

**Networks and neighbourhoods: devotional practices and attitudes towards
the Church in late medieval Bristol, 1400-1500.**

Esther Mary Gwennyth Lewis, BA (Hons), MA.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on religious life and devotional attitudes in the fifteenth-century port town of Bristol. It does this through a study of the surviving testamentary evidence and from records of heresy trials concerning individuals from the town. It aims to give an account of the dynamics of religious life across the whole of the town, and will focus on how testators and dissenters engaged with the institutions of the Church there. This thesis has used quantitative research methods, most notably Network Analysis, and qualitative analysis of specific case studies.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter explores why testators left legacies to multiple parish churches in Bristol in their wills. This will challenge the notion that the parish contained the piety of the laity and that wills only show death-bed piety. The second chapter discusses how some testators were more engaged with extra-parochial institutions such as chapels, hospitals and friaries than with their parish churches. The third chapter considers religious dissent and lollardy in the late medieval town, and the relationship that people who could be described as 'heterodox' might have had with the more 'orthodox' population of Bristol.

This thesis gives a view of piety in town that includes a consideration of the whole town, and in doing so argues for a diversity of religious experience in the century prior to the Reformation.

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Abbreviations

BA	Bristol Archives
Chichele	<i>The register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443, volume 3</i> , ed. by E. F. Jacob (Oxford, 1945).
GA	Gloucestershire Archives
GOB	The Great Orphan's Book of Wills
Kightly	C. Kightly, 'The Early Lollards: a survey a popular lollard activity in England, 1382-1428' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 1975).
LA	Lincolnshire Archives
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
OED	The Oxford English Dictionary
PCC	The Prerogative Court of Canterbury
SHC	Somerset Heritage Centre
Tanner & McSheffrey	<i>Lollards of Coventry, 1486-1522</i> , eds. by S. McSheffrey & N. Tanner (Cambridge, 2003).
Thomson	J. A. F Thomson, <i>The Later Lollards, 1414-1520</i> (London, 1965).
TNA	The National Archives
WAAS	Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service
WSHC	Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre

Editorial Note

All quotations from original manuscripts are given in the original language with a translation when the original language is Latin. Original spellings have been kept, and expansions have been added in italics. Dates are given on the basis of the year starting on the 1st of January. Street and place name have been written in their modern form as far as possible. The only exceptions to this are places where no modern name could be found, or where medieval streets have disappeared with changes in town planning. Network graphs have been included throughout the thesis as figures. To render these readable, labels or zoomed in versions have been added to direct the reader to specific detail. Versions of some graphs have also been published on a Wordpress site which can be viewed in high definition.¹ Percentages have been rounded up to the nearest whole number.

¹ Esther Lewis, Medieval SNA: <https://medievalsna.com/esther-lewis/> Accessed 31/03/2020.

1.1: Introduction

In c.1478-9, Robert Ricart made a calendar that recorded the history of Bristol and listed the men who had held civic office there.¹ The manuscript includes the first known map of Bristol (Figure 1). Ricart depicted the town as a walled city focused on the high cross that was built at the central crossroads. The image is reminiscent of Jerusalem with all the connotations of holiness, completeness and containment.² This depiction is an attempt at both an identity formation by the town's clerk and an elevation of the town's status, but it does not depict reality (Appendix 1). The suburbs are neglected along with the two rivers



Figure 1: Robert Ricart's Map of Bristol.³

¹ P. Fleming, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* (Bristol, 2015), pp. 3, 32.

² K. D. Lilley, *City and Cosmos: the Medieval World in Urban Form* (London, 2009), pp. 20, 57; K. D. Lilley, 'Mapping Cosmopolis: Moral Topographies of the Medieval City', *Environment and Planning, Society and Space*, 22 (2004), p. 688. Lilley suggests that Ricart is depicting a Jerusalem and, although probably focusing on the Anglo-Saxon foundation of the town, is also projecting ideas of holy and unholy topographies. Fleming argues that the image of the cross formed by the roads is also meant to show the 'Christian nature of the place: Bristol was a holy city.' Fleming, *The Maire of Bristowe*, p. 30.

³ Robert Ricart's *The Marie of Bristowe is Kalendar* (1480-1508) (Bristol Record Office): http://www.bristolreads.com/map_1.html Accessed 08/10/2019.

that ran through the town, and none of the dynamic movement of people through the busy port is conveyed. Neither is there room for, or consideration of, dissenting religious behaviour in the world view that Ricart presents: only a walled city containing many churches.

This thesis focuses on popular piety in fifteenth-century Bristol, taking popular piety to mean devotional practices and religious attitudes of the laity.⁴ Specifically, it is interested in how the laity engaged with the ecclesiastical institutional structures that facilitated pious and devotional activities in the town. This includes how lay people related to the parish churches in Bristol, extra-parochial institutions such as stand-alone chapels, hospitals and friaries, and how and why some individuals moved away from the institution of the Church through activities that may be described as dissenting or heretical.

1.2: Research Questions

To address these areas, this thesis asks the following research questions. What was urban piety like? How did people engage with and use the religious institutions available to them in an urban context? How was urban piety organised in terms of institutional framework, topography and civic and ecclesiastical jurisdictions? What sort of diversity existed in urban religious life in terms of practice and belief? To what extent does this diversity challenge our understanding of the categories and descriptors of orthodoxy and heterodoxy?

1.3: Approaches to the study of late medieval popular piety

These research questions are drawn from the historiography surrounding pre-Reformation piety. The end of the twentieth century saw revisionism in the study of late medieval English lay piety, with the works of historians such as John Bossy and Eamon Duffy painting a new perspective. Prior to this revisionism, the traditional historical narrative had regarded the laity as disengaged from the late medieval Church: the Church was seen as oppressive and the changes brought by the Reformation as liberating. This view was put

⁴ This follows Andrew Brown's understanding of the term, where popular is taken to mean 'of the people (gentry included), and piety need not include only those religious practices that conformed to standards set by the Church hierarchy.' A. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury 1250-1500* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 1-2.

forward by John Foxe in the 1560s in his *Acts and Monuments*, and was argued for by Arthur G. Dickens who used heresy trials to demonstrate the spread of Protestantism before the Reformation in England.⁵ Bossy, Duffy and J. J. Scarisbrick, to name but a few revisionists, argue that the Catholic Church provided the laity with a framework through which to pursue their faith and achieve their salvation, and that the laity enthusiastically engaged with this up to the 1530s. The Reformation, which swept this framework away, was incredibly traumatic for much of the population.⁶ Duffy, in particular, has concerned his study with more typical piety in order to remove the emphasis of studies that highlight less common cases of heresy.⁷ One of the major criticisms of revisionism, however, is that it does not allow for an appreciation of the complexity and variety of lay piety.⁸

The parish is often used as a category of analysis in studies of lay piety, and this has particularly been championed by revisionist historians. Perhaps one of the most well-known examples of this is Duffy's study of the parish of Morebath on Exmoor. He reconstructs the piety of its people and the changes brought by the Reformation through a study of the parish's churchwardens' accounts.⁹ Beat Kümin's examination of churchwardens' accounts also puts the parish at the centre of local communities in the later Middle Ages. He uses these accounts to demonstrate that a significant amount of time and resources were invested in the parish by the laity, arguing for its popularity.¹⁰ In the context of Bristol, Clive Burgess has reconstructed the parish life of the church of All Saints

⁵ A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London, 1964). For comparisons between Dickens and John Foxe, see C. Haigh, 'Introduction', in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. by C. Haigh (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 1-3.

⁶ John Bossy claims this in his exploration of the social history of the sacraments in J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985); Duffy has explored late medieval English piety and the impact of the Reformation in E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*, 2nd Edition (New Haven, 2005); J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford, 1984). This has also been put forward very clearly in relation to late medieval Bristol by Clive Burgess. See C. Burgess, *The Parish Church and the Laity in Late Medieval Bristol* (Bristol, 1993).

⁷ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 2. For examples of works that focus on heresy in England, see K. B. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity* (London, 1952); K. B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972).

⁸ D. Aers, 'Altars of Power: Reflections on Eamon Duffy's *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional religion in England 1400-1580*', *Literature and History*, 3/2 (1994), p. 94.

⁹ E. Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (London, 2001).

¹⁰ B. Kümin, *The Shaping of a Community. The Rise and Reformation of the English parish c.1400-1560* (Brookfield, 1996).

by using the parish archive which includes churchwardens' accounts.¹¹ These are but three examples of this approach, and there are many more studies that examine popular piety through the lens of the parish.¹² As well as using the parish as a lens through which to approach the past, these studies also consider the parish as central to pious lives of testators.¹³ Indeed, this is something that Norman Tanner has argued for his study of late medieval Norwich, and likewise, Burgess for Bristol.¹⁴

Studies of the parish are often enabled by the survival of churchwardens' accounts, other accounts surviving in parish archives, and wills. Of these types of evidence churchwardens' accounts are certainly the most important for a parish-centric study of piety.¹⁵ They give a view of the worship of God through the parish church, and the importance of the commemoration of the dead in late medieval piety.¹⁶ But churchwardens' accounts are a rare survival and, where they do survive, they largely show the activities of wealthier parishioners who were able to give gifts to the church. Through this record of contribution, they give a sense of harmony within the community of the parish church. This is partly because these accounts cannot show any of the parishioners' other commitments, but it is also a partial result of Churchwardens recording the ideals of the parish, of hope, peace and unity, within these records.¹⁷ It is unsurprising that

¹¹ C. Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls': The Parish of All Saints on the Eve of the Reformation* (Woodbridge, 2018).

¹² For example, *The Parish in English Life, 1400-1660*, eds. by K. L. French, G. G. Gibbs, B. A. Kümin (Manchester, 1997); *The Later Medieval English Parish*, eds. by C. Burgess, E. Duffy (Donington, 2006).

¹³ For example: E. Mason, 'The Role of the English Parishioner, 1100-1500', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 27/1 (1976), pp. 17-29; M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire* (Lincoln, 1971), p. 104; J. A. F. Thomson, 'Clergy and Laity in London, 1376-1531' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1960), p. 4; C. Burgess, 'Educated Parishioners in London and Bristol on the Eve of the Reformation', in *The Church and Learning in Late Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of Prof. R. B. Dobson*, eds. by C. Barron, J. Stratford (Donington, 2002), p. 294; C. Burgess, 'Friars and the parish in Late Medieval Bristol: Observations and Possibilities', in *The Friars in Medieval Britain: Proceedings of the 2007 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by N. Rogers (Donington, 2010), p. 79.

¹⁴ N. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich, 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984), p. 1-18, 167-168; Burgess, 'Educated Parishioners', p. 294; Burgess, 'Friars and the parish', p. 79.

¹⁵ For an appraisal of the uses of churchwardens' accounts see C. Burgess, 'Pre-Reformation Churchwardens' Accounts and Parish Government: Lessons from London and Bristol', *English Historical Review*, 117/471 (2002), pp. 302-332.

¹⁶ C. Burgess, 'A Hotbed of Heresy? Fifteenth-Century Bristol and the Lollards in Perspective' in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 45.

¹⁷ G. G. Gibbs, *Five Parishes in Late Medieval and Tudor London: Communities and Reforms* (London, 2019), p. 16.

churchwardens' accounts paint a picture of community gathered around the parish church, as their concern was the management of such a building for the laity. In relation to late medieval Bristol, and the English Church more broadly, this emphasis on the parish and churchwardens' accounts has led to a focus on commemoration and purgatory. After the use of churchwardens' accounts, historians have used wills to study the laity, the role of the parish and the laity's concern with their death and afterlife in the parish.¹⁸ There is a lack of analysis of piety during life and the vibrancy of religious experience in an urban setting. Wills have been viewed as only being about death but, as this thesis will show, there are glimpses of testators' piety in life in their wills too.¹⁹

Heterodox pieties have been studied separately over the past century, evident in studies of lollardy that focus on lollardy as distinct from the mainstream.²⁰ Such separation has caused revisionists such as Burgess and Duffy to argue that there has been an overemphasis on lollardy in late medieval historiography.²¹ In his discussion of lollardy within the broader framework of the church, Robert Swanson argues that the bishops and broader culture created a stereotype of a heretic based on Wycliffism, a set of beliefs based on the ideas of the Oxford theologian John Wyclif. Therefore, most heretics, irrespective of the individual quirks of their beliefs, became labelled as lollards; originally the term used to describe the popular movement that followed Wyclif's teachings.²² This hostility and stereotyping means that these sources are unsympathetic to the person on trial: the source's creators wrote them with the viewpoint that these dissenters were dangerous and their beliefs had the potential to lead more people astray. This has led many historians to conclude that such sources can only tell us about the inquisitor's opinion of the deponent's

¹⁸ For example, see Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich*; C. Burgess, 'Chantry in Fifteenth Century Bristol' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1982).

