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**Presbyterianism, royalism and ministry in 1650s Lancashire:  
John Lake as minister at Oldham, c. 1650-1654\***

**James Mawdesley  
The University of Sheffield**

Late in life, John Lake attained his place in the annals of English history. As the Bishop of Chichester, he was one of the so-called ‘Seven Bishops’ who, in 1688, refused to read James II’s second ‘Declaration of Indulgence’, granting toleration, via the royal prerogative, to Catholics and to Protestant dissenters. Put on trial accused of seditious libel, the bishops were sensationally acquitted on 30 June 1688, and that very day, one of the acquitted, the Bishop of London, Henry Compton, joined six gentlemen in inviting William of Orange, the husband of James’ eldest daughter Mary, to invade England. With William and Mary’s rule established in the so-called ‘Glorious Revolution’, Lake, along with four of the other acquitted bishops and some 400 parish clergy, refused to swear the oath of allegiance to the new monarchs, on the basis that it would represent a breach of their oaths of allegiance to the deposed James II. Lake died in 1689, in the midst of this controversy, but many of these non-juring clergy, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Sancroft, went into exile.<sup>1</sup>

This article, however, will focus upon a tumultuous spell which Lake spent, early in his career, as minister at Oldham in Lancashire during the early 1650s, then technically a chapelry within Prestwich parish, though by the seventeenth century already exhibiting many of the characteristics of a parish.<sup>2</sup> The Church of England had, at this time, been effectively suppressed by the banning in 1645 of the use of the Book of Common Prayer in church services, and by the abolition of the office of bishop in 1646.<sup>3</sup> This article will examine both the ways in which Lake attempted to retain some vestiges of the rites and doctrines of the

suppressed Church of England in his ministry at Oldham, and also the nature of the division within the parish which was prompted by Lake's ministry. Intriguingly, this division saw an existing localised dispute within the chapelry assume a new form as Lake's ministry became contentious. By using the example of a prominent figure in the restored Church of England, this paper will illustrate some of the complexities which lie behind parochial politics during the years of the English republic. What at first sight may seem to be a straightforward clash between two competing ecclesiologies, between that of the suppressed Church of England on the one hand and of presbyterianism on the other hand, is in fact much more complex.

It should be pointed out that very little research has been done about the relationship between the parish and the classical presbyterian government which was established in Lancashire, with parliamentary approval having been given in October 1646.<sup>4</sup> At Cartmel in the far north of Lancashire, the failure of presbyterian government to enact godly reformation at the parish level ultimately disappointed members of the local godly to such an extent that they embraced Quakerism after visits by George Fox and James Nayler to the parish in 1652-1653.<sup>5</sup> A study of Oldham, though, offers a different challenge. Firstly, there does not seem to have been the same local disaffection with presbyterianism as there was at Cartmel, and thus local Quakerism (one of the ways in which discontent with presbyterianism could be manifested) remained weak. Two Cartmel Quakers, Richard Roper and James Taylor, were amongst the four Quakers who were first attributed as having brought Quakerism to Oldham in the 1650s, where they 'were struck & haled out of the Steeple house yard at Ouldham by John Tetlaw who thrust them over the wall'.<sup>6</sup> Though a Quaker meeting was established at Oldham, the movement never took root there to the same extent which it did at Cartmel, and between 1673 and 1676, all of the ten collections levied at Oldham for the Lancashire quarterly meeting raised the lowest sums of any meeting in Lancashire.<sup>7</sup> Secondly, very

different issues at Oldham are highlighted by the different range of sources available for that area. Unlike for the north of Lancashire, where such records do not survive, the minutes of the Manchester presbyterian classis were published by the Chetham Society in the 1890s, under the editorship of William Shaw, the pioneering historian of mid-seventeenth century church politics.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, some valuable material concerning John Lake's tenure at Oldham are contained within a series of manuscripts preserved at Chetham's Library in Manchester, which Shaw transcribed as an appendix to his minutes of the Manchester classis.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, Oldham, located in the south-eastern corner of Lancashire, was situated in an area where protestantism took root during the second half of the sixteenth century more deeply than in other parts of Lancashire, and where, during the first civil war of 1642-1646, parliamentary allegiance was numerically stronger than elsewhere in Lancashire.<sup>10</sup> Thus, a study of Oldham, and in particular John Lake's career as minister there, offers much potential for the investigation of religious politics in an area where the battles were not so much between presbyterianism and Quakerism or other forms of religious independency, but rather, were between presbyterianism and the Church of England survivalism promoted by Lake.

### **John Lake: The man and his attitudes:**

To understand Lake's career as minister at Oldham, his life before his arrival there reveals some interesting points which may well have impacted in his future life. He was baptised at Halifax in the West Riding of Yorkshire on 5 December 1624, the eldest child of Thomas Lake, a 'grocer' involved in the wool trade, and his wife Mary. Following education at Halifax grammar school, he progressed to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated with a B. A. degree on 20 April 1642. After civil war broke out in England that summer, Lake was imprisoned at Cambridge for expressing royalist opinions, before

escaping to Charles I's headquarters at Oxford. There, he entered into active service in the King's army, serving in the garrisons at Basing House and Wallingford, and he was apparently wounded on several occasions. The first civil war ended in 1646, and by 26 July 1647, Lake had returned to Halifax, when he preached his first sermon. On 19 October 1647, Lake was clandestinely ordained at Halifax by Thomas Fulwar, the bishop of the Irish diocese of Ardfert. Presumably after his return to Halifax, Lake married Judith, the daughter of Gilbert Deane of Exley Hall, near Halifax.<sup>11</sup>

Lake's home town of Halifax had experienced some early protestant radicalism in the late 1540s, but much of its reputation as a 'puritan' town came later, with (as William and Sarah Sheils have argued) no linkage to this earlier protestant radicalism.<sup>12</sup> Particularly influential in fostering this evangelicism was John Favour, vicar for some thirty years between 1593 and his death in 1623, later described by Oliver Heywood (whose own ministry would be based upon the Halifax area) as 'a great friend to nonconformists'.<sup>13</sup> At the 1619 visitation, from which Favour was absent, he was excommunicated for the typically puritan offence of not wearing the clerical surplice, which puritans saw as being an unnecessary survival from Catholic worship (indeed, at the heart of puritanism was a desire to cleanse the Church of England from unnecessary Catholic survivals).<sup>14</sup> During Lake's youth, the vicar between 1629 and his death in 1638 was Henry Ramsden, an Oxford graduate, who, during his time as a preacher in London prior to coming to Halifax, was described by Anthony Wood as being 'much resorted to for his edifying and puritanical sermons'.<sup>15</sup> However, one of the most significant developments for Lake's career was the appointment of Richard Marsh as vicar of Halifax in 1638.<sup>16</sup> After his translation to York in 1632, Archbishop Richard Neile had attempted to impose innovatory new standards of conformity upon the northern province of the Church of England. In league with the

Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, and Charles I, communion tables were ordered to be railed at the east ends of churches, which, to critics, seemed to represent a move towards popery by stealth, particularly when combined with other aspects of the wider 'Laudian' programme, such as attacks on sabbatarianism by the promotion of Sunday afternoon recreations, and the emphasis upon the sacraments at the seeming expenses of sermons.<sup>17</sup> Such changes not only represented an attack on puritanism (as Laud, and Neile et al perceived them to be), but to many godly people, they also seemed to present a challenge to the mainstream Calvinism which was arguably the most common position within the Church of England at this time.<sup>18</sup>

