, among them Sir Thomas More, Thomas Cranmer, Henry VIII's wives, and Henry VIII himself alongside other courtiers and London dwellers, including several German Hanseatic merchants. While religious painting was permitted under Henry VIII (unlike Edward VI and Elizabeth), a lack of competent portrait painters in England resulted in a demand for contemporary portraits from Holbein to the virtual exclusion of the other genres he had formerly practised.
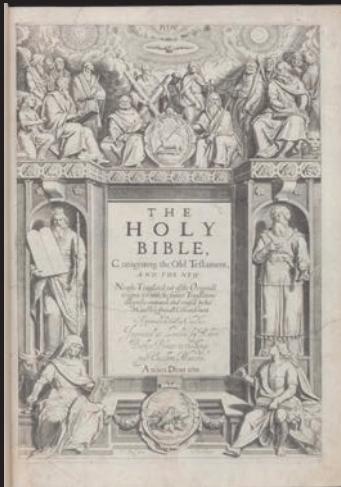
## 7.

### *The Holy Bible, Conteyning the Old Testament and the New: Newly Translated out of the Originall Tongues …*

London: R. Barker, 1611
[S.L.] I [Bible – 1611] elf

'Geographically its spread has been global for hundreds of years: wherever in the world there are English readers, there are copies. In the story of the earth we live on, its influence cannot be calculated. Its words have been found to have a unique quality …' (David Daniell). The King James Version of the Bible is the bestselling book in the world, and its longevity (over 400 years) is an unparalleled phenomenon. It has mediated to us numerous phrases from earlier versions of the Bible, such as 'Am I my brother's keeper?' and 'a law unto themselves'. The King James Bible is a result of the English Reformation in that it is a revolt against a strongly Protestant text: James I of England was averse to the notes of the Geneva Bible (on display in Gallery 3) as being 'very partial, untrue, seditious, and savouring too much of dangerous and traitorous concerts'. The King James Bible, by contrast, eschewed doctrinal notes. It was a conservative volume using archaic language and was intended to reset the standard of a solid middle-of-the-road Anglican establishment. The King James Bible was to be used for services in all churches in England.

## 8.

### *Actes and Monuments of Matters Most Speciall and Memorable, Happenyng in the Church*

John Foxe
Fourth edition
London: J. Day, 1583
C4.2 [Fox] fol.

John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, popularly known from its first appearance onwards as the 'Book of Martyrs', was the exceedingly influential Protestant martyrology that succeeded the *Golden Legend*. It focuses mainly on English church history, especially from Wycliffe until the accession of Elizabeth I, but also considers continental history. *Actes and Monuments* was both the most important narrative source for the English Reformation and a work that helped shape its later development: it influenced English religious, social and cultural life considerably. Until 1684 it was reprinted regularly in its entirety and with additions. Thereafter it appeared in numerous abridgements which, while at best restricting and at worst distorting Foxe's message, simultaneously disseminated and perpetuated some of the content. Foxe compiled the work from numerous printed and archival sources and from oral testimonies. The first edition appeared in 1563. In successive editions Foxe eliminated some material and, extending sources and the time coverage, added some. The fourth edition, shown here, is the last to have been printed in Foxe's lifetime. Among its changes it takes account of recent atrocities, such as France's St Bartholomew's Day massacre (1572). The edition gains significance as the version used by Victorian editors.

**9.**

*The Noble And Joyous Book Entytled*
*Le Morte Darthur*

Sir Thomas Malory
Chelsea: Ashendene Press, 1913
[S.L.] III [Ashendene Press - 1913]

Stories of King Arthur and the knights of the Round
Table, their loves, quests, and chivalric feats, were popular
throughout Europe in the Middle Ages. In England they
culminated in Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*, printed by
William Caxton in 1485 and reprinted twice by Wynkyn de
Worde before the English Reformation. Central to Malory's
work was the quest for the Holy Grail, the cup or dish used
by Christ at the Last Supper and brought to England by
Joseph of Arimathea, which fed the worthy and healed
wounds. But the Grail could be seen also as an image of the
Catholic Eucharist. Significantly, the first post-Reformation
printing of Malory (1557) was during the reign of Mary
Tudor. Although it was printed twice in Protestant London,
in 1582 and 1634, the *Morte Darthur* largely disappeared
until revived by late-eighteenth-century antiquarian interest
and nineteenth-century enthusiasm for all things mediaeval.
Meanwhile, Roger Ascham in *The Schoolmaster* (1571)
condemned the *Morte Darthur* as a Catholic work presenting
a danger to Protestant youth, and Edmund Spenser
countered it in The *Faerie Queene* (1590) with a specifically
Protestant holy knight, emphasising grace rather than works
and rejecting the image of transubstantiation.

*The manuscripts flew about like butterflies.*
John Aubrey

*To destroy all without consideration, is and will be unto England for ever, a most horrible infamy among the grave seniors of other nations.*
John Bale

# Gallery Two: Society

It is hard to overestimate the climate of uncertainty—and deep anxiety—that permeated English society during the sixteenth century. The fundamental relationship between God and man was debated and rewritten by theologians on the continent in the decades following 1517. People wrestled with the concept that there was more than one possible route to achieving salvation, and that learned clergy disagreed which one was right. Making the correct choice would determine the fate of their eternal soul and was their responsibility, rather than mediated by priests and the church. Whereas everyone previously shared the same faith, individuals now faced choices whether to identify as Catholics or Protestants. Levels of state-sponsored persecution grew as England's official religion switched from one to the other according to the personal beliefs of the monarch. Individuals choosing to follow their consciences felt trapped between obedience to God and to their ruler. As a result, what had started out as theological debate at times flared into an increasingly violent struggle on the streets, often accompanied by iconoclastic destruction of religious images in buildings and churches. The deep religious divisions of the sixteenth century cast a long shadow over politics throughout the seventeenth century.

In London the impact was particularly unsettling. Its strong trading links with many of the places from where Protestant dissent was emerging meant a rapid influx of new ideas. This was linked to an increasing number of refugees seeking a place of safety where they could worship in peace. As France descended into chaos during the Wars of Religion, thousands of Huguenot refugees crossed the Channel seeking shelter in the city. They brought with them new trades and skills such as silk weaving, watch-making, silver-smithing and increasingly sophisticated financial services. Immigration was therefore a contributory factor behind London's rapid population growth during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Friends, family and neighbours were joined by strangers spreading new ideas, and those adhering to the 'old' religion soon began to feel like outsiders in their own city. The environs of London were often the site for militia musters, a reminder that overseas invasion was a threat, but equally, that the troops could be mobilised against the civilian population if the need arose. Indeed, the use of London as the main place of execution for the leaders of the Pilgrimage of Grace—a huge rebellion against religious change in 1536—served as a further warning to the city's inhabitants.

The rising population had an impact on society in other ways, particularly the need for greater provision for the sick and the poor. Yet the crisis was exacerbated by the Crown's land-grab during the dissolution of the monasteries, since they had traditionally served this purpose, especially in more rural areas. Over half of all London property was monastic, and much of it was sold into private hands and converted to diverse secular uses. The Charterhouse, for example, first became a private mansion and, later, the original site of Charterhouse school. The former Dominican priory of Blackfriars became the location for a theatre, and Henry VIII converted the leper hospital of St James into St James's Palace.

Yet some monastic buildings were partially saved from privatisation and reformed as hospitals, such as St Thomas's and St Bartholomew's, both of which are still with us today. Others became places of worship for new congregations. For example, the church for 'Germans and other strangers' was established in 1550 on the site of the former Austin Friars monastery. It was soon catering for an estimated 5,000 residents from the Low Countries, by the 1570s London's largest migrant group.