¹⁹ C. Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered', in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. by M. Hicks (Gloucester, 1990), p. 17.

²⁰ For early examples see McFarlane, *John Wycliffe*; McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*; J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (London, 1965); C. Kightly, 'The Early Lollards: a survey of Popular Lollard Activity in England, 1382-1428' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 1975). For more recent examples see *Lollardy and the Gentry in the Later Middle Ages*, eds. by M. Aston & C. Richmond (Stroud, 1997); J. P. Hornbeck, M. Bose & F. Somerset, *A Companion to Lollardy* (Leiden, 2016).

²¹ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 2; Burgess, 'A Hotbed of Heresy?', p. 61; C. Burgess, 'A Repertory of Reinforcement: Configuring Civic Catholicism in Fifteenth-Century Bristol', in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 107-108.

²² R. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 329-336.

beliefs, not the beliefs of the deponent themselves.²³ John Arnold's work on heresy in thirteenth-century Languedoc highlights the impact of the power dynamics of the inquisition on the person under suspicion, and how this made them into a heretic rather than someone who had just erred in their faith. There is certainly an element of making a lollard out of an unorthodox believer through the process of a trial.²⁴ Indeed, Anne Hudson states that it was the bishops who called lollards 'lollards', whereas those accused of lollardy referred to themselves as 'true men'. It is clear, then, that lollardy was an identity imposed by the Church to some extent.²⁵ This construction and solidification of lollard theology by the bishops means that historians continue to grapple with a clear definition of lollardy.²⁶ Andrew Larsen and Patrick Hornbeck have both investigated what beliefs defined a lollard. Hornbeck identifies key points of doctrine, such as those concerning the Eucharist or the saints. Larsen makes the important point that lollards were still Christians, and would have considered themselves as such, despite differing from the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.²⁷

Since Duffy's monumental *The Stripping of the Altars*, there has been a rise in post-revisionist works that have tried to reconcile lay enthusiasm for Catholicism before the Reformation and instances of heresy and dissent where individuals and groups were clearly dissatisfied with the doctrine and devotional practices of the Church. George Bernard's account of the late medieval English Church paints an alternative picture to Duffy's: a Church that was flourishing before the Reformation but that also had flaws. He argues that the flaws in the Catholic Church were not severe enough to have brought down the Church

²³ Hornbeck, Bose & Somerset, *A Companion to Lollardy*, pp. 107-111. They argue the questions asked were 'more about the preoccupation of the searcher than about lollardy itself', p. 109.

²⁴ Arnold has found that the power dynamic in the context of inquisition creates a 'Confessing subject', as he has coined it, in the thirteenth-century Languedoc trials. J. H. Arnold, *Inquisition and power: Catharism and the Confessing Subject in Medieval Languedoc* (Philadelphia, 2001), ch. 3.

²⁵ A. Hudson, 'Who is my Neighbour' in *Wycliffite Controversies*, eds. by M. Bose & J. P. Hornbeck (Turnhout, 2011), p. 95; This has also been argued by Catto, in J. Catto, 'Fellows and Helpers: The Religious Identity of the Followers of Wyclif', in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life: Essays in Honour of Gordan Leff*, eds. by P. Biller & R. B. Dobson (Oxford, 1999), pp. 141-162.

²⁶ Scholars of lollardy have debated whether to capitalise lollardy, as capitalisation makes it seem like a proper noun and a coherent movement. See Hornbeck, Bose and Somerset, *A Companion to Lollardy*, p. 1; F. Somerset, *Feeling Like Saints: Lollard Writing After Wyclif* (London, 2014), pp. 15-22.

²⁷ J. P. Hornbeck, *What is a Lollard?: Dissent and Belief in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2010); A. E. Larsen, 'Are All Lollards Lollards?', in *Lollards and their influence in late Medieval England*, eds. by F. Somerset, J. C. Havens & D. G. Pitard (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 63.

without the king's divorce as a catalyst.²⁸ In studies of piety based on a locality, Rob Lutton considers orthodox and heterodox pieties in the Weald of Kent, finding that religious dissenters were sometimes 'prominent members of their local communities'. He states that those pursuing lollard pieties continued to attend church and did not withdraw from that aspect of community life.²⁹ Andrew Brown's study of the diocese of Salisbury has likewise considered how those who dissented from the Church's doctrine lived alongside those who continued to accept the Church's teaching, while Derek Plumb has found that lollards 'were neither ostracised from, nor penalised by, the communities they lived in, and sometimes held local office'.³⁰ Fiona Somerset considers the relationship between mainstream (orthodox) texts and Wycliffite texts. She finds that lollard writings share similar 'style, tone, and purpose' to the mainstream texts, demonstrating that they were part of the same manuscript culture even if their content was different.³¹ In a similar vein, Robyn Malo argues that both Wycliffite and mainstream thinkers were dubious as to the authenticity of relics.³² Wendy Scase also notes that some discussions, such as those about sacerdotal power, were prevalent in wider society, not just in heretical circles.³³ Broadly, such studies account for a diversity in religious beliefs before the Reformation and grapple with the complexity of different ideas and voices in the fold of the late medieval English Church. For these reasons, Ian Forrest argues that historians should stop studying heresy and mainstream religion separately, and that historians of mainstream pre-Reformation religious practice and heresiologists can learn from each other's methodologies.³⁴

As well as studies that consider orthodox and heterodox pieties, and the relationships between them, there is also a growing awareness that lollardy was just one part of a culture

²⁸ His justification for this post-revisionist stance is found at G. W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church: Vitality and Vulnerability Before the Break with Rome* (London, 2012), pp. viii-x.

²⁹ R. Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England: Reconstructing Piety* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 167, 169.

³⁰ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 218; D. Plumb, 'The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy: A Reappraisal', in *Voluntary Religion*, eds. by W. J. Sheils & D. Woods (Oxford, 1986), p. 129.

³¹ Somerset, *Feeling Like Saints*.

³² R. Malo, 'Behaving Paradoxically? Wycliffites, Shrines and Relics', in *Wycliffite Controversies*, ed. by M. Bose & J. P. Hornbeck (Turnhout, 2011), p. 195.

³³ W. Scase, 'Lollardy', in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, eds. by D. Steinmetz & D. V. N. Bagchi, (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 17-18.

³⁴ I. Forrest, 'Lollards and Late Medieval History', in *Wycliffite Controversies*, eds. by M. Bose & P. Hornbeck (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 121-134.

of dissent. Arnold demonstrates that the modes of expression used by lollards were not exclusive to lollardy or Wycliffism. Instead, he has found that such language, conflicts and concerns were present in orthodoxy and other strands of dissent in late medieval England.³⁵ This is also seen in Kerby-Fulton's work, which highlights many other instances and forms of dissent besides lollardy in late medieval England.³⁶ In his more recent work, Forrest talks about the 'social church' and calls for 'a new sort of institutional history' in which the approaches of social, cultural, religious, political, economic, and institutional histories are inseparable. He argues that all these aspects need to be considered to understand late medieval religion as a social and religious phenomenon.³⁷ The post-revisionist works discussed above have managed to do this and demonstrate the merits of such an approach. They also speak to the diversity of religious experience that David Aers accused Duffy of missing and allow for both typical and atypical religious experiences. Traces of atypical beliefs give us a small insight into the range of beliefs present in late medieval religious culture.³⁸

1.3.1: Approaches to the study of urban piety

The broad historiographical debate outlined above is largely concerned with reconstruction of lay piety and an understanding of lay enthusiasm for Church doctrine. However, there is an important distinction to be made between the religious culture in towns and countryside and the possibilities that these different contexts afforded lay people in their pious practice. The intensity of religious provision and the proximity of parishes to each other were different in every locality, and particularly different between urban and rural areas. Miri Rubin argues that town and countryside were similar in their approaches in self-governance, political actions, cultural events such as processions and pageants, and the laity's digestion of religious ideas. Indeed, she argues that there was

³⁵ For example, doubt regarding the Eucharist was a concern held outside and beyond lollardy. J. H. Arnold, 'Voicing Dissent: Heresy Trials in Later Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 245/1 (2019), pp. 3-37, 18. Lawrence R. Poos also suggested that lay people were open to lollardy because the ideas were already prevalent in their society. L. R. Poos, *A Rural Society after the Black Death: Essex 1350-1525* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 263, 271.

³⁶ K. Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion: Censorship and Tolerance of Revelatory Writing in Late Medieval England* (Notre Dame, 2006).

³⁷ I. Forrest, *Trustworthy Men: How Inequality and Faith made the Medieval Church* (Oxford, 2018), p. 7.

³⁸ For example, J. H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in medieval Europe* (London, 2005), p. 4. 'traces of belief'.

equal participation in town and countryside in orthodox religion, and that there was heresy in both too.³⁹ Yet, many argue that the difference in locality created diverse parochial cultures, different obligations and varying levels of engagement with the institution of the Church.⁴⁰ Brown's study of the diverse settlement patterns in the Diocese of Salisbury demonstrates this point.⁴¹ Sarah Thomas states that the status and function of rural chapels was different from the status and function of urban chapels, and for this reason she chose to focus on rural chapels in her monograph.⁴² The difference in the chapel's role in rural and urban contexts is apparent in Gervase Rosser's work on the parish and sub-parochial buildings. He argues that chapels did not take away from devotion to the parish but instead demonstrated the laity's pious enthusiasm.⁴³ However, the examples that he uses are largely from rural areas in large parishes where it was not possible for all the laity to attend the parish church regularly. In these cases, supporting a chapel was a practical response to the challenges of distance. The church and chapel were not close enough to create conflict of interests. In an urban context, however, it is possible that conflict could have arisen where the laity would have been able to reach their parish churches but also chose to support another institution. In urban settings, Burgess is keen to emphasise that parishes did not exist in isolation from their surroundings and that some testators did not rely on the parish (although he does not explore this in any great detail).⁴⁴ Swanson has argued that the parish was not necessarily the boundary of a community and that this was particularly the case in towns.⁴⁵

³⁹ M. Rubin, 'Religious Culture in Town and Country: Reflections on a Great Divide', in *Church and City 1000-1500. Essays in honour of Christopher Brooke*, eds. by D. Abulafia, M. Franklin & M. Rubin (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 9-19.

⁴⁰ M. C. Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation c. 1530-1570* (Oxford, 2003), p. 11; Gibbs, *Five Parishes in Late Medieval and Tudor London*, p. 1.

⁴¹ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval*.

⁴² S. E. Thomas, *The Parish and the Chapel in Medieval Britain and Norway* (Woodbridge, 2018), p. 3.

⁴³ G. Rosser, 'Voluntary Religion and Parochial Conformity', *Transaction of the Royal Historical Society*, 1 (1991), pp. 173-189.

⁴⁴ C. Burgess, 'Time and Place: The Late Medieval English Parish in Perspective', in *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, eds. by C. Burgess & E. Duffy (Donington, 2006), p. 2; Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, p. 83.

⁴⁵ R. N. Swanson, 'Parochialism and Particularism: The Dispute over the Status of Ditchford Friary, Warwickshire, in the Early Fifteenth Century', in *Medieval Ecclesiastical Studies in honour of Dorothy M. Owen*, eds. by M. J. Franklin, C. Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, 1995), p. 242.