Richard Marsh has been described by the historian of the diocese of York, Ronald Marchant, as being 'the staunchest supporter of Neile among the beneficed clergy of the West Riding'.<sup>19</sup> A pluralist, Marsh had been vicar of nearby Birstall since 1614, and his appointment to Halifax coincided with an attempt to enforce conformity upon a recalcitrant parish.<sup>20</sup> In November 1638, the curates of the chapels in Halifax parish were ordered to read prayers before and after their sermons.<sup>21</sup> In 1644, Marsh was appointed as Dean of York, but the city's fall to Parliament during that year, and the abolition of episcopacy by Parliament in 1646, meant that he would not be installed as dean until 1660, after the restoration of the monarchy and of episcopal church government.<sup>22</sup> Marsh would be responsible for the first significant appointment of Lake's career when, in the face of significant opposition from local presbyterians, he was appointed as vicar of Leeds on 10 April 1661.<sup>23</sup> It is surely feasible that Marsh must have had some influence on the young Lake, especially given the patronage which Lake was later to receive from Marsh. During the 1630s, Marsh had been a keen promoter of a certain ecclesiastical style, characterised by the promotion of dignified attitudes towards worship and an exalted view of the clerical profession.<sup>24</sup> This style would

be revived in the post-restoration Church of England. In August 1660, Marsh was reported as presiding over the full restoration of worship at York Minster, with ‘singing men and organs’.<sup>25</sup> There is no reason to believe that Lake differed in attitude from his patron. Whilst serving as magistrate of the Cathedral precinct at York during the 1670s, Lake was known to forcibly remove the hats of young boys who had entered the Minster, and in 1673, Lake’s attempts to suppress an apprentice revel traditionally held in a bell tower at the Minster on Shrove Tuesday so antagonised its supporters that troops had to be brought in to restore order.<sup>26</sup> As Bishop of Chichester after 1685, Lake enforced the restoration of railed communion tables in his diocese, an innovation which had been so controversial during the 1630s.<sup>27</sup>

Yet, responsibility for Lake’s interest in this ecclesiological style may not rest solely with Marsh, but also upon Lake’s time as a student at St. John’s College, Cambridge. The chapel at St. John’s had recently been sumptuously renovated. Behind the altar was a depiction of Christ’s crucifixion, above which was a dove (representing the Holy Ghost) within a radiating sun. The sky blue ceiling was interspersed with ‘gilt stars’, and the writing ‘Jesus Christus Dominus Noster’.<sup>28</sup> Worshipping within this kind of exuberant setting must have had a strong influence upon the young Lake, and was a world away from what he would have encountered in the chapels of Halifax parish, and indeed, at Oldham.

It is difficult to place with any certainty Lake’s ecclesiological views prior to his arrival at Oldham. He evidently had contacts with figures at the heart of the Laudian establishment, though there is no evidence during his time at Oldham that he promoted particularly Laudian views (which we must remember were largely innovatory in the Church of England during the 1630s), though he was part of what we might define as a Laudian

resurgence during the 1680s. It may be the case that he joined those clergy who found it politic to abandon their Laudian views which came under criticism from a wide variety of people in the early 1640s, before the cataclysmic splits of 1641-1642 as England headed towards civil war.<sup>29</sup> In any case, many moderate puritan clergymen conformed with the Laudian innovations during the 1630s (as much as they were an attack on puritan evangelism), and many moderate puritan clergymen also became royalists during the civil war.<sup>30</sup> So fluid are clerical positions during this period that certainly in Cheshire, clergymen of differing ecclesiological persuasions (during both the 1630s and the 1640s) and later, of different civil war allegiances, were able to retain some form of relationship.<sup>31</sup> These fluidities may be of some significance for why Lake came, firstly to Prestwich and then to Oldham, in the early 1650s.

During the 1640s, the minister at Bury, the parish adjacent to Prestwich, was one William Alte. He was there firstly as curate to the rector, Peter Travers, a puritan who would be ejected from his living in 1645 upon accusations of royalism, with Alte and Andrew Lathom being appointed his successors.<sup>32</sup> Both Alte and Lathom had Halifax connections. Alte had been a lecturer there (a form of unbeneficed minister employed specifically as a preacher) during the 1630s, before coming to Bury sometime before February 1642, when he signed the Protestation there.<sup>33</sup> According to Oliver Heywood, Lathom had been minister at Coley chapel in Halifax parish during the late 1630s, before fleeing the area during incursions by the Earl of Newcastle's royalist troops in the area, circa 1643.<sup>34</sup> Lathom had died in June 1648, but Alte was still minister at Bury when we first hear of Lake as being minister at Prestwich in March 1650.<sup>35</sup> It is probable that Lake had known Alte from his time at Halifax, and though it is only speculation, one wonders if he played a role in bringing Lake to Prestwich. Though his parishioners at Oldham later discovered his royalist background, this



may not have been known by Alte, who may well have thought that Lake had simply been away at Cambridge (a parliamentarian town throughout the war) rather than serving in the King's forces. For Alte, bringing Lake to Prestwich may well have been an opportunity to bring to south-eastern Lancashire a talented young minister who he had known as a youth in Halifax. This may well also explain why the Manchester presbyterian classis did not seek to suspend Lake from his ministry when he failed to attend classis meetings, if they thought that approving him (when he did finally attend) would be a mere formality. It is quite likely that they did not know at this time that Lake had been clandestinely episcopally ordained by Bishop Fulwar in October 1647.<sup>36</sup> Though episcopacy had been abolished in England by Parliament in October 1646, Kenneth Fincham and Stephen Taylor have recently estimated that in the years when episcopacy was suppressed, between 1646 and 1660, some 2730 men were episcopally ordained in England, and they acknowledge that even that figure may be on the conservative side.<sup>37</sup> Lake was probably one of the first clerics to be clandestinely episcopally ordained, coming in the year after episcopacy was abolished, and representing the low point for the number of episcopal ordinations conducted during the years of suppression.<sup>38</sup> Significantly, in the articles later exhibited against Lake at Oldham, though mention is made of his royalism, no mention is ever made of his episcopal ordination, which suggests that he may well have not revealed his status during his time as minister there.<sup>39</sup>

So, what are we to make of all this, with Lake later receiving the patronage of a keen Laudian (Marsh) during the 1660s but feasibly also receiving the patronage of a puritan-presbyterian minister (Alte) during the early 1650s, both of whom he would have reasonably have had Halifax connections with? It would have been impolitic to have been an open Laudian during the 1640s and 1650s, particularly if one had wanted to serve within the presbyterian structure in Lancashire which had replaced the suppressed Church of England.

More likely is that when Lake arrived in south-eastern Lancashire and realised both the weakness of presbyterian government in the area and that there were other ministers in sympathy with the Church of England ministering in the area with little meaningful intervention by the authorities, he may well have felt confident in introducing Church of England 'conformist' (if certainly not 'Laudian') practices into the worship when he presided over at Oldham.