**1.**
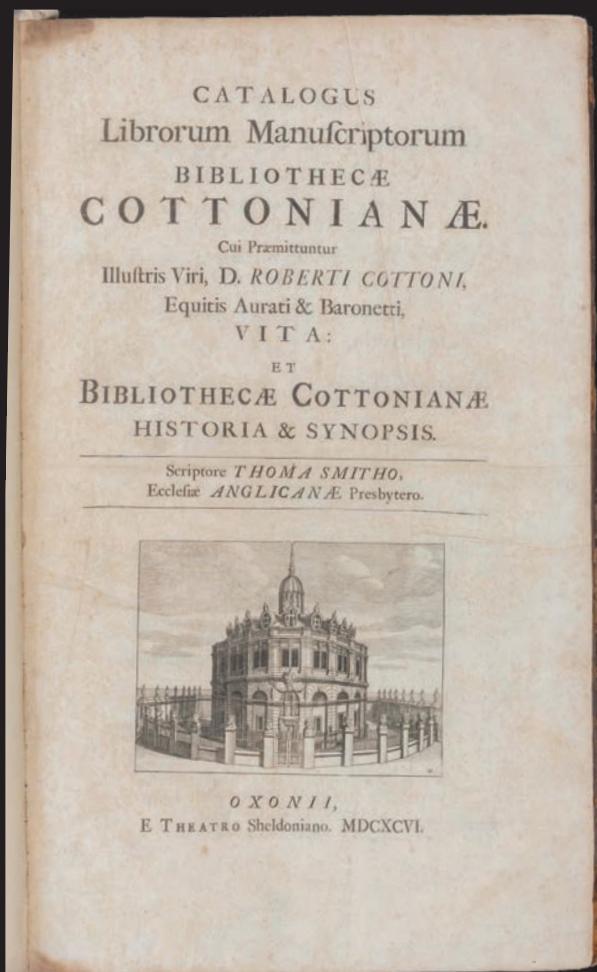
### *Catalogus librorum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Cottoniae*

Thomas Smith
Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1696
CC25.8c.1 [B.M.] lf

With Henry VIII's dissolution of the English monasteries between 1536 and 1540 to accrue wealth and suppress the political opposition that could be expected from them came the destruction of their libraries. 'In my grandfather's days the manuscripts flew about like butterflies', wrote the antiquary John Aubrey famously, whilst John Bale contemporaneously lamented the lack of respect shown for libraries: 'to destroye all without consyderacyon, is and wyll be unto Englande for ever, a most horrible infamy amonge the grave senyours of other nacyons'. Of the over 800 religious houses in England, only about 5,200 library and service-books survive. Writing under Queen Mary, the antiquary John Dee suggested that dispersed manuscripts should be sought out and collected for a royal (equivalent to a national) library. Indirectly, this happened. As a second-generation collector, Sir Robert Cotton (1571-1631) collected monastic manuscripts which upon the death of his grandson John in 1702 passed to the state and in 1753 became one of the founding collections of the British Museum, now the British Library. Shown here is the earliest catalogue of the Cotton Library, compiled by John Cotton's unofficial librarian. Its introductory life of Cotton and history and analysis of his Library remain useful today.

## 2.

### *Leaf containing part of scholastic commentary on Psalm 101:2-5*

14th century
MS843/1

Manuscripts from the dissolved monasteries were put to such uses as book bindings and wrapping paper. Although we have no conclusive evidence of this fragment's earlier provenance, the manuscript to which it belonged was the sort of work that could have been a victim of such a fate. The fragment from the second half of the fourteenth century was used to strengthen the binding of Justus Lipsius's *Antiquarum lectionum commentarius* (Antwerp, 1575), owned in the seventeenth century by an Englishman, John Spencer. It contains part of a scholastic commentary on Psalm 101, with phrases from the psalm underlined in red. Scholasticism was a mediaeval form of theology and philosophy based on the early church fathers and Aristotelean logic, emphasising tradition and dogma. From the Renaissance until the beginning of the nineteenth century, 'scholasticism' was a term of opprobrium.

## 3.

### *An Historical Sketch of the Priory and Royal Hospital of St. Bartholomew*

William Alfred Delamotte
London: H. Cunningham, 1844
[B.L.] Delamotte

St Bartholomew's was founded by the monk Rahere, formerly Henry I's minstrel, in 1123 to give free medical care to the poor of the City of London. Its church priory was dissolved in 1539 and, to quote Delamotte, 'bestowed upon the unworthy minions of the king'. Mary gave it to the Black Friars, and under Elizabeth I it became an Anglican church in West Smithfield, as it remains today. Henry VIII transferred the hospital to the City of London in 1546 under the name 'The House of the Poore in West Smithfield in the suburbs of the City of London of Henry VIII's Foundation' (the official name until the National Health Service was formed in 1948). Thus, although the hospital is the oldest in Britain to provide all medical facilities on the site on which it was founded almost 900 years ago, it is firmly linked with the Reformation. A stained glass window in the Great Hall depicts Henry VIII handing the hospital's charter of 1546 to his surgeon, Thomas Vicary. The main entrance is still through an arch with a statue of Henry VIII over the centre, the only remaining statue of Henry VIII in London.

## 4.

### *The History of the Abbey Church of St. Peter's Westminster, its Antiquities and Monuments*

William Combe
London: R. Ackermann, 1812
[S.L.] IV [Ackermann – 1812] fol.

'This vast and beautiful fabric, this scene of human grandeur', as William Combe describes the London landmark of Westminster Abbey in this sumptuously illustrated folio, has been the setting for every coronation since 1066, and a church and Benedictine monastery had been on the site before then. In its way the Abbey is, however, a product of the Reformation. In 1540 Henry VIII dissolved the monastery and made the Abbey into a Cathedral; he also established two masters and 40 grammar scholars, the nucleus of today's Westminster School. Mary I restored the Benedictine monastery in 1556; under Elizabeth I, however, Parliament gave religious houses revived under Mary to the Crown. Elizabeth removed the monastery and in 1560 re-founded the Abbey as a Collegiate Church with dean and chapter, which as a 'Royal Peculiar' was exempt from the Bishop of London's jurisdiction. The phrase 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' emanates from the sale of Abbey land for money to repair St Paul's Cathedral following early Reformation iconoclasm there. A visible modern memorial of the Reformation is a stone commemorating Reformation martyrs near the tomb of Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I.



## 5.

### *Domus Carthusiana, or, or An Account of the Most Noble Foundation of the Charter-House near Smithfield in London*

Samuel Herne
London: R. Marriott and H. Brome, 1677
[B.L.] 1677 [Domus]

A Carthusian priory was established near Smithfield in 1371 and dissolved in 1537—much to the displeasure of the resisting monks, whose prior was hanged at the gate for refusing to renounce papal supremacy. Ten monks were taken to Newgate Prison, where nine starved to death and the tenth was executed at Tower Hill. The property became a mansion house, bought



and embellished first by Sir Edward North and then by Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, before Thomas Sutton purchased it in 1611 and bequeathed money to establish an almshouse for 80 male pensioners and a school for 40 scholars, with a schoolmaster aged at least 27. The almshouse remains in the City of London. The school, Charterhouse, much expanded, moved to Godalming in Surrey in 1872, making way first for the Merchant Taylors' School and then for part of the St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School. It has become a leading public school, whose eminent pupils have included among others Isaac Barrow, Joseph Addison, William Makepeace Thackeray and early University of London Vice-Chancellor George Grote. With reference to the priory, the pupils are still known as Carthusians.