When considering religious experience in urban environments some historians have found that the parish does not contain it, providing contrast to the arguments outlined above. Brown has found that the activities of guilds spread across urban spaces 'regardless of parochial boundaries'.⁴⁶ Colin Rose's work destabilises the category of the parish, finding that the laity and the clergy defined the parish by identity and relationships between the residents rather than by geography or location in early modern Florence.⁴⁷ Likewise, Niall Atkinson's work on the soundscape of late medieval Florence demonstrates that parish boundaries were transcended by bell tolling. He argues for an audible topography that surpassed institutional boundaries.⁴⁸ These works demonstrate the permeability of parish boundaries and the impact that the closeness of the urban space had on the experience of the laity.

In studies of urban spaces, some historians have begun to look at the experience of the laity through the lens of neighbourhood. Justin Colson takes issue with Kümin's definition of the parish as a community, arguing instead that a parish was a neighbourhood in late medieval London.⁴⁹ Alan Kissane takes a similar approach in his work on Lincoln, arguing that neighbourhoods were often focused on a building, but this did not have to be the parish church. He argues for the fluidity of neighbourhood, and that the boundaries of a neighbourhood only stretched as far as the reach of relationships between people. He also argues that neighbourhoods could go beyond the boundaries of the parish, beyond physical boundaries (such as walls, rivers or the end of the street) or other boundaries imposed by jurisdictions.⁵⁰ In York, Sarah Rees Jones describes the Micklegate area as a 'holy neighbourhood', characterised by the veneration of certain saints and engagement

⁴⁶ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 153. Forrest has found something similar in Hereford: that there were conflicts between jurisdictions because they did not line up with parochial boundaries. I. Forrest, 'The Politics of Burial in Late Medieval Hereford', *English Historical Review*, 125/516 (2010), pp. 1117-1118.

⁴⁷ C. Rose, 'Thinking about using DECIMA: Neighbourhoods and Occupations in Renaissance Florence', in *Mapping Space, Sense, and the Movement in Florence. Historical GIS and the Early Modern City*, ed. by N. Terpstra & C. Rose (London, 2016), pp. 15-32.

⁴⁸ N. Atkinson, 'Seeing Sound: Mapping the Florentine Soundscape', in *Mapping Space, Sense, and the Movement in Florence*, pp. 149-168.

⁴⁹ J. Colson, 'Local Communities in Fifteenth Century London: Craft, Parish and Neighbourhood' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2011), p. 25.

⁵⁰ A. Kissane, 'Lay Urban Identities in Late Medieval Lincoln, 1288-1400 (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2013), pp. 75-76. Forrest has also found this in Hereford. Forrest, 'The Politics of Burial', pp. 1117-1118.

with a common pious culture by its inhabitants.⁵¹ Marianne Wilson's work on the Cathedral Close in Lincoln finds that there were close networks between the people who lived in the Close.⁵² The Close was split between two parishes, and she finds that the context of the Close allowed the laity to form community in it, crossing boundaries, to focus their piety on the Cathedral rather than their parish churches. While her study does consider the parish, it shows groupings of people who were meaningfully connected without being focused around the parish church.⁵³ Jeremy Boulton reconstructs a neighbourhood within the parish of St Saviour's, Southwark. Within this reconstruction, he argues that the parish churches were not a focal point for community, and comments that the local taverns were more important focal points for community and the fostering of social connection.⁵⁴ These studies have begun to demonstrate that the parish is not the only category through which historians can study lay piety, and show the importance of not being constrained by parochial boundaries when considering the religious lives of the laity.

Indeed, the parish was not the only ecclesiastical institution in towns, where there was an intensity of religious provision. Engagement with chapels, friaries, religious houses, hospitals and fraternities within the immediate locality was possible for townspeople. The roles of these institutions within the urban environment and the laity's engagement with them has been discussed to varying degrees. Swanson states that loyalties to sub-parochial institutions were present in late medieval society, but that they are usually only visible to us when there was a dispute that was presented before a court.⁵⁵ However, in late medieval Bristol there was a strong lay engagement with friaries, chapels and hospitals which is evidenced in last wills and testaments. Each type of extra-parochial institution had a different function and it is worth considering them separately.

⁵¹ S. Rees Jones, 'Richard Scrope, the Bolton Hours and the Church of St Martin in Micklegate: Reconstructing a Holy Neighbourhood in Later Medieval York', in *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr*, ed. by P. J. P. Goldberg, (Donnington, 2007), pp. 214-36.

⁵² M. Wilson, 'Community, kinship and piety: Lincoln Cathedral close, c. 1450-1500' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham 2014), ch. 3, p. 223.

⁵³ Wilson, 'Community, kinship and piety', p. 276-277.

⁵⁴ However, his focus is post-Reformation. J. Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 275-288, 293.

⁵⁵ Swanson, 'Parochialism and Particularism', p. 242.

A building described as a chapel could have many different roles and functions. The term is broad: it can describe side chapels within parish churches where activities were 'hard to disentangle from the churches around them', or free-standing buildings that were distinct from the parish church.⁵⁶ Chapels are under-studied in comparison to other ecclesiastical institutions because of the lack of written records. Bishops' licences for chapels set out the terms of their function and prevented them from providing services that might rival the provision of the parish church. Some chapels were in busy places, while others were in secluded spots such as the chapel in St Vincent's Rock in the Avon Gorge near Bristol.⁵⁷ Nicholas Orme and Thomas both argue that a chapel could rival the parish church within the parish in which it sat.⁵⁸ Indeed, Swanson has found cases where the independence of a chapel was bitterly contested by the mother parish church, and Lutton has found instances of dispute of the rights of a chapel to perform certain services and attempts of some to discourage the laity's use of that chapel.⁵⁹ But chapels could also aid the parish church in some of its ceremonies: they were an important part of rogation processions in rural parishes, for example.⁶⁰ Sometimes, chapels were administered from the centre of the parish, and sometimes not. Some of the accounts of chapels in Bristol were kept within the parish archive: the Knappe chapel's records were kept in the Church Book of St Nicholas's parish church which was the parish in which it lay. The chapel of the Assumption that was on the Bristol Bridge, however, was managed by the fraternity that met within it instead of the church of St Nicholas in whose parish it lay.⁶¹ Secluded chapels have been surveyed in late medieval England by Rotha Clay in her work on hermits and anchorites, including chapels near Bristol.⁶² Some parish churches were downgraded to chapels of ease in instances where parishes were merged, as Tanner found in Norwich,

⁵⁶ N. Orme, 'Church and Chapel in Medieval England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6 (1996), p. 80.

⁵⁷ Orme, 'The Other Parish Churches: Chapels in Late Medieval England', in *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, eds. by C. Burgess & E. Duffy (Donington, 2006), pp. 78, 80-82.

⁵⁸ Orme, 'Church and Chapel', p. 80; Thomas, *The Parish and the Chapel*, p. 86. For Thomas, this is in rural settings where parishioners could not get to their parish church.

⁵⁹ Swanson, 'Parochialism and Particularism', pp. 241-257; Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion*, pp. 126-127.

⁶⁰ Orme, 'The Other Parish Churches', pp. 85-86.

⁶¹ J. Bettey, 'The Pre-Reformation Records of St Nicholas, Bristol', in *Historical Churches and Church Life in Bristol*, ed. by J. Bettey (Bristol, 2001), pp. 60-63.

⁶² R.H. Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England* (London, 1914), pp. 44-45, 70-71, 91-92, 191.

while others were sometimes upgraded from chapels to parishes in their own right, as was the case for the parish churches of St Thomas the Martyr and of St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol.⁶³ Thomas's recent monograph on rural parishes and chapels in late medieval Britain and Norway gives a rounded overview of different types of chapels and their attendees, and strongly emphasises that they could provide for the laity and threaten the dominance of the parish church. Her work moves away from the understanding in much of the secondary literature that the chapel was subordinate to the parish in terms of function and institutional status.⁶⁴ Instead, she demonstrates the variety of uses of chapels by the laity, and indicates that the relationship between the laity and chapels can be investigated further, particularly in urban contexts.⁶⁵

Friaries were also found in many urban settlements. Their basic functions were to preach to the laity, hear confession, and give spiritual advice.⁶⁶ With regards to the friars' role in popular piety, friaries were stable parts of the local community and were places that the laity went to for worship.⁶⁷ They were also places where the laity could seek sanctuary and store possessions, and were used to host diplomatic meetings.⁶⁸ In the town, friaries have often been regarded as places for burial and commemoration. Joel Rosenthal argues that friaries were mostly popular places to be buried in towns in his work on the English aristocracy.⁶⁹ Yet, although popular, Burgess emphasises that the friaries in Bristol were of secondary importance to the parish church in the devotional lives of the laity: they aided the parish in funerals and provided the laity with prayers for their souls after death. In instances where the laity engaged with the friars in their will, they never forgot their

⁶³ N. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich*, pp. 3-4; C. S. Taylor, 'The Chronological Sequence of the Bristol Parish Churches', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 32 (1909), p. 203.

⁶⁴ Rosser, 'Voluntary Religion and Parochial Conformity', pp. 173-189.

⁶⁵ Thomas, *The Parish and the Chapel*, p. 3.

⁶⁶ J. Röhrkasten, 'Friars and the Laity in the Franciscan Custody of Cambridge', in *The Friars in Medieval Britain*, p. 107.

⁶⁷ R. Copsey, 'The Administration of the Medieval English Carmelite Province: Provincial Chapters', in *Franciscan Organisation in a Mendicant Context: Formal and Informal Structures of the Friars' Lives and Ministry in the Middle Ages*, eds. by M Robson & J. Röhrkasten (Munster, 2010), p. 81; N. Holder, *The Friaries of Medieval London: From Foundation to Dissolution* (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 189-190.

⁶⁸ F. Andrews, *The Other Friars. The Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Piet Friars in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 29.

⁶⁹ T. Rosenthal, *The Purchase of Paradise: Gift Giving and the Aristocracy, 1307-1485* (London, 1972), p. 101.

parish.⁷⁰ However, Jens Röhrkasten's work demonstrates that the friaries had an active relationship with the laity around them and that they were an engaged part of pious provision in the town, in life as well as in death. When a member of the laity chose to be buried in a specific friary, this demonstrated their 'attachment to a particular order' and previous connections with that house, in the same way we would think about someone being buried in a parish church.⁷¹ In London, the friaries could provide confessors for foreigners in their own language and were places of burial for the laity of the surrounding neighbourhoods. Röhrkasten states that the friaries 'complemented London's extensive parish system and for some also offered a spiritual alternative'.⁷² In Cambridge, Röhrkasten has also been able to track the impact of the friaries within the town's pious provision, but states that here they operated within the parish structure.⁷³ There are clear examples of the laity entering friaries for regular worship: in Norwich several lay guilds met in the friaries, while in London Nick Holder argues that the laity regularly entered the friary churches for devotional activities.⁷⁴ Two pictures are painted here: one where the friars were secondary to the parish and were only used by testators to serve them in death, and another where the friars were actively engaged with the laity in their piety in life as well as when preparing for death. This present study will re-examine the testamentary engagement with the Bristol friaries to reassess the laity's relationship with them beyond their mortuary function.

The label 'hospital' could also be used to describe a range of places: it is a broad term that can describe large institutions, with a programme of divine service, as well as covering smaller institutions such as leper houses or alms-houses.⁷⁵ Alms-houses housed the poor while leper houses had specific inhabitants. However, hospitals cared for the sick, aged or pilgrims. They were run by secular clergy who were educated but were rarely university

⁷⁰ Burgess, 'Friars and the Parish', p. 89, 92-93.

⁷¹ J. Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants in the Late Middle Ages', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 3/47 (1996), p. 466.

⁷² Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants', pp. 460-461, 467.

⁷³ Röhrkasten, 'Friars and the Laity', p. 123.

⁷⁴ Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich*, Appendix 8; Holder, *The Friaries of Medieval London*, pp. 189-190.