### **The situation at Oldham:**

The situation which Lake found when he began his ministry at Oldham in 1650 or 1651 was a complex one which requires further investigation. Like Halifax, Oldham had a history of puritan nonconformity, with the first reported instance of lay puritan nonconformity in the diocese of Chester coming at Oldham at the 1605 visitation, when the inhabitants were presented for not kneeling when receiving communion, an action which, to puritans, implied idolatry.<sup>40</sup> Though technically a chapelry of Prestwich parish (whose rector, Isaac Allen, lost his living after being accused of active royalism during the first civil war), the Oldham congregation were exhibiting the features of an autonomous parish by the 1640s.<sup>41</sup> In late 1646, a petition was sent by some Oldham parishioners to the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents, to ask that the tithes of Oldham, sequestered from a local gentleman, Edmund Ashton of Chadderton, be reallocated towards the funding of 'a godly and learned Minister' at Oldham. The petitioners protested that they, 'who have always bin faithfull and well affected to the Parliament, and many of them freely ventured their lives in the Parliament's Service, would be very sorrie that Mr. Assheton, who is sequestred for Desertinge the Parliament, should enjoy any part of the said Tythes and your petitioners be without a Minister for want of Maintenance'. In response to this petition, an order was made

that Ashton would be discharged from his sequestration if he agreed to 'settle the residue of the said Rectory of Oldham and Tythes to the Church of Oldham'.<sup>42</sup>

There is evidence that the Solemn League and Covenant of October 1643, which bound Parliament's supporters to a commitment to establish presbyterian church government, was administered at Oldham.<sup>43</sup> Yet, it appears that there were difficulties in bringing Oldham into the Manchester classis after its establishment early in 1647, with Oldham not being represented at the classis until August 1649.<sup>44</sup> In contrast to the Church of England, where ministers were allowed some degree of autonomy in how they ran their parishes, under this classical presbyterian system, ministers governed their parishes in conjunction with an eldership, consisting of laymen 'elected' by the parish, or, as was perhaps more likely, by the 'better sort' of the parish. Each congregation was placed into a 'classis', a body of the minister and eldership of each parish within a certain geographical area which met monthly, to hear a sermon, to approve new ministers for ordination, and to discuss issues of practical pastoral concern.<sup>45</sup> The nature of this resistance at Oldham is difficult to decipher from the classis' minutes, but it seems to have arisen in some part about a local dispute over the elections to the eldership, rather than out of the disputes about whether establishing presbyterianism was simply replacing one form of ecclesiastical tyranny with another which were then occupying the national stage.<sup>46</sup> The Oldham congregation, or at least its leading parishioners, were not resistant to presbyterianism per se. Rather, they were a congregation which valued their (hard won) autonomy, and were reluctant to surrender that autonomy to a novel system of church government whose implications were as yet unclear. It may well have been the popularity of Robert Constantine, a minister presented 'by the people of Oldham' and who had participated in the Manchester classis before an eldership from Oldham

attended, combined with two years of observing from the outside how the classis functioned, which finally brought Oldham into the classis system.<sup>47</sup>

That the Oldham congregation did not oppose presbyterianism outright is shown by them seeking the approval of the Manchester classis for their new minister, Robert Constantine, in November 1647.<sup>48</sup> Constantine was born in 1619 at Taxal in Cheshire, receiving his degree from the University of Glasgow.<sup>49</sup> He had been a regular attendee of the meetings of the Manchester classis from June 1648, though no elders would represent Oldham at the classis for another year.<sup>50</sup> On 26 November 1650, he was summoned to appear before the Council of State accused of ‘seditious preaching against the Government’.<sup>51</sup> The next day, the Council of State ordered that ministers who had refused to take the Engagement be removed from their livings.<sup>52</sup> The Engagement was a form of oath whereby one signified their allegiance to the republic which had come into being following the execution of Charles I in January 1649. Whilst many presbyterians were no supporters of Charles I’s religious policies, the Solemn League and Covenant, which many of them had taken, contained a clause that they would fight to defend Charles’ life, and there are several instances of people refusing to ‘engage’ with the Rump Parliament which had put Charles on trial for his life.<sup>53</sup> The last time that Constantine attended a meeting of the Manchester classis was on 8 October 1650.<sup>54</sup> John Vicars, in a pamphlet published posthumously in 1660, blamed the schoolmaster, Richard Midgley, and a local magistrate, James Ashton (the son of Edmund Ashton, who had been forced to reallocate the tithe revenues of Oldham towards funding a minister there), for conspiring against Constantine so that he was removed from his living for refusing to take the Engagement.<sup>55</sup> Though it is impossible to know for certain the truth of Vicars’ account, it may be significant that it was James Ashton who the Council of State

ordered to examine Constantine, which perhaps suggests that there was an element of truth in Vicars' accusations.<sup>56</sup>

### **John Lake's time at Oldham: The anatomy of a ministry:**

It was following the suspension of Robert Constantine that John Lake became minister of Oldham.<sup>57</sup> However, by the middle of 1653, the relationship between Lake and a group of parishioners within Oldham had deteriorated to such an extent that a series of seven articles were prepared against him, presumably with the intention of securing his ejection from the living, which were presented alongside a series of depositions by one Mr. Rigby. These allegations can be fitted into two broad groups, political and religious, which can be used to explore why Lake's ministry at Oldham proved to be so contentious.

#### **(i) Political:**

It has already been noted that Robert Constantine was forced to leave his ministry at Oldham because of his refusal to take the Engagement. Lake seems to have entered the living at Oldham initially on a short term basis. How Lake came to be minister is by no means clear, though he was accused in the articles of having entered the living 'in a suttile way', but he apparently 'made sollome promises and protestacions not to settle himselfe as minister there'.<sup>58</sup> It has been suggested by Alex Craven that Lake had received the patronage of James Ashton, who had acted against Constantine, and that it was his protection which kept the Manchester classis at bay.<sup>59</sup> However, there is no firm evidence that Ashton either invited Lake to minister at Oldham, or subsequently protected him. Lake, though, was already ministering within the parish at Prestwich, possibly because of (as has been speculated) a

connection with William Alte, the minister of Bury who had been a lecturer at Halifax during Lake's youth in the town. Lake seems to have entered something of a storm at Oldham. Constantine, according to the articles, was 'a godly minister', who 'was, by reson of the informacion of some disaffected persons, detained & kept from the congregation'.<sup>60</sup> We have already seen how John Vicars would later blame the schoolmaster Richard Midgley and the magistrate James Ashton for securing Constantine's suspension.<sup>61</sup> Lake was himself accused of preventing 'with great violence' the 'eleccion of honestt menn' as churchwardens 'because some of them were non-Engadgors'.<sup>62</sup>

This intervention by Lake in the election of the churchwardens raises some pressing issues. Elsewhere in the articles, Lake was accused of having 'bene a grand cavaleire in former tymes'.<sup>63</sup> In a letter dated 9 August 1652 sent to Charles Worsley and John Wigan, both leading figures in Parliament's administration of Lancashire, Henry Root, an Independent congregational minister at Sowerby, near Halifax, reported that 'hee hath bene a grand enemie to the parliament and in armes in former times. Hee ever, when hee lived with us, sided and kept company with the basest and most malignant'.<sup>64</sup> Why, thus, should a royalist use a failure to subscribe to the Engagement (which was a means of securing loyalty to the government which had executed Charles I) as a means of attacking some of his parishioners? For presbyterian parliamentarians who had subscribed to the Solemn League and Covenant, with its promises to protect the King's life and to establish presbyterian church government, the Engagement represented a violation of that oath, and could not thus be taken in conscience.<sup>65</sup> However, Lake, as a royalist and an episcopalian, is unlikely to have taken the Covenant, not least because of its promise to abolish episcopacy. Indeed, Lake could quite feasibly have taken the Engagement in conscience. Its vague wording, that 'I do declare and promise, that I will be true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England as it is now

established, without a king or House of Lords', potentially allowed royalists considerable room for manoeuvre, unlike for those who had taken the Covenant and now felt that they were at risk of being forsworn.<sup>66</sup>

Lake's actions at Oldham were always surrounded by the whiff that he was doing them to garner his own popular support. By using the Engagement as a means of keeping elected churchwardens out of office, he was effectively keeping presbyterians out of that office. Lake was accused in the articles of being 'yett a frequent companion of malignant & disaffected people'.<sup>67</sup> Even ostensibly religious actions were (to his opponents at least) being cynically deployed by Lake to win himself support within Oldham.