## 6.
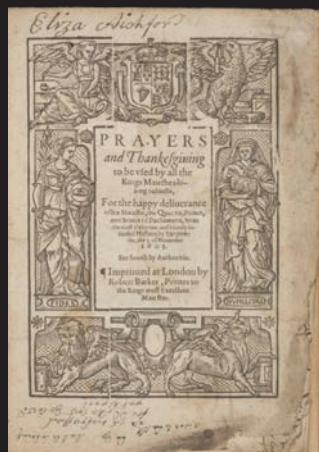
***Prayers and Thankesgiving to be Used by all the Kings Maiesties Loving Subiects for the Happy Deliverance of his Maiestie, the Queene, Prince, and States of Parliament, from the most Traiterous and Bloody Intended Massacre by Gunpowder, the 5 of November 1605***

London: R. Barker, [1606?]
[B.L.] 1606 [Prayers]

When James VI of Scotland became King of England in 1603, Catholics hoped for toleration. In fact, he ordered all Catholic priests to leave England, re-imposed fines for recusancy, and refused Catholics the right to receive rent or make wills. The resulting Gunpowder Plot was a Catholic attempt to blow him and Parliament up with gunpowder smuggled into the cellars of the House of Lords. Popular print and sermons alike attributed the plot's failure to divine delivery, with God protecting Protestant England against Roman Catholicism. Denominational enmity flared, and for many years the bonfires that still commemorate the event were topped with an effigy of the pope. The official prayers issued after the plot, shown, were recited annually at least until the Civil War. They include some pointed invective, such as: 'wee yeeld unto thee … all possible praise and thankes for the woonderfull and mightie deliverance of our gracious Sovereigne King James … [and others], assembled together at this present in Parliament, by Popish treacherie appointed as sheepe to the slaughter, and that in most Barbarous and Savage maner, no age yeelding example of the like cruelty intended towards the Lords Anointed and his people.'

## 7.

***Einige Predigten von Heinrich Otto Schrader, Hofprediger zu St. James's, und Lehrer der deutschen Sprache bey Ihren Königl. Hoheiten den Prinzessinnen von Gross-Britannien***
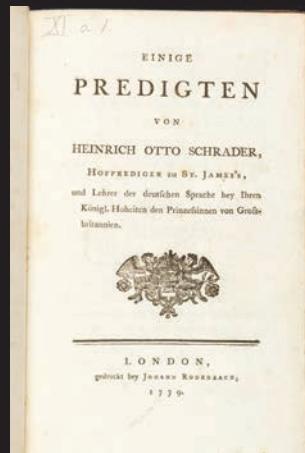
Heinrich Otto Schrader
London: J. Rodenbach, 1779
[G.S.C.] 0402

While Germans had inhabited England since the Middle Ages, a new distinct group, distinctly of Protestant refugees, came from the mid-sixteenth century. They were just some of the many Protestant immigrants who came to London and wanted churches where they could worship in their own ways. Foreign congregations existed in London by 1550, the most important of which was centred on Austin Friars, a former Augustinian priory near the modern Bank of England that was dissolved in 1538. Here different nationalities worshipped separately in their own language and form. They paved the way for further churches, some of which still survive: for example, the German Marienkirche (St Mary's), established in the Savoy in 1694, and the Georgenkirche (St George's), established in Little Alie Street, east of the city, in 1762, are now based together within a mile north-east of Senate House. *Einige Predigten* is a representative of such foreign churches. Heinrich Otto Schrader, the author of the four sermons printed here, was in addition to the German teacher of the young princesses the court chaplain at the Chapel Royal—a German congregation established around 1700 in St James's Palace, primarily for Queen Anne's consort, Prince George of Denmark.

## 8.

### *A Treatise of Melancholie*
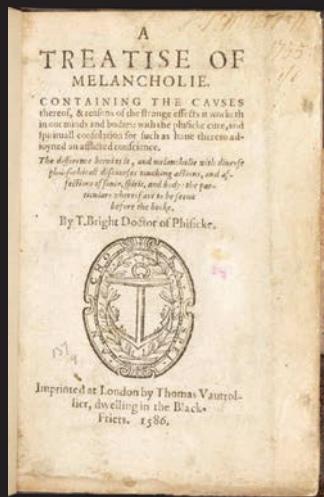
Timothie Bright
London: T. Vautrollier, 1586
[D.-L.L.] X7.7 [Bright] SR

The French Wars of Religion caused many French Protestants to flee to London during Elizabeth I's reign. Among these was the bookseller and printer Thomas Vautrollier, working initially with another French immigrant, Jean Desserans. Vautrollier became known as one of London's most accomplished printers. He used printing types designed by two major French type designers, Robert Granjon and Claude Garamond. In a very successful career, Vautrollier published some 150 books between 1570, when he set up independently at Blackfriars, and 1587. Alongside translations from French, educational works from elementary levels upwards, and other subjects (the work shown discusses mental depression), he printed Protestant theology, including several editions of Jean Calvin's *Institutes* in English and Latin, and works by Martin Luther, whom Vautrollier kept in the public eye at a time when Calvinist theology prevailed. Vautrollier's Protestantism may be seen even through his device with the motto: 'Anchora spei' ('Anchor of hope').  His legacy is shown partly in the continuation of his business by one of his former apprentices, Richard Field, who in 1588 married Vautrollier's widow Jacqueline. Among Field's output were William Shakespeare's first two published works, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, and many important Shakespearean sources.

## 9.

### *A Chronicle at Large and Meere History of the Affayres of Englande and Kinges of the Same …*

Richard Grafton
London: R. Tottel and H. Toy, 1569
Cc [Grafton] fol. SR

Not all changes of the Reformation were noted in near-contemporary accounts, with the emphasis of chronicles on royalty, pomp, and turbulence. This chronicle by Protestant printer and reformer Richard Grafton (1506/7-1573) dwells for the year 1538 upon a muster in the city of London, including the clothes people wore, with a paragraph about a skirmish between Henry VIII and the pope about a meeting called at Mantua, and briefer references to fortifications and to some executions for treason. Yet it is silent about legislation of the year that had the longest effect. In 1538 Thomas Cromwell ordered that every clergyman should 'keep one book or register, wherein ye shall write the day and year of every wedding, christening, and burying, made within your parish for your time'. The maintenance of parish registers throughout England and Wales to record all births, marriages and deaths was intended to provide the basis of certain information about descent, which was requisite for a better order in rights of inheritance, and achieved its aim. It has also proved a boon for local and family historians and others, with far-reaching consequences for the study of the English past.