⁷⁵ S. Watson, *Hospitals in the Middle Ages*: <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396584/obo-9780195396584-0233.xml> Accessed 02/10/2019; S. Sweetinburgh, *The Role of the Hospital in Medieval England: Gift Giving and the Spiritual Economy* (Dublin, 2004), p. 21.

graduates. These clergymen acted as chaplains within the hospital, and the hospitals did not have a rich book culture beyond the books needed to conduct divine service, although there were exceptions to this.⁷⁶ Some historians have come to view hospitals as communities of retirees in the later Middle Ages, as they housed and cared for older people. Rosser has found this to be the case in St James's Priory in Westminster, and Mary Erle and Ian Doyle have found a community of high status women who patronised a rich manuscript culture in St Mark's Hospital, Bristol.⁷⁷ Hospitals, however, were not exclusive places for the elite: people of lower social and economic status lived there too. Caroline Barron gives the example of the presence of servants of some of the higher status residents.⁷⁸

The hospital, then, was a community of clergy and lay people with the capacity to conduct divine service, both for the benefit of the living and the dead.⁷⁹ However, the hospital's relationship with the parish church was not simple. Nigel Ramsay and James Willoughby note that hospitals were reliant on the parish church for religious services when they did not have their own chapel.⁸⁰ However, Euan Roger and Barron have both argued that St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, became a 'virtual parish'. Their work demonstrates the value of studying piety outside of the lens of the parish church, showing that the parish was not the only structure that governed the lives of the laity. Clearly, the situation of each hospital was unique, but there was potential for larger hospitals with

⁷⁶ N. Ramsay, & J. M. W. Willoughby, *Hospitals, towns and the professions* (London, 2009), pp. xxxiii-xxxiv. For an exception to this general statement, see A. I. Doyle, 'Books with Marginalia from St Mark's Hospital, Bristol', in *New Direction in Medieval Manuscript Studies and Reading Practices: Essays in Honor of Derek Pearsall*, eds. by K. Kerby-Fulton, J. J. Thompson & S. Baechle (Notre Dame) pp. 177-191.

⁷⁷ G. Rosser, *Medieval Westminster 1200-1540* (Oxford, 1989), p. 310; M. Erle, 'Widows in Retirement: Region, Patronage, Spirituality, Reading at the Gaunts, Bristol' *Religion & Literature*, 37/2 (2005), pp. 51-75; Doyle, 'Books with Marginalia', pp. 177-191. Euan Roger and Caroline Barron have also found this to be the case in St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. E. C. Roger, 'Blakberd's Treasure: A Study in Fifteenth Century Administration at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London', in *The Fifteenth Century XIII: Exploring the Evidence: Commemoration, Administration and the Economy*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 81-107; C. Barron, 'The People of the Parish: the close of St Bartholomew's Hospital in Fifteenth-Century London', in *The Urban Church in late Medieval England. Essays from the 2017 Harlaxton Symposium Held in Honour of Clive Burgess*, ed. by D. Harry, & C. Steer (Donington, 2019), pp. 353-379.

⁷⁸ Barron, 'The People of the Parish', pp. 366-367.

⁷⁹ C. Rawcliffe, 'Communities of the Living and of the Dead: Hospital Confraternities in the Later Middle Ages' in *Hospital and communities 1100-1960*, ed. by C. Bonfield, J. Reinartz & T. Huguet-Termes (Oxford, 2013), pp. 125-154.

⁸⁰ Ramsay & Willoughby, *Hospitals*, p. xxxiv.

sufficient financial backing to rival the parish. It should be noted, however, that hospitals were not unique in their ability to take on the same functions as the parish. Cathedrals are another example of an institution that could rival the parish's rights over lay baptism and burial.⁸¹

Guilds in late medieval England were prevalent in both town and countryside.⁸² They varied in size and had different functions, which has led historians to view these networks of people in different ways. Some regard guilds as having a purely economic function but in this thesis I am interested in their religious functions.⁸³ Craft guilds certainly had an economic function, but, as Brown has shown, the devotional functions of the guilds were just as important.⁸⁴ Ben McRee states that religious guilds had members from a variety of vocations and were not concerned with craft and industry regulation in their ordinances.⁸⁵ Yet, despite this distinction, all guilds existed to honour their patron saint, conduct worship, bury and pray for the dead members, and provide candles and other furnishings for the church in which they met.⁸⁶ Only larger guilds and fraternities had ordinances; Barron makes the important point that, although some guilds had ordinances and guild-wardens, others were smaller and did not meet the financial threshold to be recorded in the 1389 guild returns or the 1546-1548 chantry returns. At its most simple, a guild or fraternity was a group of lay people who engaged in communal action to maintain a permanent chaplain or a light to a saint within a church or religious building.⁸⁷

Unlike chapels, friaries, or hospitals, which often had a building independent of the parish church, guilds largely met within the parish church at a side altar or in a side chapel.

⁸¹ M. Franklin, 'The cathedral as parish church: the case of southern England', in *Church and City, 1000-1500*, p. 195; Forrest, 'The Politics of Burial', pp. 1110-1138.

⁸² Rubin, 'Religious Culture in Town and Countryside', pp. 6-7.

⁸³ For example, S. Ogilvie, *Institutions and European Trade: Merchant Guilds, 1000-1800* (Cambridge, 2011), p. 19. In S. Ogilvie, *The European Guilds: An Economic Analysis* (Oxford 2019), Ogilvie treats guilds as economic units that have an impact on the market. They are beneficial to members, market institutions, and non-market institutions because of the economic networks that they produce.

⁸⁴ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 157.

⁸⁵ Unlike craft guilds, which were.

⁸⁶ B. McRee, 'Charity and Gild Solidarity in Late Medieval England', *Journal of British Studies* 32/3 (1993), p. 196.

⁸⁷ C. Barron, 'The Parish Fraternities of Medieval London', in *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society*, eds. by C. Barron & C. Harper-Bill (Exeter, 1985), pp. 19-21.

Rosser argues that, whereas previous studies of parish and guild have seen the two as struggling against each other, guilds supported the parish and were sub-parochial in this respect, working towards the broader aims of the Church in the context of the parish.⁸⁸ However, the diverse nature of guilds and fraternities means that they did not have a uniform relationship with the parish. The Kalendars' guild in Bristol was unusual because it was made up of clergy and existed to celebrate the mass on the first day of the month, hence its name, 'The Kalendars'.⁸⁹ It housed and maintained a library from the late 1440s onwards and the prior of the Kalendars administered this, as well as publicly preaching.⁹⁰ Burgess describes this guild as being 'within, but not strictly of, the parish', indicating that not all guilds were sub-parochial.⁹¹ Indeed, guilds had the potential to hold great power; in some late medieval towns, such as Coventry and York, a guild governed the town.⁹² Rubin states that guilds were often made up of groups of people with common interests outside the remit of parochial obligation. However, they can also show fashions in devotional practices as well as the religious sensibilities of their members.⁹³ In towns, people were sometimes members of guilds outside of their parish, showing that engagement with the guild did not necessarily demonstrate engagement with their own parish. Sometimes, the guilds and fraternities provided services that the parish could not.⁹⁴

Lay devotional practice and religious attitudes in an urban context, then, need to be studied in the context of the whole town. This has been attempted for some towns. Tanner's survey of religious life in Norwich through a study of approximately 1800 wills considers the laity's testamentary engagement with many different types of institutions such as parishes, religious houses, hermitages and anchorites. He finds no evidence of any lay discontent with the institutional Church prior to the Reformation. Instead, he finds that some clerical aspects of the Church in Norwich were carried into the fifteenth century from

⁸⁸ That is, the salvation of the laity's soul. G. Rosser, 'Communities of parish and guild in the late Middle Ages', in S. J. Wright, *Parish, Church and People. local studies in lay religion 1350-1750*, ed. by Wright (Hutchinson, 1988), pp. 29-55, p.42.

⁸⁹ Ramsay & Willoughby, *Hospitals*, p. 23.

⁹⁰ Ramsay & Willoughby, *Hospitals*, p. 24.

⁹¹ Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, p. 136.

⁹² Barron, 'The Parish Fraternities of Medieval London', p. 14.

⁹³ Rubin, 'Religious culture in town and country', pp. 6-7.

⁹⁴ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 157.

the High Middle Ages, while new modes of devotional practices, such as engagement with hermits and anchorites, flourished in the town.⁹⁵ Nigel Baker and Richard Holt have considered the impact of the Church on urban growth in Gloucester and Worcester throughout the Middle Ages. In their study, they have considered how parishes developed, the influence of other major religious institutions and the impact of other ecclesiastical institutions such as friaries, hospitals and nunneries. They focus on how the church contributed to the physical layout of the late medieval English town.⁹⁶ Gary Gibbs has begun to study multiple parishes in London, but does not consider the interaction between them. Rather, he is concerned with a comparison of parochial regimes before and during the changes of the Reformation.⁹⁷ In the case of Bristol, Burgess suggests that the wealth of the town's inhabitants allowed them to support a wide array of religious institutions for their funeral and mortuary services. However, his investigation into the laity's interaction with these institutions during their lifetimes does not go much further than that. Largely, his focus has been on the parish of All Saints or on the cross-town activities of wealthy individuals.⁹⁸

The laity were clearly part of a complex network of relationships among themselves and a variety of ecclesiastical institutions. The question remains, what was the relationship between different types of institutions? Some historians regard the relationship as harmonious. For example, Burgess has argued that there is little evidence of conflict between the friaries and the parish churches in Bristol.⁹⁹ Ramsay and Willoughby have also outlined instances where institutions such as hospitals might rely on the parish if their programme of divine service was not fit for purpose, demonstrating that the relationship with the parish could be cohesive.¹⁰⁰ However, others have found conflict between various religious institutions, and between institutions and the laity. Röhrkasten has found instances of conflict between friars and Londoners in the thirteenth century, and other

⁹⁵ Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich*.

⁹⁶ N. Baker, & R. Holt, *Urban Growth and the Medieval Church: Gloucester and Worcester* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 239-260, 293-306, 307-324, 365.

⁹⁷ Gibbs, *Five Parishes in Late Medieval and Tudor London*.

⁹⁸ Burgess, *The Parish Church and the Laity*, p. 3; Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls'*.

⁹⁹ Burgess, 'Friars and the Parish', p. 75.

¹⁰⁰ Ramsay & Willoughby, *Hospitals*, p. xxxiv.

complaints about the convents.¹⁰¹ These were generally raised in instances where tithes were paid to the friaries or hospitals rather than the parish.¹⁰² These disputes were clearly about money. Sub-parochial institutions such as guilds could also have volatile relationships with non-ecclesiastical institutions in the town. David Sacks has found this to be the case for some guilds in Bristol which got into a dispute with the commonality, the elected group of men who ran the town.¹⁰³ Swanson argues that, although rare in survival, records of disputes between chapels that wanted independence and parish churches provide 'important insights into the tensions within the so-called community of the parish', and into the laity's loyalties to different institutions on a local level.¹⁰⁴

1.3.2: Late medieval Bristol: Contexts and historiography.

This thesis will explore this broad debate through a study of late medieval Bristol. There was a settlement in Bristol prior to the Norman Conquest, and the town grew in size and importance throughout the Middle Ages to the extent that it was granted county status by Edward III in 1373. It was the first town in England to be made into a county.¹⁰⁵ By 1400 Bristol was a large urban centre with an estimated population of 10,000 people, comprising of eighteen parishes, two monastic houses and four friaries.¹⁰⁶ The Rivers Frome and Avon ran through the town, splitting it into three areas: the central (and oldest) part of the city, the northern suburb and the southern suburb. The River Avon remained the boundary between the Diocese of Bath and Wells and the Diocese of Worcester, and this divide in diocesan jurisdiction meant that there was no cathedral in the town (and so cannot be classed as a medieval city). The town lay inland from the River Severn, providing it with international trade by sea and domestic trade by land. By sea, it traded with Gascony,

¹⁰¹ Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants', pp. 452-453.

¹⁰² A. G. Little, 'Personal Tithes', *English Historical Review*, 60/236 (1945), p. 67.

¹⁰³ D. H. Sacks, 'The Demise of the Martyrs: The feasts of St Clement and St Katherine in Bristol, 1400-1600', *Social History*, 2/11 (1986), pp. 141-169.

¹⁰⁴ Swanson, 'Parochialism and Particularism', p. 244.

¹⁰⁵ M. D. Lobel, E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'Bristol', in *The Atlas of Historic Towns, Volume 2, Bristol, Cambridge, Coventry, Norwich*, eds. by M. D. Lobel, W. H. Johns (London, 1975), p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Burgess, 'Educated Parishioners', p. 286; Skeeters, *Community and Clergy*, p. 2.

Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Wales and (occasionally) Iceland. Over land, it had distinct trade routes with Coventry, London, Southampton and the rest of the West Country.¹⁰⁷

To date, Burgess has done the most work on lay devotion in the town. His main focus has been on the parish of All Saints in the centre of the town. As well as publishing editions of the sources, he has written a monograph and many articles on the parish. Through his work on Bristol, piety has been viewed through the parish and the parish has been regarded as the primary lens through which the laity experienced and practiced their devotion.¹⁰⁸ Other academics have also studied religious life in Bristol. Sacks has discussed how social and economic tension encouraged dissent within the craft guilds and brought them into conflict with the town's governance.¹⁰⁹ Orme has considered Bristol as part of his wider studies of chapels.¹¹⁰ Adams's PhD thesis on Bristol considered female piety in the town, reflecting on the impact of the female life cycle and patriarchal structures on female piety.¹¹¹ There has been an emphasis on the veneration of St Katherine; a cult which has often been linked to wool production.¹¹² Joseph Bettey has outlined the known evidence regarding the friars and hospitals in the town, plotting their foundation and some of their interaction with the town throughout the Middle Ages.¹¹³ There have also been edited collections produced about Bristol's popular piety that focus on specific aspects of Bristol's religious history.¹¹⁴ Martha Skeeters' work on the clergy in Reformation Bristol has summarised late medieval piety in the town, suggesting that the intensity of religious provision in Bristol meant that the laity had lots of different religious experiences. However she has not explored this idea further than this statement.¹¹⁵ Unlike these previous studies,

¹⁰⁷ Burgess, 'Educated Parishioners', p. 286; E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol', in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, eds. by E. Power & M. M. Postan (London, 1933), pp. 186-202-212, 214-221, 224.

¹⁰⁸ For a full list of Burgess's work, see E. Duffy, 'Clive Burgess: an Appreciation Bibliography of Published Works of Clive Burgess', in *The Urban Church in late medieval England*, pp. xvii-xxi.

¹⁰⁹ Sacks, 'The Demise of the Martyrs'.

¹¹⁰ Orme, 'Church and Chapel'; Orme, 'The Other Parish Churches'.

¹¹¹ S. J. Adams, 'Religion, Society and Godly Women: The Nature of Female Piety in a Late Medieval Urban Community' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Bristol, 2001).

¹¹² Adams, 'Religion, Society and Godly Women', p. 205; Sacks, 'The Demise of the Martyrs', p. 148.

¹¹³ J. Bettey, *The Medieval Friaries, Hospitals & Chapelries of Bristol* (Bristol, 2009).

¹¹⁴ *Almost the Richest City: Bristol in the Middle Ages*, ed. by L. Keen (Leeds, 1997); *Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol*, ed. by J. Bettey (Bristol, 2001).

¹¹⁵ Skeeters, *Community and Clergy*, p. 11.

this thesis will look at the whole town in order to assess how townspeople pursued their piety within the urban context.

1.4: Sources

1.4.1: Wills and testaments

To begin to engage with the broad themes outlined above, this thesis mainly uses two types of source. The first is last wills and testaments. These were legal documents that dealt with the disposal of a testator's moveable and immovable goods after their death and made pious provision for their soul's passage through purgatory. They could either be written by scribes, parish priests, associates or family members of the testator, or by the testator themselves.¹¹⁶ Upon the death of the testator, they would be taken by the appointed executors to the relevant probate court and granted probate, and a copy of the will would be written into the probate book of that court. In the case of late medieval Bristol, wills survive in the registers of two major probate courts: the Great Orphan's Court and the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

The use of last wills and testaments for studies of popular piety has been criticised and problematised on several grounds. First, Burgess argues that wills do not show anything more than deathbed piety and the mortuary and commemorative concerns of the testator.¹¹⁷ Neal Galpern also argues that, on the deathbed, the testators appear more pious as they were confronted with death.¹¹⁸ Peter Heath's study of wills in Hull argues that, although they show profound faith, they were not deeply engaged with broader trends in religious culture. His work shows the limits of just focusing on testamentary evidence.¹¹⁹ Second, the reading of the preamble of the will as evidence for religious

¹¹⁶ A. Spedding, 'Hoc est testamentum: The Structure and Development of Introductory Clauses in Latin Testamentary Writing', *Viator* 45/1 (2014), p. 283; J. D. Alsop, 'Religious Preambles in Early Modern Wills as Formulae', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 40 (1989), p. 20.

¹¹⁷ Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention', p. 17; Also see C. Burgess, 'By Quick and by Dead: Wills and Pious Provision in Late Medieval Bristol', *English historical Review*, 102/405 (1987), pp. 837-858.

¹¹⁸ A. N. Galpern, *The Religions of People in Sixteenth-Century Champagne* (London, 1976), p. 13; Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People*, p. 11.

¹¹⁹ P. Heath, 'Urban piety in the later middle ages: the evidence of Hull wills', in *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by R. B. Dobson (Gloucester, 1984), p. 229.

attitudes has been heavily criticised. M. L. Zell's work has broadly identified changes in the preamble of the will during the course of the English Reformation, but argues that evidence of religious belief is more likely to found in the main content of the will.¹²⁰ Margaret Spufford has argued that religious preambles are more representative of the scribe than the testator.¹²¹ Third, there is the issue of authorship of the will. Spufford and Burgess have both suggested that the process of going to a scribe to commit the last will and testament to writing filters and influences the intentions of the testator.¹²²

However, not all are so damning of the potential for historical research that wills hold. Elisabeth Salter argues that wills are some of the most abundant texts for the history of individuals, and that each will can be looked at qualitatively.¹²³ K. B. McFarlane has demonstrated how a group of knights reflected their Wycliffite sympathies in their wills, while John Craig and Caroline Litzenberger have shown how William Tracy, a Gloucestershire gentleman, made a will in 1530 that contained heretical ideas and was accepted to probate.¹²⁴ This case is clearly unusual and heavily linked to the Reformation changes afoot in the 1530s, but it nonetheless demonstrates that self-expression was achievable within the context of the will. Plumb has looked at the wills of people associated with heresy in the mid-Thames valley, finding that they shared a distinctive preamble that was 'less than conservative', but nonetheless accepted to probate.¹²⁵ Barron has also

¹²⁰ M. L. Zell, 'The Use of Religious Preambles as a Measure of Religious Belief in the Sixteenth Century', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* (1977), pp. 246-249. Others who problematise the preamble as a source for popular piety include C. Marsh, 'In the Name of God? Will-Making and Faith in Early Modern England' in *The Records of the Nation*, eds. by G. H. Martin & P. Spufford (Woodbridge, 1990), p. 255; Alsop, 'Religious preambles', p. 20.

¹²¹ M. Spufford, 'Religious Preambles and the Scribes of Villagers' Wills in Cambridgeshire', in *Till Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, in T. Arkell, N. Evans & N. Goose (Oxford, 2000), pp. 144-57.

¹²² C. Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service': Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36/1 (1985), p. 46; Spufford, 'Religious Preambles', pp. 144-57

¹²³ E. Salter, *Cultural Creativity in the Early English Renaissance: Popular Culture in Town and Country* (Basingstoke, 2006), pp. 13-14.

¹²⁴ J. Craig & C. Litzenberger, 'Wills as Religious Propaganda: The Testament of William Tracy', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 44/3 (1993), pp. 415-431.

¹²⁵ Plumb, 'The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy', p. 128. Likewise, Jennifer Kermode argues that the standardization of wills by the scribe creates a 'false impression of orthodoxy', but some lollard phrases do creep in and were granted probate. See J. Kermode, *Medieval Merchants: York, Beverly and Hull in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 119.

identified a case where the testator used his will as an autobiography of his life.¹²⁶ Wills are rich documents that can tell us about material culture, familial and social relationships, the testators' perception of themselves, their social status and their associations with various types of ecclesiastical institution.¹²⁷ Tanner's work on Norwich demonstrates how an analysis of all the wills surviving from a locality can be used to reconstruct popular piety in an urban centre.¹²⁸ Jennifer Kermode, Lutton, Robert Dinn, L. M. Higgs and Robert Wood all use wills to consider the piety of lay people in various localities across England, showing how productive the use of wills can be.¹²⁹

Like those who criticise the use of wills for their deathbed piety, Salter also comments that wills are made at a sentimental moment in life with a heightened religiosity and spirituality but does not see this as a negative. Instead, it suggests they are a final statement of identity by the testator.¹³⁰ Tanner also argues that there is a sincerity at the point of death that is reflected in the wills.¹³¹ Lisa Liddy argues that wills are emotional documents and contain 'personal declarations of feelings' in relation to the people mentioned in them.¹³² In some cases, wills also show how a testator felt about a group or institution. The subjectivity of deathbed piety, then, does not need to be regarded as a negative aspect of the will. The formulaic nature of the documents means that local sets of wills can be compared to identify regional variation. Additionally, despite being

¹²⁶ C. Barron, 'The Will as Autobiography: The case of Thomas Salter, Priest, died November 1558', in *Medieval London: Collected Papers of Caroline M. Barron*, eds. by M. Carlin & J. T. Rosenthal (Kalamazoo, 2017), pp. 213-264.

¹²⁷ Salter, *Cultural Creativity*, p. 1.

¹²⁸ Tanner, *The church in late medieval Norwich*.

¹²⁹ Kermode, *Medieval Merchants*, pp. 117-188; Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion*; R. B. Dinn, 'Popular Religion in Late Medieval Bury St Edmunds' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 1990); L. M. A. Higgs, 'Lay Piety in the Borough of Colchester, 1485-1558' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Michigan, 1983); R. Wood, 'Life and Death: A Study of the Wills and Testaments of Men and Women in London and Bury St. Edmunds in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Royal Holloway, 2012).

¹³⁰ Salter, *Cultural Creativity*, pp. 16-17.

¹³¹ N. P. Tanner, 'Popular Religion in Norwich with Special Reference to the Evidence of Wills, 1370-1532' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1974), p. 225

¹³² L. Liddy, 'Affective Bequests: Creating Emotion in York Wills, 1400-1600', in *Understanding emotions in early Europe*, ed. M. W. Champion & A. Lynch (Turnhout, 2015), p. 275.

formulaic, they can also shed light on a moment of self-expression on the part of the testator.

There is a relatively small survival rate for wills in fifteenth-century Bristol: under 400 for a town with a population that fluctuated between 8,000 and 10,000 across the century. This represents between 4 and 5 per cent of the population. Compared to other contemporary urban centres such as London and Norwich, this is low.¹³³ Burgess states that there is nothing 'noteworthy' about the daily practices of piety in the pre-Reformation town in the surviving wills.¹³⁴ However, as this thesis will demonstrate, there certainly is an abundance of important detail and information. Additionally, the poor survival of churchwardens' accounts and other parish archives across Bristol, largely as a result of extensive bombing during the Blitz in the 1940s, means that wills remain one of the only forms of documentary evidence through which a study of all parishes can be undertaken.

The current study has identified 393 wills made between 1400 and 1501 (the distribution of which is outlined in Figure 2). These wills mainly survive in the Great Orphans Book, the probate register of the Great Orphans Court, and the registers of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.¹³⁵ The Great Orphans Court was a local probate court that sat in Bristol's Guildhall. Its purpose was to look after the underage heirs of deceased burgesses of the town.¹³⁶ The register therefore is highly selective and only contains the wills of the wealthiest of the town who had children yet to reach the age of majority. The Prerogative Court of Canterbury was also a selective court, holding the wills of testators from across the Province of Canterbury who had land in more than one diocese or movable wealth of £5 or more in value.¹³⁷ It is important to remember that the wills in this sample represent some of the wealthiest people in late medieval Bristol, and some were proved

¹³³ Tanner has shown that the survival rate of wills in Norwich across the fifteenth century was around 10%. Tanner, *The church in late medieval Norwich*, appendix 23. Meanwhile, Thomson states that there are roughly 8000 wills for late medieval London which, with an estimated population of 40,000 people, means that there is a survival rate of 20%. Thomson, 'Clergy and Laity'.