(ii) Religious:

Presbyterianism offered new opportunities for power within the parish for those parishioners deemed to be suitably godly to partake in parish administration. Governing the parish alongside the minister was the eldership, made by a select number of the godliest inhabitants. Under the suppressed Church of England, whilst parishioners played a role in managing (and funding repairs to) the church fabric, the administration of worship was often the minister's prerogative, including, according to the Book of Common Prayer, deciding if any parishioners were to be excluded from receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.<sup>68</sup> A definition of who should be excluded was included within the Church of England's canons of 1604, which stated that only notable sinners and schismatics should be excluded from receiving the sacrament.<sup>69</sup> A presbyterian conception of the sacraments notably expanded the groups of people who could potentially be excluded from receiving the sacrament.

Under a presbyterian system, the Lord's Supper was reserved for those deemed worthy to receive, a goal which the unworthy could only attain via their own spiritual renewal. Preaching and catechising would be available to all within the chapelry, but the Lord's Supper would remain closed to all but the godly.<sup>70</sup> A parliamentary ordinance of 20 October 1645 had stipulated that people should possess a minimum amount of knowledge about God and theology before they were admitted to the sacrament, as well as being free from scandalous behaviour. The parish eldership would decide if an individual was fit to receive the sacrament.<sup>71</sup> At nearby Bolton, tokens were issued to those deemed worthy to receive communion, which they would then exchange for the bread and wine at the service. This led to such a significant dispute within the congregation that the practice soon ended.<sup>72</sup> It is Lake's attitudes towards such parliamentary directives, enforced by the classis, which first bring his activities into focus. On 8 April 1651, the classis wrote to Lake, warning him that his 'resolucion' to be the sole arbiter of who received the Lord's Supper was against 'the rule of the word & expresse command of civil authority', and 'intreate & require you to forbear such administration of the supper, and to entertaine a brotherly conference with us accordinge to the motion wee made to you (though at present refused by you) that wee may, through the blessinge of God, satisfie the scrupils that hinder your orderly and regularacting with us, both in congregacion & classis'.<sup>73</sup> The next month, the classis heard that Lake had ignored the admonition, and on 10 June 1651, two witnesses appeared before the classis to testify about these incidents.<sup>74</sup> Caleb Broadhead, aged circa thirty-four, testified that Lake had set the communion table for communion on Sundays 13 and 20 April 1651. On the afternoon of the thirteenth, Lake told the congregation that when he had referred to examination, he had meant those who were strangers to the congregation, and that he hoped that those who had not communicated on that day would do so on the next Sunday. John Worrall of Oldham, aged circa sixty-six, and a lay elder, said that he had seen that the communion table was laid in the



morning, but he had 'heard' that few had communicated. In the afternoon, he had heard Lake tell the congregation that he had only intended that 'yonge folks who had not formerly received the Sacrament and strangers should have come to have beene examined and not others'.<sup>75</sup>

This issue had not disappeared when allegations were made against Lake circa 1653, when it was claimed that he used a 'promiscuous' administration of the sacrament, 'contrarie to the rule injoynd by the honourable Parliament, or practised by any reformed congregacion, admitting thereunto many cavaleirs of remote parte'. He then proceeded to inveigh 'in his sermons against the godly, because they doe not, nor in conscience can they, come in and joyne with such to abuse the ordinance of Christ'.<sup>76</sup>

Lake's 'promiscuous' administration of the sacraments had a dramatic consequence for the ruling eldership at Oldham. It had undermined their role as the self-consciously, and particularly, godly at Oldham. As much as personal piety may have brought them into such a position whereby they could be elders, such a position, as effectively arbiters of the sacrament, gave them status within the congregation. Under Lake, this differentiation was lost. Whilst there was an important theological point here, it also meant that their status as the godly was diminished as they received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper alongside their neighbours, both elect and damned. A hint of the displeasure of Lake's opponents is given in the accusation that he had baptised illegitimate children, a practice, which, whilst generally accepted by the suppressed Church of England, was a matter of contention amongst presbyterians.<sup>77</sup> It was complained that the parents of these children had not given 'satisfaccion to [the] congregacion, which thinges doth very much discorish the harts of the godly'.<sup>78</sup>

However, Mr. Rigby's testimony adds another dimension to this opposition to Lake. Rigby reported that on several occasions, after most of the congregation (including himself) had left Oldham church following the service, Lake remained inside the church, along with 'severall cavaleirs and disaffected persons that came from remote parts uppon purpose, as he (this examinantt) veryly beleeveth to receive the sacrament from the said Mr. Lake'.<sup>79</sup> Though Rigby does not explicitly say so, the implication is that Lake was using the Book of Common Prayer (banned from use since 1645), as why else would he hold private services with 'cavaleirs and disaffected persons'? Back in 1642, as England headed towards civil war, Charles I had made much currency of himself being the defender of episcopacy and the liturgy, against the religious innovations threatened by Parliament, and many royalists seem to have come to support Charles out of a desire to defend the Church of England from attack.<sup>80</sup> One can only wonder why the curiosity of Rigby and presumably others did not get the better of them when these private religious gatherings were apparently being held within their church, but, to his opponents in Oldham, the forces of religious conservatism and royalist allegiance were inextricably linked.

Despite the apparent strength of presbyterianism in south-eastern Lancashire, it is important that we do not see Lake as being a lone bulwark representing the interests of the suppressed Church of England, standing against a dominant presbyterianism. The minutes of the Bury classis record several instances of religious conservatism and royalism amongst ministers under its jurisdiction. On 22 April 1647, the classis heard that Thomas Blackburn, the minister at Rivington, had recently been episcopally ordained, and the classis resolved to discuss if an episcopal ordination which had taken place so recently was valid.<sup>81</sup> On 13 January 1648, the classis heard charges brought by Thomas Hammond of Bury against John

Pollitt, the minister of Milnrow, that by his coronation oath, the King ‘must maintaine the ceremonies, as the surplice and book of common prayer’, and that though he had taken the Covenant, ‘hee ordinarily frequented the company of malignants and society of prophane persons as swearers and pot companions as he did before, and never publickly manifested any sorrow for his malignancy and disorderly conversation’.<sup>82</sup> The classis heard on 12 September 1648 that Robert Gilbody, the minister at Holcombe, had conducted ‘divers marriages (contrarye to the Directorye and Ordinance of Parliament thereupon)’, and on 12 October 1648, they heard ‘that Mr. Gilbody hath admitted several people to the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper without consent of his eldership’.<sup>83</sup> In the light of these actions, it is something of a mystery why the Manchester classis never acted to suspend Lake, even though he repeatedly failed to attend their meetings. Ann Hughes has speculated that it was the ineffectiveness of classical presbyterian government which allowed Lake to carry on with his ministry.<sup>84</sup> This interpretation does raise some questions. The Bury classis, for example, suspended Robert Gilbody, the minister at Holcombe, in August 1649, which, given the anxiety of Gilbody and his lay supporters that the suspension be lifted, suggests that it was enforced.<sup>85</sup> However, it is true that classical presbyterianism was weakened by the disruption which followed the arrest of several prominent Lancashire presbyterian ministers who were implicated in Charles Stuart’s invasion which was defeated at Worcester in September 1651, and it is possible that Lake’s continuation in his ministry may have been an unintended consequence of this disruption.<sup>86</sup>