COMMUNICATIONS
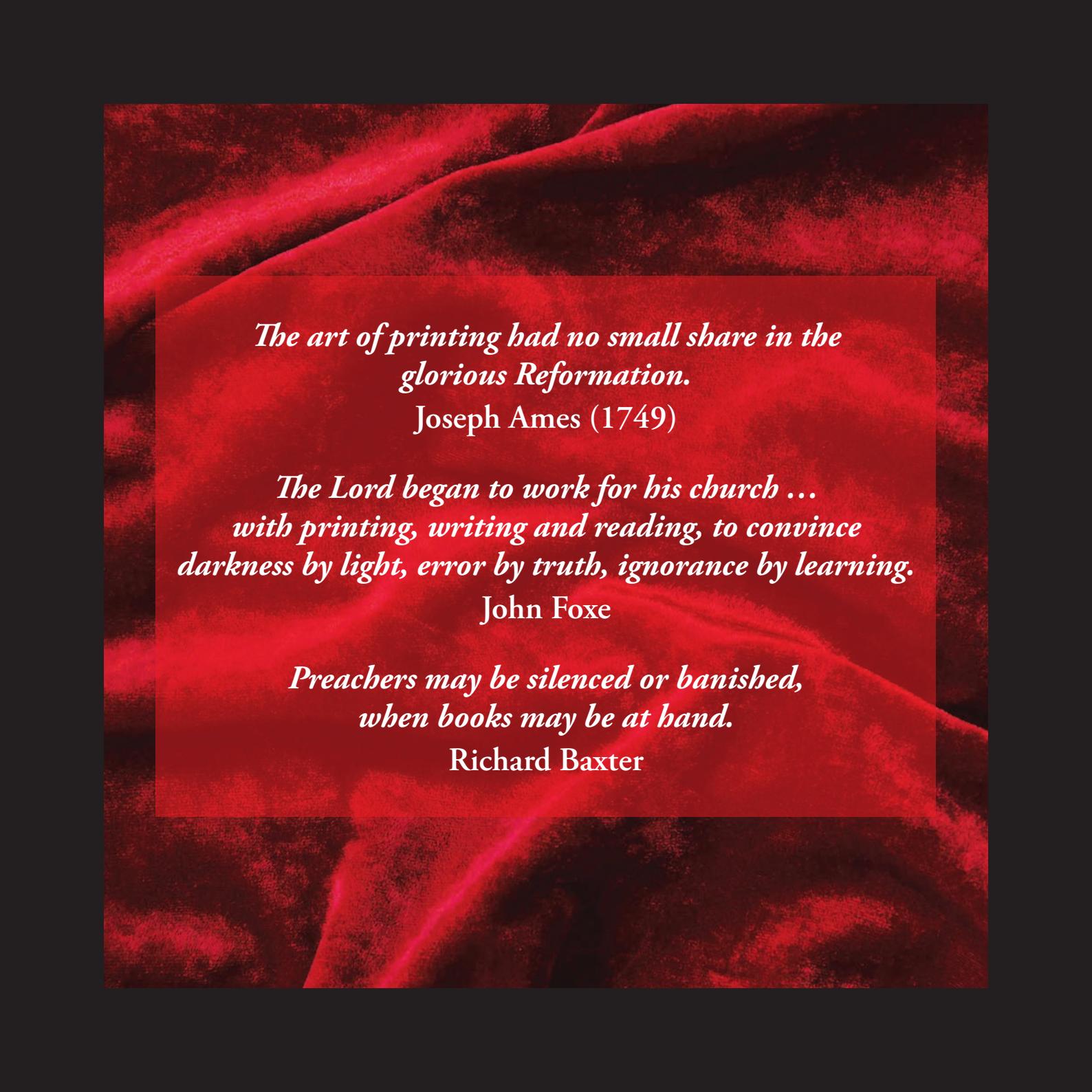
*The art of printing had no small share in the glorious Reformation.*
Joseph Ames (1749)

*The Lord began to work for his church …*
*with printing, writing and reading, to convince*
*darkness by light, error by truth, ignorance by learning.*
John Foxe

*Preachers may be silenced or banished,*
*when books may be at hand.*
Richard Baxter

# 3 Gallery Three: Communications

Prior to the Reformation, communication had primarily been oral and visual. Levels of literacy beyond the educated elite were low, Latin was the dominant written language of church and state, and the manuscript culture limited the spread of ideas. Important religious information was transmitted at a local level through sermons in church, reinforced through mystery or morality plays performed on carts, and supplemented by proclamations regarding religion read aloud in market places or local courts by an official. Printing had been introduced into England in 1476 but at the beginning of the sixteenth century was limited to some half-dozen printers, who between them published fewer than sixty titles in 1500.

The Reformation transformed this situation, and the communications revolution it inspired was driven by London. First, the twenty or so printers operating in the city by the middle of the sixteenth century found there was a growing market for the production and dissemination of religious polemic, in particular Protestant propaganda ranging from pamphlets for the mass market to weighty tomes for the churches and universities. The total number of publications rose sharply. Public sermons, such as those preached at St Paul's Cross, continued to be well attended and highly influential. However, the spoken word was, for the first time, captured in print and spread speedily and more widely to even larger numbers—key sermons were circulated to audiences around the country alongside new formats such as 'penny godlies', satirical cartoons and sensational literature, as well as standard classics of popular divinity.

Equally, rebuttals and counter-rebuttals allowed people to follow the evolving argument, rather than just hear one side; many pamphlets and books were read aloud in company, allowing more people to participate in the debate. Personal views could be expressed in print, thus enabling a far greater number of people to circulate their ideas, in the way that social media—in particular, blogs—do today.

The victory of English over Latin as the language of God in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was the result of the mass production of highly influential texts such as the *Book of Common Prayer* and the Geneva and King James Versions of the Bible in English, which would not have been possible without the new print technology. Rising literacy levels in all levels of society resulted from the Reformation, with both men and women being educated to ensure that they could read God's word personally.

Yet freedom to express heterodox religious opinions could always be seen as a major threat to authority, and attempts were made to control it. All English printing had to be licensed, and monopolies granted to trusted printers for certain classes of books gave the Crown additional control. Books regarded as heretical were seized and burned, while the people behind their production and dissemination were fined, imprisoned, and sometimes burned along with their books.  It is no coincidence that printers were among those who fled England during Mary I's attempts to reverse the Protestant Reformation in the middle of the sixteenth century.

## 1.
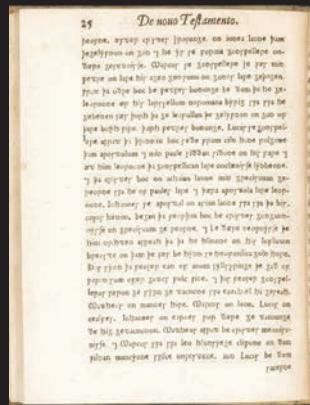
### *A Saxon Treatise Concerning the Old and New Testament*

Aelfric; edited by William Lisle
London: H. Seile, 1623
[E.M.W.] 012 SR

*A Saxon Treatise* is by Abbot Aelfric of Eynsham (c.955-c.1010), author of the *Catholic Homilies* and *Lives of the Saints* and the most prominent known figure of Old English literature. Its editor and translator, William Lisle (c.1569-1637), was significant as an Anglo-Saxon scholar who pioneered the recovery of Old English. But equally important here is Lisle's religious and political purpose in translating the work, which he explains in a forty-page preface, extremely long in proportion to Aelfric's text, with its own table of contents. Just as in the previous generation Archbishop Matthew Parker had collected works, including Aelfrician manuscripts, to find evidence for the existence of Protestantism in Britain's past to rebut the Catholic taunt of where the Protestant church was before Luther, Lisle explains his desire to preserve 'an auncient monument of the Church of England' (b1r), and therefore to validate the Church of England as an ancient body. He further emphasises the value of possessing the Scriptures in a known tongue to promote clear understanding and stresses the long tradition of the English Scriptures, as shown by the existence of much of the Bible in Anglo-Saxon.