¹³⁴ Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service', p. 46.

¹³⁵ Bristol, Bristol Archives, JOr/1/1; London, The National Archives, PROB 11.

¹³⁶ *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills in the volume entitled the Great Orphan Book or Book of Wills in the Council House at Bristol*, ed. by T. P. Wadley (Bristol, 1886), p. 2

¹³⁷ K. Grannum & N. Taylor, *Wills and Other Probate Records: A Practical Guide to Researching Your Ancestor's Last Documents* (Kew, 2004), pp.14-15.

in both probate courts. However, there are some wills that were proved outside of these courts that are included in this study. The charter that made Bristol into a county in 1373 gave the commonality of the town probate jurisdiction.¹³⁸ Miscellaneous wills survive in the Great Red Book of Bristol, a municipal manuscript concerned with burgage tenure, in some parish archives, and in an antiquarian scrapbook.¹³⁹ It is clear from the Great Orphan Book of wills and miscellaneous wills that they were proved in the Guild Hall in front of the commonality, and it is likely that many more wills were made in late medieval Bristol than survive today. However, no probate registers survive for the commonalty, and neither are they found in other court recordings. A handful of Bristol wills also survive in the registers of the Archbishops of Canterbury.¹⁴⁰ In addition there are some wills that were copied into the Church Book of St Nicholas's parish. A partial transcription of this document was made, but the parish archive was destroyed in a fire after an air raid in the 1940s.¹⁴¹ As I do not have the whole or original documents for these wills, they have not been included in the corpus of wills under study here; however I have used information from the partial transcription to back up wider points or to give insights where appropriate.

¹³⁸ *Bristol Charters, 1155-1373*, ed. by N. D. Harding (Bristol, 1930), pp. 133.

¹³⁹ The Great Red Book of Bristol Text (Part I-IV), ed. by E. W. W. Veale (Bristol, 1931-1953); For example, in the parish archive of All Saints. C. Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Parts 1-3* (Bristol, 1995-2004); Bristol, Bristol Archives, 08153/1. The scrapbook belonged to Francis Fox and contains four wills not found in any probate register of municipal manuscript. These have not been used in previous studies of Bristol's wills.

¹⁴⁰ London, Lambeth Palace Library, V/A/9, 11; *The register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443, volume 3*, ed. by E. F. Jacob (Oxford, 1945).

¹⁴¹ J. Bettey, 'The Pre-Reformation Records of St Nicholas', pp. 55-72; Cuthbert, E. G., & Atchley, F., 'On the Medieval Parish Records of the Church of St. Nicholas, Bristol', *St Paul's Ecclesiological Society Transactions*, VI (1906), pp. 35-67.

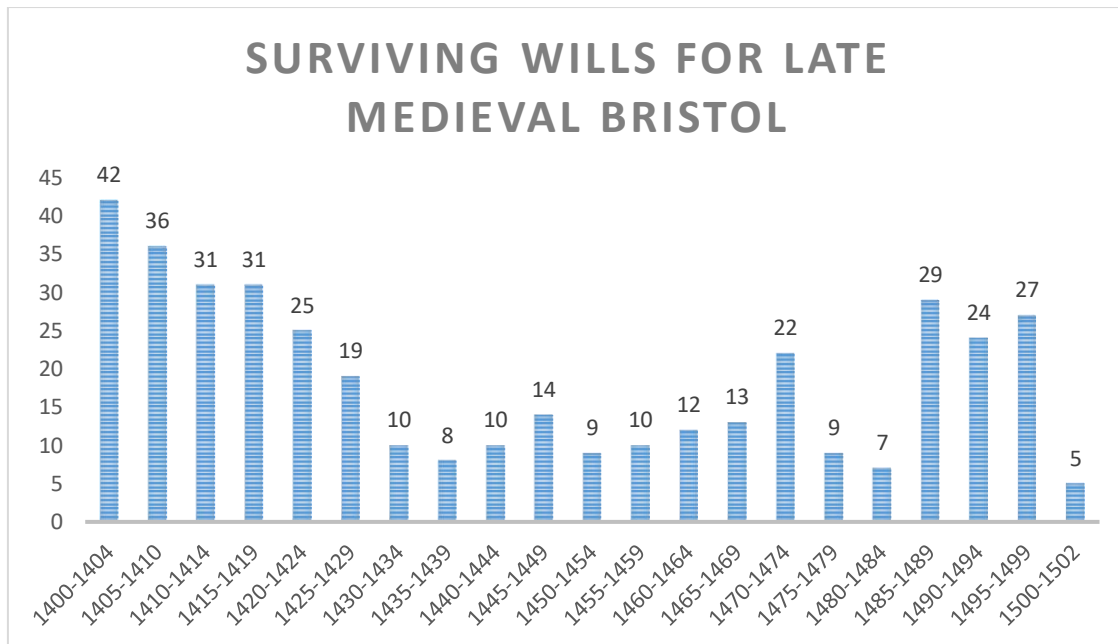


Figure 2: Surviving wills for late medieval Bristol.

The surviving wills, then, represent the final wishes of a privileged portion of Bristol's society. Indeed, 176 of the testators identified themselves as being of burgess status (or as the heir or kin of a burgess, in cases of female testators). Thirty of the testators were women, making them 8 per cent of the sample of wills. Fifty-seven of the testators identified themselves as merchants, which is the largest occupational group in the sample. This is unsurprising as the majority of burgesses appear to have come from the mercantile trade. However, some of the wealthiest members of artisanal trades, such as weavers, dyers and chandlers, also achieved the status of burgess and made wills. Surprisingly, there is not a high number of common office holders in the surviving sample of wills. In years where there is information about common office holders they form between 3 per cent of the sample (between 1410 and 1414, for example, where only one of the thirty-one testators had held common office) and 30 per cent (between 1430 and 1434 where three of the ten testators had held common office). It is highly likely that common office holders were wealthy enough to necessitate making a will, so the low proportion of surviving wills from common office holders is probably a matter of what has survived. With regards to nationality, the majority of testators under study here are likely to be largely of English origin. Some testators demonstrate a strong connection to Ireland and south Wales, which raises the possibility that they were Irish or Welsh or may have traded with

these areas.¹⁴² It is difficult to confidently identify Welsh and Irish names as they were often anglicised by English scribes or by testators who wanted to assimilate into Bristol society.¹⁴³ However, Mark Ormrod, Bart Lambert, and Jonathan Mackman's recent study of immigrants in England has estimated that immigrants made up 11.64 per cent of the population of Bristol in 1440. This is the highest alien population in any provincial town in the mid-fifteenth century, and so it is highly likely that some of the testators in the surviving sample were not originally from the town.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, in *The Little Red Book of Bristol* there is an order for the bailiffs of the town to accept foreigners into the liberty of the town and let them trade freely as burgesses, so it is entirely possible that some of these testators were originally foreigners before settling in Bristol.¹⁴⁵

1.4.2: Sources for heresy

The second types of source this thesis uses is evidence of people who engaged with dissenting beliefs and practices which is most visible in compurgation or abjuration certificates found in bishops' registers. Yet, the record of heresy trials in England is incomplete as a result of the loss or destruction of court books and Act books. In Bristol, the split ecclesiastical jurisdiction between the diocese of Worcester and the diocese of Bath and Wells may have impacted the effective prosecution of heretics.¹⁴⁶ This present study considers individuals who were from Bristol, tried in Bristol or who mentioned Bristol in their trials. Largely, the evidence comes from the bishops' registers for the dioceses of Bath and Wells and of Worcester, but I have also included evidence of heretics from Bristol found in the registers for the diocese of Salisbury and the diocese of Lincoln.¹⁴⁷ All known cases of lollardy in Bristol are outlined by J. A. F. Thomson in *The Later Lollards*, but I have

¹⁴² Bristol traded with both of these places. E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol', pp. 186, 202-212, 214-221, 224.

¹⁴³ P. Fleming, 'Identity and Belonging: Irish and Welsh in Fifteenth Century Bristol', in *The Fifteenth Century VII: Conflicts, Consequences and the Crown in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 175-193.

¹⁴⁴ This does not include the alien population in London that was likely much higher. However, Bristol had a larger alien population in 1440 than other port towns such as Southampton (6.8%) and Norwich (1.37%). M. Ormrod, B. Lambert, J. Mackman, *Immigrant England, 1300-1550* (Manchester, 2019), p. 62.

¹⁴⁵ *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, vol 1, ed. by F. B. Bickley (Bristol, 1900), pp. 102-103.

¹⁴⁶ A. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite texts and Lollard history* (Oxford, 1988), p. 123.

¹⁴⁷ Taunton, The Somerset Heritage Centre, D/D/breg/4- 9; Worcester, Worcester Archive and Archaeology Service, 716093/5/iii; Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, D1/2/10, D/1/2/13.

looked at the full set of beliefs in the original abjurations and have consulted the original records.¹⁴⁸ This has been done to check that no important details of cases have been omitted from the diocese of Bath and Wells in the editions of The Somerset Record Society, and to check that all cases are included there. One deponent who was arrested in Bristol, William Taylour, ended up in front of the southern convocation of bishops at St Paul's Cathedral on two separate occasions in 1421 and 1423. This trial, found in Archbishop Chichele's register, has been considered in this analysis to build a broader picture of his heresy.¹⁴⁹

Abjuration and compurgation certificates were the result of the end of an ecclesiastical trial. An abjuration certificate demonstrates that a deponent was found guilty of the crime, in this case of heresy, and had to give up their beliefs, swear to never take them up again, and sometimes perform a penance. A compurgation meant that guilt could not be proved and that the individual had been restored to their former good reputation (also known as *fama*) through the act of purgation. It did not prove innocence.¹⁵⁰ These certificates were copied into the bishops' registers. They vary in the amount of detail they give about the trial, but all broadly follow the same structure.¹⁵¹ Some list the questions asked and answers given during the trial, others list the beliefs found to have been held, while others just state that the deponent was guilty of heresy. These documents, then, are essentially summative; their main purpose is to give a condensed overview of the offence and the outcome as decided by the inquisitors. They are not as detailed as court books, such as the Litchfield Court Book for example, and we have to accept that the voice of the deponent is distorted and presented to us through many filters in such certificates.

There exists evidence for heresy in other places too. The evidence of those who were indicted after Oldcastle's revolt is recorded in the records of the King's Bench, and this

¹⁴⁸ Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, pp. 20-52.

¹⁴⁹ *The register of Henry Chichele*, pp. 63-70.

¹⁵⁰ R. H. Helmholz, 'Crime, Compurgation and the Courts of the medieval Church' *Law and History Review*, 1 (1983), pp. 20, 23. For work on reputation and fama see J. Coleman, 'Scholastic Treatments of Maintaining One's Fama (Reputation/Good Name) and the Correction of Private "Passions" for the Public Good and Public Legitimacy', *Cultural and Social History*, 2 (2005), 23-48; T. Fenster & D. Lord Smail, 'Introduction', in *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, eds. by T. Fenster & D. Lord Smail (Ithaca, 2003), pp. 1-14.

¹⁵¹ For a discussion of a 'textual template' for inquisition records see J. H. Arnold, 'Lollard Trials and Inquisitorial Discourses', *The Fourteenth Century*, II (2002), pp. 81-83.

thesis has investigated cases for Bristolians by taking Kightly's PhD thesis as a starting point; however I have found nothing beyond his findings. As the King's Bench was concerned with treason, rather than unorthodox religious beliefs, the beliefs of the deponents are not listed in the way that they would be in the records of a bishop's investigation, and I am satisfied that, through re-examining the indictments and the cases presented in KB 27 and KB 29, all of those who came into contact with the King's Bench for instances of heresy have been identified.¹⁵² I have looked for lollardy in Bristol at the end of the century in the King's Bench records through a sampling approach due to the volume of material; I looked through some indictments from the 1490s at random, but did not find any cases. Unless they had committed treason or violence that concerned the state, defendants were unlikely to be tried outside of an ecclesiastical court.