However, one speculative reason why the Manchester classis might have been reluctant to assist Lake’s opponents within the Oldham congregation is the involvement in their cause of Henry Root, the Independent congregational minister at Sowerby, near Halifax, who had testified to Lake’s royalism in a letter to Charles Worsley and John Wigan in August

1652.<sup>87</sup> In this letter, he called upon Worsley and Wigan to give ‘your best assistance to your neighbours att Ouldham for the removeall of Mr. Lake, minister there’. This raises the question if Root’s involvement had been solicited by members of the Oldham congregation, and if so, how early were the connections made between Root and the Oldham congregations? In February 1646, Richard Hollinworth, who would become a prominent member of the Manchester classis, was one of the two intended recipients of the contents of a letter complaining about Root’s establishment of an Independent congregation in Yorkshire.<sup>88</sup> This letter came into the hands of Thomas Edwards, a London prebyterian minister, who included it in the third part of his *Gangraena*, part of a trilogy of works printed in 1646 which detailed in sometimes lurid detail the activities of religious sectaries.<sup>89</sup>

Lake may not have been the ideal choice of the Manchester classis to be minister at Oldham, but an important point was at stake here. If members of the Oldham congregation were in contact with a leading congregationalist minister, with key tenets of Independent congregationalism being the administration of the sacraments to only ‘covenanted’ members of the congregation, and freedom from classical oversight, then it may have looked to the clerical members of the classis that if the Oldham congregation succeeded in ejecting Lake, the next step may well have been the establishment of an Independent congregation, arguably (in the light of Edwards’ *Gangraena*) more worrying than the Church of England survivalism which Lake was promoting.<sup>90</sup>

At the heart of the dispute at Oldham is the matter of where power lay in the congregation, even in ostensibly sacramental disputes. The eldership may not have liked sharing the Lord’s Supper with the reprobate on a theological basis, but this took on a whole new significance when, ‘with the ade and assisstance of some whom he [Lake] had humored

with his promiscuous administration of the sacrament, gott hands to a writting or petition', which was then sent to the Committee for Plundered Ministers to ask that Lake be granted title to the living as Robert Constantine's permanent successor.<sup>91</sup> If we were to take a cynical view, it may even be the case that discontented members of the Oldham congregation enlisted the support of Henry Root as a form of last resort to prompt an ineffective classis to take some meaningful action against Lake. As we shall see later, though, the shifting national political situation meant that Constantine's return as minister at Oldham in 1654 could be engineered, and the Oldham congregation's contacts with Root seem to have gone no further.

### **John Lake's time at Oldham: An analysis of a dispute:**

Thus far, it may seem that the weight of this article is coming down against Lake, who had succeeded the popular Constantine as minister at Oldham, only to antagonise segments of his congregation through his sacramental practices, and coupled with that, the bringing into the congregation of his royalist associates. Yet, Oldham was a far from united chapelry upon Lake's arrival circa 1650, and indeed, several lay elders had much riding on the successful implementation of presbyterianism there, with the obvious consequence that Lake's disregard of his eldership would negatively impact their status within the chapelry. This next section will attempt to outline these issues.

The ringleader of the opposition to Lake seems to have been one Henry Wrigley. He was a merchant involved with the cloth trade, originally from Salford, but who had purchased Chamber Hall in Oldham in 1646 from George and John Wood.<sup>92</sup> He was appointed as High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1650, having first taken the Engagement.<sup>93</sup> He was, though, an outsider to the chapelry, with seemingly no prior connection to Oldham before his purchase

of Chamber Hall. Though he would serve as an elder of the Oldham congregation, he seems to have been a man anxious to prove his status.<sup>94</sup> In 1648, he prosecuted the local lords of the manor, the Cudworth family of Werneth Hall, for occupying part of the north chapel of Oldham church, which he claimed belonged to Chamber Hall. The Woods had purchased Chamber Hall from Robert Tetlow, a Catholic recusant. Historically, the chapel had been shared by the Cudworth and the Tetlow families, but during the years in which Tetlow had absented himself from church, the senior defendant John Cudworth (d. 1652) had repaired the Tetlow part of the chapel, which had fallen into disrepair. The issue at stake was whether Wrigley had a claim to the Tetlow part of the chapel via his ownership of Chamber Hall, given the Cudworths' recent repairs to the chapel.<sup>95</sup> Though the depositions for this case survive, the judgement does not, but Joshua Cudworth's reference to his ownership of the chapel in his will dated January 1662 may indicate that the case had not gone in Wrigley's favour.<sup>96</sup>

Wrigley, though, had other reasons to be tetchy about his status. Whilst a contributor towards Parliament's cause in the first civil war, in 1644 he had been investigated on suspicion of contributing towards the royalist armies, though nothing seems to have come of this inquiry.<sup>97</sup> He was also listed in February 1644 as being amongst those who had either failed to pay, or had failed to pay proportionately to the value of their estates, their propositions for the funding of Sir Thomas Fairfax's troop of horse.<sup>98</sup> One wonders if suspicions were also aroused by Wrigley's involvement during the 1630s with William Laud, the now disgraced Archbishop of Canterbury. In January 1636, Wrigley acted as an intermediary for the payment to Laud of £505 5s. 6d. raised from the glebe rents for the parish of Whalley in Lancashire, which was an advowson held by the archbishopric of Canterbury.<sup>99</sup> Wrigley's own financial situation was also complicated. Whilst evidently

wealthy enough to have purchased the Chamber Hall estate for £2050 in 1646, he was owed nearly £12,000 by various debtors at the time of his death in July 1658, and had mortgaged Chamber Hall and its lands for £1100 in 1650.<sup>100</sup> With Lancashire being known to have suffered bad harvests between 1647 and 1650, Wrigley's business interests may well have been hit.<sup>101</sup> Over half of the gross sum owed to him by debtors at his death was described by the appraisers of his inventory as being 'desperate'.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, Wrigley and his wife had a difficult relationship. In his autobiography, Henry Newcome, at the time of Wrigley's death a presbyterian minister at Manchester collegiate church, recalled that Wrigley and his wife 'could not hit it to live quietly and comfortably together, but lived in perpetual secret unkindness'.<sup>103</sup> If Newcome knew about these marital problems, one wonders if it was perhaps common knowledge in the Oldham and Manchester areas.

In the light of these difficulties, which could all have impacted upon the regard in which Wrigley was held within the locality, he may well have derived some personal status within the chapelry which he might not have otherwise had through his activities as a lay elder.<sup>104</sup> Whether or not the other elders were involved in persecuting Lake is a mystery, though one, John Worrall, did testify against Lake over the matter of his administration of the Lord's Supper without due examination in 1651.<sup>105</sup> Other than that, the historian is only left with opaque references to 'the godly'. That said, an intriguing document, dated 28 January 1654, from one Isaac Ogden to a lay elder Samuel Scofield, accuses Scofield of having been involved in the ejection from Oldham of a minister named William Langley.<sup>106</sup> Langley had taken the Protestation oath as minister of Oldham in early 1642, and the 1650 church survey names a 'Mr. Langley' as having lately ministered at Prestwich, the mother parish of Oldham.<sup>107</sup> On 12 October 1648, when William Langley was ministering at Edenfield, he was brought before the classis for breaching an inhibition on him preaching, he 'answered he was

a minister to the Church of England, and might preach (upon desire) in any place'.<sup>108</sup> Langley and Lake seem to have had similarly problematic relationships with the local presbyterian classes, with Langley refusing to heed an inhibition on him preaching by the Bury classis.<sup>109</sup> Although only tenuous evidence, it may suggest that Wrigley was not alone in his dislike of ministers who acted in ways which were at odds to the directives of the presbyterian classis.