## 2.

### *The Bible and Holy Scriptures Conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament, Translated According to the Ebrue and Greke …*

Geneva: R. Hall, 1560
[E.M.W.] 005 SR

Prepared by Protestant exiles in Geneva during Mary I's reign and first published in this edition of 1560, the Geneva Bible was exceedingly popular for household use in England, Scotland and America in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, running through 140 editions before 1644. For fifty years the English and Scots learned much of their exegesis from it. It was, moreover, the Bible of Elizabethan and Jacobean poets and prose writers—including Shakespeare, through whose plays it resonates. While the Geneva Bible was a landmark edition for dividing the text into verses and for translating the poetic and prophetic books of the Old Testament from the Hebrew for the first time, its most marked feature was its extensive notes giving definitions, variant translations, cross-references, chapter summaries, and doctrinal explanations. These glosses rendered the Geneva Bible the first study Bible in English. They furthermore marked it as Protestant and more specifically Puritan, teaching plain living and high thinking, and strengthening Puritanism in Britain. Within the Book of Revelation, some notes are distinctly anti-Roman, equating the Antichrist with the pope. James I's irritation with the notes led to the commissioning of the King James Bible to replace it.

## 3.

### A Hundred Sermons upon the Apocalipse of Iesu Christ

Heinrich Bullinger
London: J. Day, 1573
G9.3 [Revelation] SR
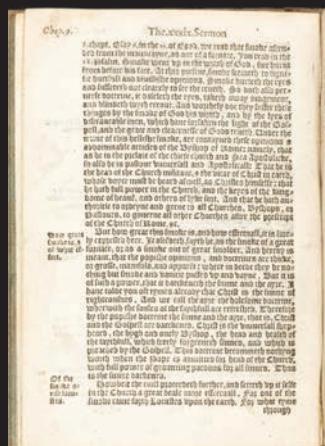
The Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1576) followed in the traditions of Ulrich Zwingli and Jean Calvin. His influence extended throughout Europe. In England, he corresponded with Henry VIII, Edward VI, Elizabeth I and Lady Jane Grey. Archbishop Whitgift ordered all ministerial candidates who lacked a theological education to read a portion of Bullinger's theological handbook *The Decades* each week and make notes from it; about fifty editions of Bullinger's works appeared (mostly in English) between 1538 and 1587; and Bullinger's death was mourned as a calamity. His literary output was vast; his sermons were noted for being biblical, clear, and practical. The sermon was a characteristic form of Protestant communication, seen as a key feature in bringing the faithful to salvation, with an estimated 1,000 titles printed in the years 1558-1603. Series of sermons expounding entire chapters or books of the Bible, verse by verse, as shown here, were a Reformation phenomenon. Bullinger was the first major reformer to write what amounted to a commentary on the book of Revelation (based on sermons previously delivered orally and published in German in 1558 before appearing in English in 1561), spurred to do so by Mary Tudor's accession to the English throne.

## 4.

### Special and Chosen Sermons of D. Martin Luther

Martin Luther
London: T. Vautroullier, 1581
G8.94 [Luther] SR

In 1519 Martin Luther's books were being exported to England, where, as Erasmus informed him, certain very great people admired them, and the daily ledger of the Oxford bookseller John Dorne shows that he sold some dozen titles by Luther in 1520. A year later, Cardinal Wolsey publicly burned a collection of Luther's works in London, following a mass at St Paul's with a sermon by John Fisher against heresy. From 1534, when Henry VIII broke from the Catholic Church, Luther's works began to be printed in England and in English, where their popularity is clear from the publication of some fifty sixteenth-century titles by or partly by him. The *Special and Chosen Sermons* first appeared in 1578. The translator, William Gace, was a convinced evangelical who translated several Latin works by German and Danish Lutheran reformers into English to bring people ignorant of Latin to God and edify the church, using a plain style for maximum effect. The martyrologist John Foxe in his introduction emphasises the value of the vernacular: 'so this translator has no lesse plainly and faithfully [than Luther] englished the same [sermons] for the commoditie and vse of our contry folke of England'.

## 5.
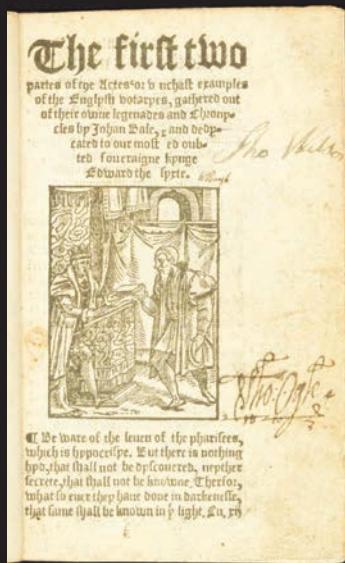
### The First Two Partes of the Actes, or Vnchast [sic] Examples of the Englysh Votaryes

John Bale
London: T. Raynalde, 1548
G8.94 [Bale] SR

The bishop of Ossory and evangelical polemicist John Bale (1495-1563) wrote his *Actes of the Englysh Votaryes* in Germany, in the first of two periods of exile. It first appeared in Antwerp in 1546 under a false imprint (Wesel): surreptitious publication reflecting the incendiary nature of print. Bale had abandoned life as a Carmelite monk in order to marry, and the *Actes* defends marriage as biblical, attacks (in opposition to Henry VIII) the vow of celibacy, and sets out bluntly to expose and vilify the sexual mores of the monastic orders—mores portrayed as encouraged by the pope, who is equated with the Antichrist. Bale presents the Church as having been originally pure but having become polluted as the papacy developed, especially over the question of clerical celibacy, and England as a blessed place for having been influenced by the pope for a comparatively short period. The book was meant to be in four parts, but Bale finished only the first two, from Joseph of Arimathea bringing apostolic Christianity to Britain in the year 1000 to the reign of King John. It became one of his most popular works, published three times between 1548 (shown) and 1560.

## 6.
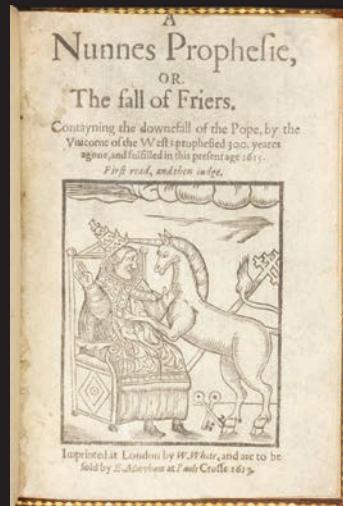
### A Nunnes Prophesie, or, The Fall of Friers: Contayning the Downefall of the Pope, by the Vnicorne of the West

London: W. White, 1615
[H.P.L.] Nun RBC

While pamphlets had been printed from the 1450s onwards, when printing from moveable type began, the Reformation was a principal stimulus to their production. They became a common form of (primarily Protestant) propaganda, being quick and cheap to print and, as they were thin, easy to disguise and smuggle if necessary. Not only was direct theology published, but matters such as murders, monstrous births and heavenly portents could be turned to Protestant purposes. The anonymous pamphlet shown would have required just three sheets of paper and cost a very few pence. It falls into a common category of crude anti-popery, represented also by such titles as *The Merchandises of Popish Priests: Laying open to the World, how Cunningly they Cheate and Abuse Poore People* … (Jean de Chassagnon, 1604) and *The Fabulous Foundation of Popedom* (1619). The woodcut on the title page reinforces a message within, with a section headed 'the Vnicorne shall thrust the Popes triple Crowne from his head'. This asserts that the pope has become ruler of the world through subtlety and cunning, with the help of the Devil, and that, his enemies having become as strong as unicorns, he shall be destroyed by God.