I have also looked at the C85 series, which are certificates of excommunication, for the dioceses of Bath and Wells and Worcester.¹⁵³ These are certainly not a full set: there are cases of excommunication in the bishops' registers for which there is no excommunication certificate. Where there are excommunication certificates for Bristol, no reason for the excommunication is given so we cannot know whether these excommunications reflect heresy or other moral crimes. Additionally, I have studied an Act Book from the diocese of Bath and Wells.¹⁵⁴ This book, which is in poor condition, covers almost half a century. There are a few references to Bristol and these are often concerned with the installation of new clergy in the churches or debts between private individuals. There was only one purgation in the book, which concerned a case of adultery.

1.4.3: Other sources

I have also used other sources of information on the social, vocational and civic positions of the testators and deponents considered in this thesis. Robert Ricart's calendar of the bailiffs, sheriffs and mayors of the town has been used to find out more about the positions

¹⁵² I looked for other instances of heresy in the King's Bench for the end of the fifteenth-century through a sampling approach. However, I found none. This is perhaps unsurprising as the King's Bench was a secular court which was not concerned with unorthodoxy until it threatened the Realm or the King (as it did in 1414 with Oldcastle).

¹⁵³ TNA, C85/39-41, 165.

¹⁵⁴ SHC, D/D/ca/1.

of some testators, and Lucy Toulmin Smith's edition of the calendar has been used for this.¹⁵⁵ *The Little Red Book* of Bristol contains some lists of the common council of Bristol, the town's governing body, in 1381 and 1409-1410.¹⁵⁶ I have also used William Worcestre's *Itinerates* edited by Francis Neale for the Bristol Record Society.¹⁵⁷ This is a topographical description of Bristol in c.1480 and is largely concerned with the length of streets and the placing of buildings. The information is dry, but useful for getting a sense of the town and some details about parts of the historical fabric of churches and other buildings that no longer survive. I have sampled deeds or petitions logged in the Bristol Archives and The National Archives catalogues that mention individuals to gain more background information on their lives, but have not gone through the deeds or petitions systematically. I have also used churchwardens' accounts and parish archives to contextualise the activities of parishioners. Clive Burgess's editions of the All Saints' archive have been particularly useful, but I have also used the Church book of St Ewen's and the snippets of the St Nicholas's Church book that were transcribed before it was destroyed during the Blitz.¹⁵⁸

1.5: Methodology

1.5.1: Belonging

Throughout this thesis, the sociological framework of 'belonging' has been used to consider the network of relationships that testators demonstrate through their wills, and the connections that suspected heretics had with the society around them. The idea of 'belonging' assesses an individual's place within a wider group through considering their belonging to a sub-group. It also considers the politics of their belonging: how an individual constructs their sense of belonging to a certain group. 'Belonging' as an analytical tool is borrowed from contemporary sociological studies that considered an individual's place in the world in relation to migration, settlement and wider conflicts such as the situation in Israel and Palestine, and is based on the work of Nira Yuval-Davis and her 2011 book, *The*

¹⁵⁵ L. Toulmin Smith, *The Marie of Bristowe is Kalendar* (London, 1872).

¹⁵⁶ *The Little Red Book*, pp. 114-115, 137-8.

¹⁵⁷ *William Worcestre: The topography of Medieval Bristol*, ed. by F. Neale (Bristol, 2000).

¹⁵⁸ *The church book of St Ewen's, Bristol 1454-1484*, eds. by B. R. Masters, E. Ralph, (Bristol, 1967); Cutbert & Atchley, 'On the Medieval Parish Records of the Church of St. Nicholas, Bristol', pp. 35-67.

Politics of Belonging.¹⁵⁹ This framework is useful because it allows consideration of an assortment of people in different places within a wider group, and allows for multiple layers of belongings: inclusion in more than one group simultaneously and to varying degrees.

In relation to late medieval urban society, this is a productive mode of analysis. Studies that use wills or track individuals across different record series quickly demonstrate that a late medieval person could be considered to belong to lots of different groups or institutions. Thinking about how and where individuals belonged to various groups is perhaps more productive than trying to think about the individual in one 'community'. The concept of community has been criticised by Katherine French and Miri Rubin for implying harmony without accounting for discord and disagreement. In contrast, belonging allows for simultaneous belongings and discord between members.¹⁶⁰ For studies of heresy, historians have long questioned lollards' relationships with the society around them. Plumb questions whether they 'assimilate[d]' into their local communities, but as 'assimilate' implies a binary inclusion or exclusion, belonging might be a more appropriate way to think about the dissenter's place in their social context.¹⁶¹

For the present study, I have identified markers that demonstrated belonging to devotional activities or religious attitudes in the will. A testamentary bequest to a parish church or fraternity suggests that the testator felt that they belonged to that institution and the community within it. A bequest to a specific friary or hospital, mention of the clergy within an institution, or request for burial suggests a relationship with an institution and some degree of belonging to it. Indeed, through the process of writing a will, a testator could confirm their belonging to religious institutions. Belonging is also important when thinking about the individuals who were tried for heresy. The question of where heretics belonged, whether this was within the community of their parish church or within the

¹⁵⁹ N. Yuval-Davis, *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations* (London, 2011), p. 10. My thanks go to Joshua Ravenhill for bringing this framework to my attention. For examples of studies that use this work in relation to migration, see J. Innes, S. King & A. Winter, 'Introduction', in *Migration, Settlement and Belonging in Europe, 1500-1930s*, eds. by S. King, A. Winter (Oxford, 2013), pp. 1-28.

¹⁶⁰ M. Rubin, 'Small Groups: Identity and Solidarity in the Later Middle Ages', in *Enterprise and Individualism in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by J. Kermode (Gloucester, 1991), pp. 132-150; K. French, *The People of the Parish: Community Life in a Late Medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia, 2001), p. 21.

¹⁶¹ Plumb, 'The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy', p. 111.

smaller groups of dissenters that they formed, is an important one. The framework of belonging is productive when considering this relationship between heterodoxy and orthodoxy.

1.5.2: Network Analysis

Another methodology used throughout this thesis is Network Analysis. This is a quantitative method of analysis based on graph theory used to visualise social connections and analyse the network that the connections form.¹⁶² Within network analysis, I am employing Social Network Analysis and Actor Network Analysis. Social network analysis considers the relationships between humans, whereas actor network analysis considers the relationships between humans and objects such as buildings or, in this case, the institutions and groups of people that those buildings represent.¹⁶³ In this study, network analysis has been employed because it allows the researcher to consider different types of social networks simultaneously, it gives the possibility for quantitative overview and comparison, and it offers a way of capturing the complexity of ties between individuals, people, and places in a busy port town.

To undertake network analysis, I have used Gephi, a freely downloadable software, to construct network graphs.¹⁶⁴ I inputted my data into the Gephi database. To do this I have input actors, also known as nodes, and the connections between the actors, known as edges. Gephi has taken this information and made a network graph. It does this using graph theory, and allows for clusters to form where there are a high intensity of connections between a sub-group of nodes.

¹⁶² For examples of studies that use formal network analysis to investigate medieval society, see D. G. Shaw, 'Social Networks and the Foundations of Oligarchy in Medieval Towns', *Urban History*, 32 (2005), pp. 200-222; R. Goddard, 'Trust: Business Networks and the Borough Court', in *Town courts and urban society in late medieval England, 1250-1500*, eds. by R. Goddard & T. Phipps (Woodbridge, 2019), pp. 176-199; C. Berry, 'To avoide all envye, malys, grudge and displeasure': sociability and social networking at the London warmote inquest, c. 1470-1540', *The London Journal*, 43 (2017), pp. 201-217; J. Chick, 'Urban Oligarchy and Dissolutioned Voters: The End of Monastic Rule in Reading, 1350-1600', *Cultural and Social History* (2019), pp. 387-411; Colson, 'Local Communities'; E. Lewis, 'Resistance, Self-Defence or Sticking up for your Friends?: A Discussion of Purgation in the Prosecution of Fifteenth-Century Lollardy', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 63 (2019), pp. 169-190.

¹⁶³ J. Innes, 'Networks' in British History' *The East Asian Journal of British History*, 5 (2016), pp. 61-62.

¹⁶⁴ <https://gephi.org/> Accessed 09.10.2019

In order to create these network graphs, I have had to decide how to input the data from my sources which means that there is an editorial process and a process of translating the sources to fit the programme.¹⁶⁵ One of the decisions that has to be made when creating a network graph and compiling data to analyse is how to categorise the units of the network: does the node represent an individual, a family, or an institution, for example?¹⁶⁶ There are two types of unit identified in this network analysis: individual and collective groupings. Testators and deponents are treated as individuals. They are named as extensively as possible.¹⁶⁷ Institutions, such as parish churches or friaries, for example, represent a collection of people. The number of people within an institution is not quantifiable, and the total number likely fluctuated across the period in question. The units that show collections of people in institutions also represent different types of institutions with differing levels of inclusivity and exclusivity. The parish, for example, was an inclusive institution, as it comprised clergy and laity. Every person in England was a member of a parish and could go to a parish church. Chapels and hospitals could be inclusive or exclusive collectives, as some only catered for the needs of the rich while others looked after the sick, needy, or poor. Friaries and monastic houses can be regarded as exclusive institutions as they were comprised of mendicants or monastics and largely excluded the laity.¹⁶⁸ The difference in these units in the network analysis undertaken through this thesis is not detrimental to the analysis being attempted but is important to bear in mind when considering the findings. The nodes do not claim to represent equal units. Instead, they show the relationships between individuals and the relationships between individuals and groupings facilitated by the institutions of the church.

I have also had to decide what constitutes the ties that will form edges in the graphs. In the context of the will, bequests of money or objects to a pious institution from a testator demonstrate a connection relationship. Some of these bequests are indicative of a pre-existing social connection while others are about the testator making connections

¹⁶⁵ A discussion of the choices that need to be made can be found in Innes, “‘Networks’ in British History”, pp. 69-70.

¹⁶⁶ Innes, “‘Networks’ in British History”, p. 70.

¹⁶⁷ In instances where we know them as the wife of someone else, they are named as such. I have input their full name wherever this information is available.

¹⁶⁸ Although they may have had servants that were drawn from the laity.

to help their soul through purgatory after death (which will be discussed below). Similarly, a bequest from a testator to another person demonstrates an existing relationship, and a valued one, and the appointment of executors and overseers demonstrates who they trusted the most.¹⁶⁹ In the part of the analysis that is concerned with relationships between people, these connections have been represented as a tie in the graph.

The network analysis software allows the user to direct the ties between people. This means that it is possible to specify which node is expressing a tie with another node. It is a useful part of the analysis when considering the connections presented in wills because wills only reflect the relationships that the testator perceived themselves to have. They do not prove the existence of these relationships, or that the recipient of a gift would have perceived the relationship in the same way as the testator. By directing a tie in the network analysis, I am ensuring that the relationships represented are not counted as mutual.

A potential problem with this methodology is that not all ties are equal during their lifetimes or at death. It is possible to attribute weightings to each connection but to do this would be to manipulate the data. I have not counted each bequest made to an institution in each will, because, although these might demonstrate the intensity of the relationship, they are more likely to demonstrate the wealth of the testator and the complexity of provision they desired rather than the relationship that they had with that institution in their life. As I am interested in what wills tell us about testators' religious associations, I have not included charitable bequests to 'all the churches' or funeral bequests to 'all the chaplains in Bristol'. These are attempts by the testator to boost prayers for their souls or highlight their importance in the civic arena during their funeral, but do not tell us about the relationships with specific people, groupings or institutions that they had during their lifetimes.

Gephi allows the user to measure the importance of nodes within the wider network through various metrics. The degree of a node can be measured by 'in-degree centrality' and 'out-degree centrality'. Centrality simply means how central the node is to the network

¹⁶⁹ Colson, 'Local Communities', pp. 254; Wilson, 'Community, kinship and piety', pp. 223-224.

and how important it is in the context of the network. In-degree counts the number of connections directed towards a node. In the context of this analysis, it counts the number of bequests made to an actor. Out-degrees measures the number of connections directed from a node and, in this case, shows the number of connections made by a testator. It is possible for Gephi to change the size of the node based on a centrality measure. For example, if you set it to show size based on in-degree centrality then it will show you the nodes with the greatest in-degree centrality as larger and those with the least as smaller. However, for more complex graphs with a large number of nodes (like those in chapter 3) this distinction is often not readable on the page. In these cases, we can use the metrics that Gephi produces to analyse the data under study here (Appendix 2).