To return to Lake, what is interesting is that Wrigley's battles with the Cudworths may well have acquired a new dimension in the disputes over Lake's ministry. Various documents survive dealing with Lake's defence, but in one, Lake's proxy is named as a Thomas Cudworth of Gray's Inn, London. John Cudworth, who died in 1631, left a legacy in his will to a grandson named Thomas, the son of the John Cudworth (d. 1652) who was the senior defendant in the pew case, and it is likely that it is this Thomas Cudworth who was Lake's proxy.<sup>110</sup> Thomas Cudworth is a shadowy figure. There is no reference of his birth in the Oldham parish registers, though the baptismal registers do not survive for the period between 1612 and 1621, which would be a plausible period for his birth.<sup>111</sup> Neither is there any record of him in the registers of Gray's Inn for this period.<sup>112</sup> Neither does Thomas Cudworth appear in the alumni lists of either Oxford or Cambridge universities, though another John Cudworth, the son of the senior defendant John Cudworth (d. 1652), and who would have been the brother of the Thomas Cudworth in question, studied at Brasenose College, Oxford, so the Cudworths were a family with experience of higher education.<sup>113</sup> There is enough circumstantial evidence to suggest that the Thomas Cudworth at Gray's Inn was a member of the Cudworth family of Werneth, particularly as premises at Gray's Inn were often sublet, so it is quite possible that an individual could reside there without ever being formally admitted to the Inn.<sup>114</sup>



So, what at first glance seems to be a relatively straightforward dispute at Oldham over the correct administration of the sacraments and a minister who refused to participate in the meetings of the local presbyterian classis at Manchester actually has, in its background, a much less religious dimension, surrounding two families within the chapelry competing for local status, and whose dispute found another battlefield amongst the religious politics of Oldham. Lake, ultimately, did not survive at Oldham, surrendering the living to the returning Robert Constantine in December 1654, with Henry Wrigley playing an important role in overseeing the transfer.<sup>115</sup> Thus far in this article, Robert Constantine has come across very well, suspended from his ministry on the basis of being unable to ‘engage’ in conscience with the new regime, and now that the dissolution of the Rump Parliament in April 1653 had effectively rendered the Engagement as null and void, was now free to resume his ministry at Oldham: a situation which Wrigley seems to have worked hard to engineer. Yet, the problem with examining a religious dispute of its nature is that the story is written by the victors. We know very little about what Lake thought about his troubles at Oldham, and throughout the dispute, Constantine lurks in the shadows as the figure who could once again unite the Oldham congregation on the road to godliness. Yet, there were elements within the chapelry who found Constantine as being less to their taste. In 1660, with the restoration of Charles II, the Church of England was restored, and the Manchester classis ceased to meet.<sup>116</sup> In March 1662, Constantine was accused of refusing to read the Book of Common Prayer in his services, and the churchwardens, James Hopwood, William Scholes, Joseph Wild and Thomas Wild, were accused of failing to ensure that Constantine used the Prayer Book. Constantine was also accused of allowing unlicensed preachers to preach, and of refusing to restore the font, which had presumably been removed at some point during the previous decade and a half.<sup>117</sup> The driving force behind this prosecution before the restored consistory court of the diocese of Chester was Alexander Potter, a gentleman of Fox Denton within

Oldham. Indeed, it was Potter who first engineered the test for the churchwardens, offering to James Hopwood and William Scholes his own copy of the Prayer Book, printed in 1626, for them to present to Constantine to use in services, but they ‘refused to receiue it’.<sup>118</sup> There are striking similarities between Potter’s prosecution of Constantine and the churchwardens and Henry Wrigley’s hounding of Lake. Potter was an outsider to the chapelry, being a native of Manchester, but he had married Susan, the daughter of Sir William Radcliffe of Fox Denton, who had been knighted by Charles I on account of his active service in the King’s forces during the first civil war. Sir William had died in the late 1640s, and after initially being succeeded by his brother Alexander, upon Alexander’s death, Sir William’s daughters Susan and Mary shared the Fox Denton inheritance.<sup>119</sup> Thus, leading the opposition to Constantine was an outsider to the chapelry, who, like Wrigley, was presumably anxious to prove his influence within the chapelry. It may be the case that Potter was the legal figurehead for a broader opposition to Constantine, and it should be remembered that the mutual sociability of presbyterian clergymen, built upon rounds of classis meetings, fast days and preaching exercises, may have left little time for fulfilling the parochial duties which their parishioners may have valued the most, such as visiting the sick and catechising the young.<sup>120</sup>

Not long afterwards, Constantine was ejected from his living, though he continued to reside in the Oldham area. In 1689, after the passage of the Toleration Act, a meeting house was certified at Greenacres in Oldham, where ‘Mr. Robert Constantine, the ancientest that is alive of the outed Ministers, hee was Minister of Oldam, hath a meeting of what survives of his people, hath a little estate of his own’.<sup>121</sup> Even at his old age, it appears that Constantine still had a dwindling number of followers, perhaps a testament to his apparent popularity during the 1650s. He was buried at Oldham church on 16 December 1699.<sup>122</sup>

In contrast to Constantine ministering to an increasingly small flock of those who were now religious dissenters, Lake's career went from strength to strength after 1660, receiving, as we have seen, his first significant appointment when Dean Marsh of York appointed him as vicar of Leeds in April 1661. Marsh had been a keen supporter of Laudianism during the 1630s, and Robert Bosher famously saw the influence of the Laudians as being crucial in the making of the Restoration religious settlement after 1660.<sup>123</sup> Whilst Lake's career as a church administrator would come a little while later, Lake can perhaps already be seen buying into that ideology of 'the beauty of holiness' during the 1660s. Appointed in 1663 as rector at St. Botolph's, Aldgate, London, with a brief from Gilbert Sheldon, the Bishop of London, 'to give an example of uniformity to the city', the communion table there would be railed by 1665.<sup>124</sup> In 1682, Lake was elevated to the episcopate as Bishop of Sodor and Man, before being translated to Bristol in 1684, and then to Chichester in 1685.<sup>125</sup> At Chichester, Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke have identified Lake as being one of the leading bishops in pushing for the return of railed altars in their dioceses.<sup>126</sup> In the midst of all this, in 1669, Lake was appointed as rector of Prestwich, within which Oldham chapelry was still technically part. However, as only one of several livings which he by then held in plurality, and he continued to hold the rectory until his resignation in 1685, it is likely that any time which he spent within Prestwich and Oldham would have been minimal.<sup>127</sup> Nonetheless, given the trouble which had previously existed between Lake and members of the Oldham congregation during the early 1650s, the irony of this appointment less than two decades later would probably not have been lost on either Lake, Constantine, or those who had played a part in the disputes in that chapelry.

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Vallance, *The Glorious Revolution: 1688 – Britain's Fight for Liberty* (London, 2007), pp. 85-90, 100-102, 240-241. The 'seven bishops' were John Lake (Chichester), William Sancroft (Canterbury), Jonathan Trelawny (Bristol), William Lloyd (St. Asaph), Francis Turner (Ely), Thomas White (Peterborough), and Thomas Ken (Bath and Wells). There were actually eight bishops acquitted of seditious libel, with the nomenclature of the 'seven bishops' excluding Henry Compton (London) because of his role in inviting William and Mary to invade. The six gentlemen who joined Compton in inviting William and Mary to invade were the Earl of Danby, the Earl of Devonshire, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Viscount Lumley (later created Earl of Scarborough), Edward Russell (later created Earl of Orford), and Henry Sidney (later created Earl of Romney). All of these individuals have entries in the DNB.