# 7.
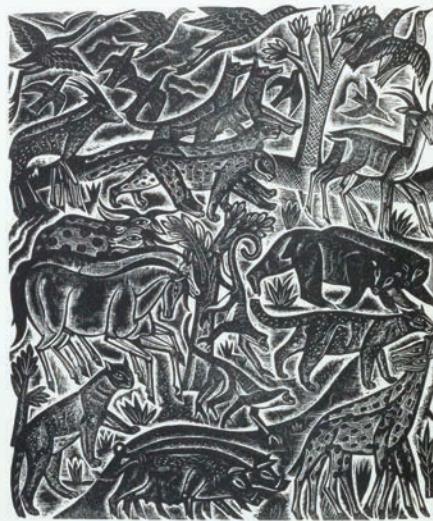
## *The Chester Play of the Deluge*

Ill. by David Jones
London: Clover Hill, 1977
[S.L.] Ill [Rampant Lions Press – 1977] fol.

This story about the Old Testament character of Noah and the Flood (Gen. 6-9) is one of the mediaeval mystery plays—dramas enacting biblical events from the creation of the world to the ascension of Christ (and sometimes beyond)—which were popular in England and other European countries between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. The plays were performed in procession outdoors over three or five days around Corpus Christi and Whitsun by craft guilds. They were widely attended, such that London clerks performed in the presence of Richard II. Noah was an especially popular play, which has come down to us in six Middle English versions and a Cornish one; that shown is one of 24 plays in the Chester cycle. It represents an oral method of communication: at a time when the vernacular Bible was regarded as heretical, listening to a paraphrase in a sermon or a play was the closest that most people came to hearing the scriptures in their own language. The Reformation distaste for idols and religious pageantry led to the demise of the mystery plays; but increasing literacy and the prevalence of the Bible and prayer book in the English language eliminated a need for them.



*Then Noe shall goe into the Arke with all his family, his wief except, and the Arke must be borded rounde about,*

## 8.

### *Stultifera Nauis = The Ship of Fooles*
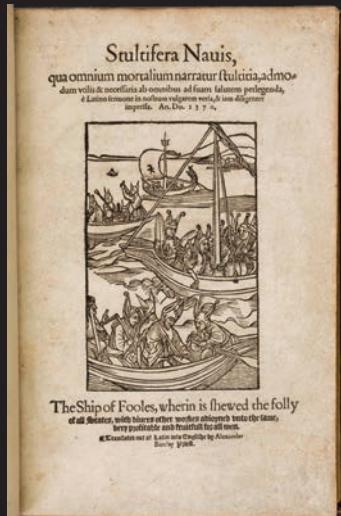
Desiderius Erasmus
London: E. Whitchurch, 1541
[E.M.W.] 341a (fol.)

This book is an English verse adaptation of Sebastian Brant's tremendously popular *Narrenschiff* ('Ship of Fools', 1494). The book is about the shipping of all kinds of fools, introduced by category, to the Land of Fools. The poet and clergyman Alexander Barclay's version, first published in 1509, contains copious additions to present a picture of contemporary English social life. It reminds us that the criticism of the Church that marked the Reformation, far from originating then, continued an earlier strain. Alongside riotous servants and corrupt lawyers, among others, Barclay attacks parish clergy for ignorance and worldliness, and monks and friars whose primary interest is gluttony, with such lines as: 'Such fooles have their minds on riches / On cursed lucre, pleasure, ioy and wealth / Caring nought at all for their soules health'. The printer, John Cawood, who operated in St Paul's Churchyard, is an example of a survivor of two regimes. He made his fortune as Queen's Printer for Mary Tudor, under whom he printed such key Catholic texts as Bishop Bonner's *Homilies* and Archbishop Cranmer's official retraction. His connection with her regime was, however, loose enough for him to continue in his role under Elizabeth I.

## 9.

### *The First Tome or Volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Newe Testament*
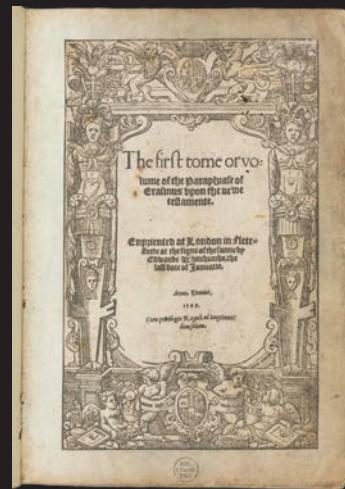
Desiderius Erasmus
London: E. Whitchurch, 1541
[E.M.W.] 341a (fol.)

Praising 'the multiplication of good books by the printer's pen' to further Christ's church, John Foxe wrote in his introduction to *The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes* (shown elsewhere in this gallery) that worthy books from former ages were not preserved because the art of printing had not yet been invented. The Dutch-born, Swiss-based humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1467-1536) was perhaps the first scholar to rely entirely upon the printed word to spread his message. Erasmus helped to pave the way for the Reformation by insisting on returning to the Bible's original text and translating the New Testament afresh from Greek into Latin. He also criticised such aspects of contemporary Christendom as the cult of the saints: for example in *Moriae Encomium (Praise of Folly)*, which he finished at Thomas More's house on one of several visits to England. Initially Erasmus's choice to write in Latin limited his influence, although he later fuelled a translation industry in England. His *Paraphrases upon the New Testament*, written in Latin and promptly translated into English by the future Mary Tudor among others on the initiative of Queen Catherine Parr, were extremely influential. In 1547 Edward VI ordered them to be made accessible in every parish in England.

## 10.

### *The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, Three Worthy Martyrs, and Principall Teachers of this Churche of England*

William Tyndale, John Frith and Robert Barnes
London: J. Day, 1573
G8 [Tyndale] fol. SR

This book was compiled by the prolific Protestant printer John Day. From the outset of his career, Day used visual propaganda to advance a Protestant message. The woodcut of William Tyndale's death shown is a clear example of illustration supporting text. Clad only in a loincloth, Tyndale's nakedness recalls that of Christ on the cross. His spiky hair may be redolent of the Crown of Thorns. The malignant or jeering expressions and gestures of the friars and monks who jostle with soldiers and townspeople around the scaffold is a convention. So, too, is the cartoon-like appearance of words in a scroll. Such words are usually, as here, a martyr's dying utterance. The picture is explained verbally five pages later: 'Devines from Louvain … tyed him to a stake, where with a fervent zeale, and a loud voice hee cried, Lord open the eyes of the King of Englande, and then first he was with a halter strangled by the hangman, and afterward consumed with fier'. Pictorial access reinforced the textual message for readers and increased access to books for illiterate auditors.

## 11.

### *A Defence of the Apologie of the Churche of England*
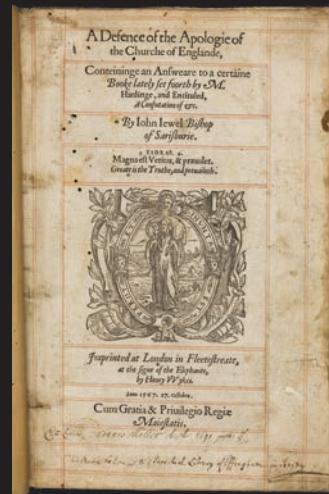
John Jewel
London: H. Wykes, 1567
G8 [Jewel] fol. SR

Statement, rebuttal, and counter-rebuttal were a feature of Reformation publishing, and the 'Great Controversy' around the work of John Jewel (1522-1571), Bishop of Salisbury, was a prime example. It stems from a bull by Pope Pius IV of 1560 that excommunicated Elizabeth I. Working as the quasi-official spokesman of the new Church of England, Jewel wrote his *Apologie of the Churche of England* (1562), refuting charges made against the Church, in Latin for continental consumption. An English translation soon appeared. Of the more than forty refutations to its arguments which appeared between 1564 and 1568, the most substantial was the 744-page *A Confutation of a Booke Intituled 'An Apologie of the Church of England'* (1565) by Thomas Harding, an English Catholic priest in Louvain. Jewel's *Defence* answers that, incorporating Harding's text within his own. Each writer closely attacks the other's arguments and citations, sometimes resorting to typically robust language, such as: 'In the ende, M. Hardinge, ye blowe up merily your owne Conquest … with so simple proufes, and so many Untruthes, as … maie not wel be shewed in your Triumphe' (p. 325). The very type shows the Protestant bias: Jewel's words appear in large, authoritative black letter, Harding's in smaller italic.
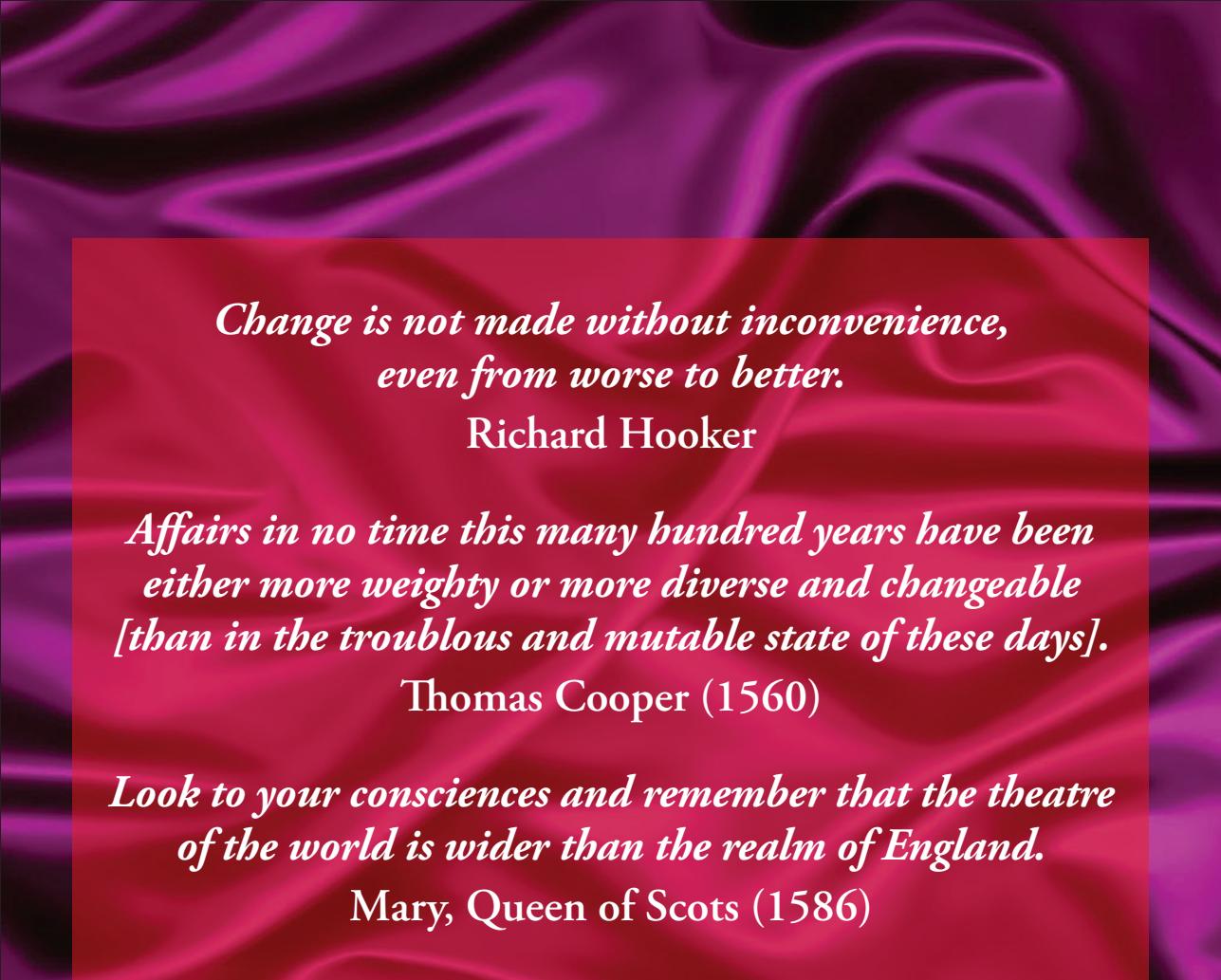
William Combe, *The History of the Abbey Church of St. Peter's Westminster, its Antiquities and Monuments* (London: R. Ackermann, 1812).

*Change is not made without inconvenience,*
*even from worse to better.*
Richard Hooker

*Affairs in no time this many hundred years have been*
*either more weighty or more diverse and changeable*
*[than in the troublous and mutable state of these days].*
Thomas Cooper (1560)

*Look to your consciences and remember that the theatre*
*of the world is wider than the realm of England.*
Mary, Queen of Scots (1586)

# 4 Gallery Four: New World Order

Henry VIII's decision to take England out of Catholic Europe—arguably the first 'Brexit'—had dramatic repercussions on its place in the world in terms of trade links, military power, diplomatic influence, and within the emerging 'new world'. European alliances and centuries-old enmities were redrawn according to new religious divides, and closer to home the battle between Presbyterianism and Catholicism in Scotland had dramatic political consequences for Anglo-Scottish relations. Nowhere was this more keenly felt than London—the heart of diplomacy and trade.

Mary Queen of Scots was seen as a potential successor to Elizabeth and champion for the Catholic counter-Reformation. Her execution on 8 February 1587 paved the way for the accession of her Protestant son James, uniting the crowns of two countries that had intermittently been at war for centuries. This was a seismic change to the political landscape and had a major impact on London. Increasingly it became the fulcrum of the royal court for both kingdoms, and therefore the location of the attempted Catholic gunpowder plot to assassinate the new king and his parliament in 1605.

The Reformation had an even more divisive impact on Ireland, with Protestantism limited in its spread but claiming a monopoly of political power, which led to bitter divisions within society. The existence of a large Catholic population so close to England was a major concern for Tudor and Stuart monarchs, who feared that Ireland could be used as a springboard for rebellions or foreign invasions. Various military interventions in Irish affairs on religious grounds caused deep-rooted resistance to English rule and a Protestant-Catholic schism that can still be felt today.

The new world order manifested itself most dramatically in England's relationships with France and Spain, as centuries of diplomatic alignment were reversed. For example, English support for Protestants rebelling against their rulers in the Spanish-controlled Low Countries also led to growing political tension between the two former allies, England and Spain, now vying for supremacy of the high seas and control of new world riches flowing from colonies in north and south America.

Henry VIII had massively expanded the royal navy, largely in response to the very real fear of invasion from Catholic states after the break with Rome. London was one of the key sites that was chosen to pioneer new naval technology, with development of the docks at Deptford. The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588—an attempt to reconvert England to Catholicism—ushered in a golden age for England as a maritime nation. By the time the Mayflower sailed in 1620, Protestant beliefs were very much in the ascendant, exported across the world from English ports.

Capturing London was one of the prime objectives of the Spanish Armada because the city was becoming the heart of a new trading empire. Start-up commercial enterprises such as the Muscovy Company (1555) and the East India Company (1600) originated in London, bringing commodities such as cotton, silk, tobacco, tea and opium into the port and generating great wealth for the city.

# 1.

## *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*

John Smith
London: E. Blackmore, 1632
[S.L.] I [Smith, J – 1632] fol.