<sup>2</sup> *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, eds. William Farrer and J. Brownbill (8 vols., London, 1906-1914), v. 104-105. More information about Prestwich parish during the first half of the seventeenth century will be found in my forthcoming article, 'The harassment

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of Isaac Allen: Puritanism, parochial politics and Prestwich's troubles during the First English Civil War', to be published in *Historical Research*.

<sup>3</sup> John Morrill, 'The Church in England 1642-1649', in *The Nature of the English Revolution*, edited by John Morrill (Harlow, 1993), 148-175 (pp. 151-153).

<sup>4</sup> *Minutes of the Manchester Presbyterian Classis 1646-1660*, edited by William A. Shaw, 3 vols., Chetham Society, new series, vols. 20, 22, 24 (1890-1891), 20, pp. 6-12.

<sup>5</sup> James Mawdesley, 'Quakers, Tithe Opposition, and the Presbyterian National Church: The Case of Cartmel, Lancashire, c. 1644-1660', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 26 (2011), 381-408.

<sup>6</sup> Lancashire Record Office, Preston, FRL 1/1/1/1 (p. 316).

<sup>7</sup> LRO, FRL 1/1/1/1.

<sup>8</sup> *Manchester Presbyterian Classis*, passim.

<sup>9</sup> Chetham's Library, Manchester, MS C.6.63. These manuscripts are published as an appendix to Shaw's *Manchester Presbyterian Classis*, 24, pp. 375-395. Some of them are dated, whilst others are undated. Shaw attempted to place the documents into a chronology, which in my opinion, does look plausible. For ease of reference, Shaw's transcripts are here cited.

<sup>10</sup> J. M. Gratton, *The Parliamentarian and Royalist War Effort in Lancashire 1642-1651*, Chetham Society, third series, vol. 48 (2010), pp. 163-167.

<sup>11</sup> H. H. Poole, 'Lake, John (bap. 1624, d. 1689)', *DNB*.

<sup>12</sup> William and Sarah Sheils, 'Textiles and Reform: Halifax and its Hinterland', in *The Reformation in English Towns, 1500-1640*, edited by Patrick Collinson and John Craig (Basingstoke and London, 1998), pp. 130-143.

<sup>13</sup> Ronald A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642* (London, 1960), p. 246; Sheils and Sheils, p. 143.

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<sup>14</sup> Marchant, p. 246. A neat introduction to puritanism is provided by John Spurr, *English Puritanism 1603-1689* (Basingstoke, 1998), ch. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Marchant, p. 270.

<sup>16</sup> Marchant, p. 110.

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Foster, 'Church Policies of the 1630s', in *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603-1642*, edited by Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (Harlow, 1989), pp. 193-223.

<sup>18</sup> Nicholas Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in *The Origins of the English Civil War*, edited by Conrad Russell (Harlow, 1973), pp. 119-143.

<sup>19</sup> Marchant, p. 109.

<sup>20</sup> Marchant, p. 109.

<sup>21</sup> Marchant, p. 110.

<sup>22</sup> A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised: Being a Revision of John Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy during the Grand Rebellion 1642-60* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 395-396.

<sup>23</sup> Poole, 'Lake', DNB.

<sup>24</sup> Peter Lake, 'The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s', in *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, edited by Kenneth Fincham (Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 161-185.

<sup>25</sup> Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547-c. 1700* (Oxford, 2007), p. 315.

<sup>26</sup> Poole, 'Lake', DNB.

<sup>27</sup> Fincham and Tyacke, pp. 328-330.

<sup>28</sup> Fincham and Tyacke, p. 230.

<sup>29</sup> Anthony Milton, 'Anglicanism and Royalism in the 1640s', in *The English Civil War: Conflict and Contexts, 1640-1649*, edited by John Adamson (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 61-81

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(p. 65); Judith Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 99-113.

<sup>30</sup> For the former point, see Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement, c. 1620-1643* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 224-230. Mawdesley, 'Isaac Allen', provides the example of the rector of Prestwich, a moderate puritan who became implicated in royalism during the first civil war.

<sup>31</sup> This is an argument which will be developed within my forthcoming University of Sheffield Ph. D. thesis.

<sup>32</sup> *Minutes of the Bury Presbyterian Classis, 1647-1657*, edited by William A. Shaw, 2 vols., Chetham Society, new series, vols. 36, 41 (1896-1898), 41, pp. 207-208; Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York, V. 1633, Court Book 2, fo. 565v.

<sup>33</sup> *Bury Presbyterian Classis*, 41, p. 207.

<sup>34</sup> *Bury Presbyterian Classis*, 41, p. 242.

<sup>35</sup> *Manchester Presbyterian Clergy*, 22, p. 137.

<sup>36</sup> Poole, 'Lake', DNB.

<sup>37</sup> Kenneth Fincham and Stephen Taylor, 'Vital Statistics: Episcopal Ordination and Ordinands in England, 1646-60', *English Historical Review*, 126 (2011), 319-344 (pp. 323-324).

<sup>38</sup> Fincham and Taylor, 325.

<sup>39</sup> *Manchester Presbyterian Classis*, 24, pp. 386-389.

<sup>40</sup> Cheshire Record Office, Chester, EDV 1/14, fo. 92v; R. C. Richardson, *Puritanism in north-west England: A regional study of the diocese of Chester to 1642* (Manchester, 1972), p. 76.

<sup>41</sup> Mawdesley, 'Isaac Allen', forthcoming.

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<sup>42</sup> The Royalist Composition Papers, being the proceedings of the Committee for Compounding, A.D. 1643-1660, as far as they relate to the County of Lancaster, extracted from the Records preserved in the Public Record Office, London, eds. J. H. Stanning, then J. Brownbill, 7 vols., Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, vols. 24, 26, 29, 36, 72, 95, 96 (1891-1942), 96, p. 402.

<sup>43</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS J. Walker, c. 5, fo. 281v.

<sup>44</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, p. 119.

<sup>45</sup> Elliot Vernon, 'A ministry of the gospel: the Presbyterians during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, edited by Christopher Durston and Judith Maltby (Manchester, 2006), 115-136 (pp. 116-118).

<sup>46</sup> These issues are discussed in Michael Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (London, 2009), chs. 16-18.

<sup>47</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 20, p. 59.

<sup>48</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 20, p. 59.

<sup>49</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 424; A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, being a *revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the ministers and others ejected and silenced, 1660-2* (Oxford, 1934), p. 131.

<sup>50</sup> Constantine's first appearance at the classis can be found at Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, p. 85.

<sup>51</sup> The National Archives, Kew, SP 25/13, fo. 59r.

<sup>52</sup> TNA, SP 25/13, fo. 67r.; *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1650*, edited by M. A. E. Green (London, 1876), p. 443.

<sup>53</sup> Alex Craven, 'For the better uniting of this nation': the 1649 Oath of Engagement and the People of Lancashire', *Historical Research*, 83 (2010), 83-101 (pp. 85-87).

<sup>54</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, p. 148.



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<sup>55</sup> John Vicars, *Dagon Demolished* (London, 1660), pp. 7-8. See also Julia Gasper, 'Vicars, John (1580-1652)', DNB.