Puritans felt that Protestant reform under Elizabeth was too moderate and objected to certain ecclesiastical practices, such as wearing clerical vestments and kneeling to receive Communion. When James I dismissed their grievances and some were deprived of their positions, immigration to the new world, especially to Virginia and to New England, was a result. The soldier John Smith (1580-1631), the author of this work, governed Virginia between 1607 and 1609. The book, first published in 1624, is largely a collection of three writings roughly contemporaneous with his time there. Smith thought that the first stage of colonization required soldiers and military discipline to secure the settlement, but that they should give way to families and communities as soon as it was feasible. Only the emigration of a cross-section of English society would permit the development of towns and communities recognisably English in character and with a strong moral core. The Puritans would have been ideal for the purpose. Puritanism was a formative element of early American life that gave Americans a sense of history as participants in a progressive drama under divine direction, and laid the foundation for the religious, intellectual and social order of New England.

## 2.
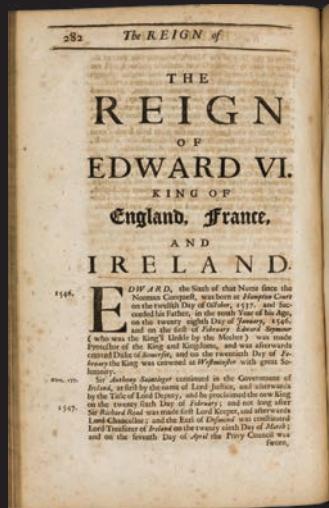
### *Hibernia Anglicana, or, The History of Ireland, from the Conquest thereof by the English, to this Present Time*

Richard Cox
London: J. Watts, 1689
[Rare] Cc.5 [Cox] fol.

The king of England had been 'lord of Ireland' since Henry II's time, a title that depended on papal grant. In 1541 Henry VIII changed the position to 'king of Ireland' in order to secure his position, and became head of the Church in Ireland. Henry, Edward VI and Elizabeth imposed Protestantism on the country. About half the Irish monasteries were dissolved; office-bearers in the Irish church or government had to take the Oath of Supremacy; attendance at Church of Ireland services was obligatory. Trinity College Dublin was established in 1592 to produce ministers to preach the reformed faith. Yet while rulers could demand degrees of outward conformity, they could not convert a hostile populace to accept religious change. Much education took place in Catholic institutions, schools at home and universities abroad. Recusancy and revolts were common. English and Scottish immigrants had to be planted in Ireland to secure the future of Protestantism. Richard Cox (1650-1733), lord chancellor of Ireland, notes the merging of national and religious viewpoints as Papists are equated with the Irish and Protestants with the English (leaf c2r), with 'irreconciliable antipathy' between the two faiths: antipathy that would throw a shadow across centuries.

## 1.

### *Annales, or, The History of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princesse Elizabeth, Late Queen of England*

Third edition
William Camden
London: B. Fisher, 1635
[D.-L.L.] (VI) Cc [Camden] fol. SR

The historian William Camden (1551-1623) laboured for more than seven years to record the events of Elizabeth I's reign, year by year. The result, with its reliance on primary sources—William Cecil's private papers, the royal archives, and Sir Robert Cotton's library—was a model of up-to-date historical writing that remained definitive for centuries. It was also an instant success. The copy shown has been enhanced by a nineteenth-century owner with some 450 illustrations. The volume is open at the year 1581, recounting unwelcome foreign interaction with England as subversive English Jesuit priests entered the country from abroad. The pope had excommunicated Elizabeth and absolved her subjects from allegiance, a move that turned Catholics into potential traitors. Elizabeth was largely tolerant, stating famously that she had no intention of making windows into men's souls (rephrased here as 'who never thought men's consciences were to be forced'), and her 45-year reign produced only some 300 Catholic martyrs: equivalent to the number of Protestant martyrs engendered during Mary's six-year rule. Executions were for treason, not belief: Camden here describes how the Jesuit Edmund Campion admitted that he would support the pope, should the pope send forces against the Queen.

## 3.

### *Maria Stuarta, Regina Scotiae, Dotaria Franciae, Haeres Angliae et Hyberniae, Martyr Ecclesie, Innocens à Caede Darleana*

Robert Turner
Ingolstadt: W. Eder, 1588
Cc.4 [Mary, Qu. Of Scots – Turner] SR

Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1587) fled to England in 1568 after having been forced to abdicate from the Scottish throne. She remained in captivity there for almost twenty years, a magnet for Catholic plots on the life of Elizabeth I, to which Mary was sometimes party. After long resistance from Elizabeth, Mary was beheaded in February 1587. Mary regarded herself as a Catholic martyr, and Catholic Europe protested at her execution; however, England pointed out that she died for treason, not her religion. The deed served its purpose, ending assassination plots on Elizabeth. Mass demonstrations followed Mary's death: of sorrow in Paris and of joy in London. Mary's story has prompted numerous retellings, including Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Abbot* (1820), Friedrich Schiller's German drama *Maria Stuart* (1800) and Donizetti's Italian opera *Maria Stuarda* (1835). Shown here is an early biography of Mary by a Roman Catholic priest from Barnstaple who travelled around the Continent and was the rector of the University of Ingolstadt at the time of writing. As even the title makes clear—'martyr of the church, innocent of the death of Darnley'—Turner represents Mary as innocent of crimes attributed to her, persecuted for her faith.

## 4.

### *The Copie of a Letter Sent out of England to Don Bernardin Mendoza Ambassadour in France for the King of Spaine, Declaring the State of England, Contrary to the Opinion of Don Bernardin, and of all his Partizans Spaniardes and Others*
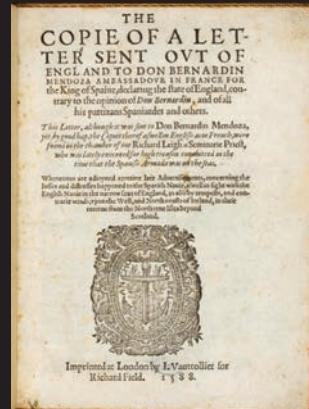
William Cecil, Baron Burghley
London: R. Field, 1588
[S.L.] I [Burleigh – 1588]

In July 1588, a Spanish armada of almost 130 ships and 30,000 men set sail to overthrow Elizabeth I and restore Catholic rule in England. Spanish dissatisfaction had been rife. Elizabeth had prevaricated over a marriage proposal made by Mary's widower, Philip II of Spain, to maintain Catholic control over England, while English ships had plundered Spanish ships and territories in the Americas and Elizabeth had supported Protestants in the Netherlands who were revolting against Spanish occupation. The invasion failed, largely because of poor organisation (the Spanish ran short of ammunition and of fresh food and water) and a bad storm off the Scottish coast. Spain lost half of its ships and over three-quarters of its men. England saw the storms that ravaged the Armada as divine intervention and the English victory as divine approval of the Protestant cause. The victory captured the English imagination and gave a long sense of national pride. This treatise is a piece of propaganda by William Cecil, Elizabeth's chief councillor, who had raised money for the war, outlined its strategy, and supervised naval supplies. It is probably the first detailed account of the Spanish Armada, including the clear sense of divine support.

## Collections used for this exhibition

The material in this exhibition draws on various named special collections within Senate House Library, as well as the general special collections of purchases and of single or dispersed gifts. Named collections used include:

**Bromhead Library**

**Durning-Lawrence Library**

**Ethel M. Wood Biblical Collection**

**Francis Bacon Society Library**

**Harry Price Library of Magical Literature**

**Incunabula**

**Littleton Collection**

**Sterling Library**

## Acknowledgements

This catalogue is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact **shl.whatson@london.ac.uk.**

ref500.uk