<sup>56</sup> TNA, SP 25/13, fo. 59r.

<sup>57</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, pp. 386, 388-389.

<sup>58</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 386.

<sup>59</sup> Alex Craven, 'Contrarie to the Directorie': Presbyterians and People in Lancashire, 1646-53', in *Discipline and Diversity*, edited by Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory, *Studies in Church History*, 43 (2007), 331-341 (p. 334).

<sup>60</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 386.

<sup>61</sup> Vicars, *Dagon Demolished*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>62</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 387.

<sup>63</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 386.

<sup>64</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 378.

<sup>65</sup> Craven, 'Oath of Engagement', p. 83.

<sup>66</sup> *The Stuart Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, edited by J. P. Kenyon (Cambridge, 1966), p. 341.

<sup>67</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 386.

<sup>68</sup> Arnold Hunt, 'The Lord's Supper in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 161 (1998), 39-83 (pp. 63-64).

<sup>69</sup> Christopher Haigh, 'Communion and Community: Exclusion from Communion in Post-Reformation England', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 51 (2000), 721-740 (p. 723).

<sup>70</sup> Vernon, pp. 125-127.

<sup>71</sup> *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, edited by C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, 3 vols. (London, 1911), 1, pp. 789-793.

<sup>72</sup> Craven, "Contrarie to the Directorie", p. 334.

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<sup>73</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, p. 158.

<sup>74</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, p. 162.

<sup>75</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, p. 164.

<sup>76</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, pp. 386-387.

<sup>77</sup> For example, in a speech to his First Protectorate Parliament given on 22 January 1655, Oliver Cromwell expressed his regret that the issue of baptism had become such a matter of contention amongst the different godly groups, see Ann Hughes, ‘The public profession of these nations’: the national Church in Interregnum England’, in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, edited by Christopher Durston and Judith Maltby (Manchester, 2006), 93-114 (p. 102).

<sup>78</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 387.

<sup>79</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 388.

<sup>80</sup> John Morrill, ‘The Religious Context of the English Civil War’, in *The Nature of the English Revolution*, edited by John Morrill (Harlow, 1993), pp. 65-68.

<sup>81</sup> Bury Presbyterian Classis, 36, p. 18.

<sup>82</sup> Bury Presbyterian Classis, 36, pp. 49-50.

<sup>83</sup> Bury Presbyterian Classis, 36, pp. 77, 83. The ‘Directorye’ refers to the Directory for Public Worship, approved by Parliament in January 1645 as a replacement for the Book of Common Prayer, see Morrill, ‘Church in England’, p. 152.

<sup>84</sup> Ann Hughes, ‘The Frustrations of the Godly’, in *Revolution and Restoration: England in the 1650s*, edited by John Morrill (London, 1992), 70-90 (pp. 81, 85).

<sup>85</sup> Bury Presbyterian Classis, 36, pp. 104-105, 114-115.

<sup>86</sup> *Materials for an account of the Provincial Synod of the County of Lancaster 1646–1660*, edited by William A. Shaw (Manchester, 1890), p. 76.

<sup>87</sup> William Joseph Sheils, ‘Root, Henry (1589/90-1669)’, DNB.

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<sup>88</sup> C. W. Sutton, revised R. C. Richardson, 'Hollinworth, Richard (bap. 1607, d. 1656)', DNB.

Neither the other recipient (the recipient of the version of the letter transcribed by Edwards) nor the writer is named.

<sup>89</sup> Thomas Edwards, *The third part of Gangraena* (London, 1646), pp. 69-70; see also P. R. S. Baker, 'Edwards, Thomas (c. 1599-1648)', DNB.

<sup>90</sup> Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Visible Saints: The Congregational Way 1640-1660* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 131-138; Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 99-103.

<sup>91</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, p. 387.

<sup>92</sup> Gratton, p. 26; LRO, QDD/49/F1.

<sup>93</sup> Craven, 'Oath of Engagement', 91.

<sup>94</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, p. 119.

<sup>95</sup> LRO, DDHp 20/54.

<sup>96</sup> LRO, WCW, The will of Joshua Cudworth of Werneth, Oldham, proven 27 June 1667.

<sup>97</sup> LRO, DDHp 39/8; Chetham's, MS C.6.63.

<sup>98</sup> University of Liverpool Library, Liverpool, Moore of Bank Hall MS, MS 23.1.55.

<sup>99</sup> Staffordshire Record Office, Stafford, D1287/9/8 (F/648).

<sup>100</sup> LRO, QDD/49/F1; DDHp 39/24; DDHp 20/59.

<sup>101</sup> Steve Hindle, 'Dearth and the English revolution: the harvest crisis of 1647-50', *Economic History Review*, 61 (2008), 64-98 (pp. 67-69).

<sup>102</sup> LRO, DDHp 39/24.

<sup>103</sup> *The Autobiography of Henry Newcome*, M. A., edited by Richard Parkinson, Chetham Society, vols. 26-27 (1852), 26, p. 96.

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<sup>104</sup> The extent to which personal credit was judged upon one's moral reputation is explored in Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1998), ch. 6.

<sup>105</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 22, pp. 119, 164.

<sup>106</sup> LRO, DDHp 20/60.

<sup>107</sup> Bury Presbyterian Classis, 41, p. 239; Lancashire and Cheshire Commonwealth Church Surveys, edited by Henry Fishwick, *The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents relating to Lancashire and Cheshire*, 1 (1879), p. 15.

<sup>108</sup> Bury Presbyterian Classis, 36, p. 79; 41, p. 239.

<sup>109</sup> Bury Presbyterian Classis, 41, p. 240.

<sup>110</sup> LRO, WCW, The will of John Cudworth of Werneth, Oldham, proven 1 June 1631.

<sup>111</sup> *The registers of St. Mary's, Oldham, 1558-1682*, edited by John Perkins, Lancashire Parish Register Society, vol. 157 (2003), passim.

<sup>112</sup> *The Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn, 1521-1889*, edited by Joseph Foster (London, 1889), passim.

<sup>113</sup> *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1500-1714*, edited by Joseph Foster, 4 vols., (Oxford, 1891), i. 360, and passim; *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*, edited by J. and J. A. Venn, Part 1 (From the earliest times to 1751), 4. vols. (Cambridge, 1922-1924), passim.

<sup>114</sup> I owe this information to Mr. Andrew Mussell, Archivist at Gray's Inn, London.

<sup>115</sup> Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, pp. 393-395.

<sup>116</sup> The final recorded meeting of the Manchester presbyterian classis was held on 14 August 1660, see Manchester Presbyterian Classis, 24, pp. 346-347.

<sup>117</sup> Craven, "Contrarie to the Directorie", pp. 336-337.

<sup>118</sup> CRO, EDC 5/1661/17.

<sup>119</sup> VCH, v. 119-120.

<sup>120</sup> Ann Hughes, *Godly Reformation and its Opponents in Warwickshire, 1640-1662*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, vol. 35 (1993), p. 22.

<sup>121</sup> Quoted in Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, p. 131.

<sup>122</sup> Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, p. 131.

<sup>123</sup> Marchant, p. 109; Robert S. Bosher, *The Making of the Restoration Settlement: The Influence of the Laudians 1649-1662*, revised edition (London, 1957), *passim*.

<sup>124</sup> Fincham and Tyacke, p. 319.

<sup>125</sup> Poole, 'Lake', DNB.

<sup>126</sup> Fincham and Tyacke, p. 328.

<sup>127</sup> Poole, 'Lake', DNB.