1.6: Thesis structure

Addressing the research questions outlined at the beginning of this chapter, this thesis is structured in three main sections. The first considers engagement with additional parish churches in late medieval Bristol, what this might tell us about the laity's perceptions of their own belonging to a parish church, and why testators left bequests to parish churches in their wills that suggested that they belonged to more than one parish church. The second section considers the laity's engagement with other ecclesiastical institutions such as chapels, hospitals and friaries, and again presents the idea that these types of institutions had the potential to be more important to a testator during their lives and as they prepared for their death than their home parish church. The third section considers heresy and dissent in the town throughout the fifteenth century and the integration of dissenters into various social and economic groups.

2: Testamentary bequests to multiple parish churches

2.1: Introduction

In 1404, William Morys, of the parish of St Mary Redcliffe, made his will. His relationship with this church is clear; he requested burial there, left 3s. 4d. to its fabric and 8s. 6d. to the chaplain, William Hous, to pray for his soul. These three clauses suggest that he belonged to the pious community in the parish church of St Mary Redcliffe. The burial request leads us to infer that he wanted St Mary Redcliffe's to be the place through which his family and friends could remember him. His choice of burial place might also tell us something of where he placed himself within Latin Christendom, and that it was his home parish church in which he chose to remain after his death. The legacies to the fabric of the church suggest some level of obligation and belonging, as well as likely covering some of the cost of his burial. The naming of a specific chaplain shows a familiarity with the church and the community of clergy who were active there as well as demonstrating, in the same way as the burial, that he wished this church to be a site for his commemoration after his death. His will shows a belonging in life as well as addressing the practicalities of dying and remembrance.¹ However, he also left 3s. 4d. to the vicar of the neighbouring church of the Holy Cross of Temple for tithes forgotten. This legacy was free from the obligations associated with practicalities of dying and burial, and instead suggests belonging to the parish church of the Holy Cross of Temple through a seemingly voluntary legacy. The motivation for this bequest to a second parish church is unclear and calls into question which parish he belonged to when writing his will.

The specifics of Morys's case are unique to his will, but the example is indicative of a broader pattern seen in the wider corpus of Bristol's testamentary evidence: that testators looked beyond their own parish to additional parish churches during their lifetimes and to provide commemoration after death, and that this was reflected in their last wills and testaments. Of the 393 wills in this study, 136 of them mention more than one parish.² This is 35 per cent of the sample and, although not a majority, demonstrates that a proportionally significant number of people made bequests to more than one parish. Of these 136, ninety-

¹ Such as funeral and burial expenses, and mortuary and *pro anima* services.

² This excludes requests for burial.

four made bequests to multiple churches within Bristol. This is 24 per cent of the sample. This includes wills that do not show any connection to a Bristol parish but were probably still made by a Bristolian testator, and wills of people who were from outside of Bristol which were either collected in the Great Orphan Book or considered relevant to this study because of their engagement with Bristol. When the miscellaneous wills and those wills from outside Bristol are removed, the proportion of testators that left bequests to multiple parishes inside Bristol increases slightly to 26 per cent. This is ninety-three of the 365 wills that are reliably from Bristol testators.

This chapter challenges the notion that a single parish completely governed the laity's pious lives through a consideration of testators who demonstrate a relationship with more than one parish and multiple churches in their will. There has been a long tradition of viewing the parish as central to the pious lives of the laity, and the parish has often been taken as a lens through which to view popular piety by the historian.³ In the case of Bristol, the unusually plentiful records of All Saints' parish has led Clive Burgess to focus on the parish to explore piety in the town, and to use it as an exemplar of the laity and the parish in late medieval England more broadly.⁴ However, other recent historiography has started to look beyond the parish, accepting that the laity's devotional lives stretched beyond its boundaries just as their business, economic and social lives did, and that other religious institutions outside of the 'community' of the parish church were important in the laity's religious lives.⁵ Although not

³ E. Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath. Reformation & Rebellion in an English Village* (London, 2001); E. Mason, 'The Role of the English Parishioner, 1100-1500', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 27/1 (1976), pp. 17-29; M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire* (Lincoln, 1971), p. 104; J. A. F. Thomson, 'Clergy and Laity in London, 1376-1531', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1960), pp. 4-5.

⁴ C. Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls': The Parish of All Saints' Bristol on the Eve of the Reformation* (Woodbridge, 2018).

⁵ C. Rose, 'Thinking about Using DECIMA: Neighbourhoods and Occupations in Renaissance Florence', in *Mapping Space, Sense, and the Movement in Florence. Historical GIS and the Early Modern City*, ed. by N. Terpstra and C. Rose (London, 2016), pp. 15-32; N. Atkinson, 'Seeing Sound: Mapping the Florentine Soundscape', in *Mapping Space, Sense, and the Movement in Florence. Historical GIS and the Early Modern City*, ed. by N. Terpstra and C. Rose (London, 2016), pp. 149-68; A. Kissane, 'Lay Urban Identities in Late Medieval Lincoln 1288-1400' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2013); J. Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 263; J. Colson, 'Local Communities in Fifteenth Century London: Craft, Parish and Neighbourhood' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2011), p. 21; S. Rees Jones, 'Richard Scrope, the Bolton Hours and the Church of St Martin in Micklegate: Reconstructing a Holy Neighbourhood in Later Medieval York', in *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr*, ed. by P. J. P. Goldberg (Donnington, 2007), pp. 214-36; M. Wilson,

in the majority, the testators who left legacies to more than one parish church in this present study demonstrate that some people did not conform to the general pattern of parish bound activity that has tended to be presented in the secondary literature.

In instances where testators have left legacies to parish churches other than their own, historians have offered the following explanations. J. J. Scarisbrick notes that many testators left legacies to more than one parish church and attributes this to the testator's personal wealth.⁶ Katherine French finds examples of testators giving to multiple parishes. Her example details Stephen Forster, a fishmonger from London, who left legacies to a parish in Somerset. His motivation for this was clear: this was the parish in which he had been born.⁷ Justin Colson finds instances where testators left tithe bequests to different churches from the one that they requested burial in. The church that they left a tithe to is often referred to as their parish church, but Colson argues that the church in which they request burial might represent their 'spiritual home'. Often, these testators were widows. He also suggests that testators may have moved parish and recollected their previous parish, or the parishes of their kin, in their wills.⁸

It was most common for testators to leave legacies to just one additional church (set out in Table 1). Seventy-five testators left legacies to one additional parish church across the fifteenth century. Seventeen left legacies to two additional churches and one person left bequests to more than four parish churches. This was Alice Chestre, the extremely wealthy vowess, of All Saints.⁹ Table 1 also demonstrates that some of Bristol's testators were using chapels, friaries, hospitals and monastic houses as focal points for their piety. This changed the dynamic of religious life in the town and is discussed in the next chapter.

Community, kinship and piety: Lincoln Cathedral close c. 1450-1500 (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2014).

⁶ J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford, 1984) p. 4.

⁷ K. French, *The People of the Parish: community life in a late medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 23.

⁸ Colson, 'Local Community', p. 221.

⁹ Alice Chestre is discussed extensively in Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls'*, pp. 128-140.

	2 parish churches	3 parish churches	4+ parish churches	general to all	Chapels ¹⁰	Friaries ¹¹	Hospitals ¹²	Abbey ¹³	Outside of Bristol	No. of Testators
-1400	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
1400-09	15	2	0	1	1	7	1	2	12	36
1410-19	13	1	0	1	3	2	0	0	7	23
1420-29	9	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	6	15
1430-39	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8
1440-49	3	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	9
1450-59	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	16
1460-69	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
1470-79	9	2	0	3	1	0	2	0	11	16
1480-89	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	4	12
1490-1502	7	2	0	1	0	2	3	1	12	21
1500-02	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Totals	79	16	1	7	7	13	8	4	66	166

Table 1: The number of Bristol testators who left legacies to multiple institutions in their wills.

¹⁰ These are requests for burial within chapels that were separate from the parish church.

¹¹ These are requests for burial within the friary. Röhrkasten argues that these bequests should be taken as seriously as burial requests to parish churches.

¹² This includes burial requests as well as legacies to the hospital where the testator is treating the hospital as a parish church. For example, Nicholas Appurley calls the hospital his parish church in 1404 (see chapter 3).

¹³ These are requests for burial within St Augustine's Abbey.

	Burial	High Altar	Tithes forgotten	Rectors	Vicars	Unspecified clergy	Chaplains	Fabric	Unspecified	Pro Anima	Mortuary	Charity	Books	Other	Testators giving to multiple parishes	Total number of testators
-1400	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
1400-09	3	0	5	0	2	2	0	10	2	6	1	1	0	4	19	78
1410-19	2	0	4	2	0	2	3	6	1	5	3	0	1	1	15	62
1420-29	1	0	3	2	1	0	3	2	1	1	2	0	0	3	9	44
1430-39	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	1	0	7	18
1440-49	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	7	24
1450-59	3	0	1	1	1	0	1	7	4	6	1	0	0	0	10	19
1460-69	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	5	25
1470-79	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	3	3	4	3	0	1	10	31
1480-89	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	4	0	0	6	36
1490-99	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	9	22
1500-02	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
Totals	16	2	21	7	8	5	7	37	18	25	12	10	2	10	99	393

Table 2: The types of bequest left to additional parish churches in Bristol.¹⁴

A donation to the church's fabric was the most common testamentary engagement with an additional parish church in Bristol. Thirty-seven testators left a legacy that was

¹⁴ Table 2 includes bequests to chapels, friaries or monastic houses where that institution is expected to fulfil the same function as the parish church.

explicitly for the church's fabric (Table 2). A further eighteen people left a general bequest to a church which, while the purpose of such bequests is unspecified, might also have been intended as a contribution to the upkeep of the church. Twenty-five requested *pro anima* services such as month minds and chantry masses in an additional parish church, and seven left legacies to chaplains which may have been for prayers for their souls after their death.¹⁵ As well as showing familiarity with the church that they requested these services in, such requests also ensured that the testator was part of this parochial community after their death and was remembered by the clergy therein. Twenty-one testators left an explicit legacy for tithes forgotten. However, bequests to the high altar, and to rectors or vicars, can also be read as being for tithes forgotten. Tithes were paid to the rector or vicar in life, and other wills from the wider Bristol corpus reflect this by explicitly leaving tithe legacies to these members of the clergy (see Table 3).¹⁶ Elsewhere in England, tithes legacies were left to the high altar, and this happened occasionally in Bristol too (Table 3).¹⁷ In total, there are thirty-eight legacies that can be read as being for tithes forgotten to an additional parish church. Sixteen people requested burial in an additional parish church within Bristol, but other requests for burial outside of the home parish were made by Bristol testators. These included requests for burial in hospitals, friaries, chapels and monastic institutions in the town, to be discussed in the next chapter, and requests for burial in parish churches outside of the town.

To assess the meaning behind the associations demonstrated in these wills, this chapter considers how the testator could demonstrate that they belonged to a parish in the context of the last will and testament. This consideration will continue to explore how a document that is largely concerned with death, as some have argued, can tell us about the lifetime religious practices of the individual under study.

¹⁵ A month mind was the saying of prayers during the month following the death of the testator which ended with a repetition of the funeral service at the end of the month. Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, p. 446.

¹⁶ R. H. Helmholz, *The Oxford History of the Laws of England. Volume 1, The canon law and ecclesiastical jurisdiction from 597 to the 1640s* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 437.

¹⁷ Duffy has noted that tithes forgotten were often left to the high altar of a church in the Lincoln wills. E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*, 2nd Edition (New Haven, 2005), pp. 356-7.

2.2: Markers of Belonging: Tithes, fabric and burial requests in fifteenth-century Bristol wills

Within the sample of wills under study, some bequests indicate that an individual belonged to a parochial 'community' during their lifetime as well as on their deathbed. As established in the introduction, individuals can belong to multiple groups, to varying extents, at different points in time.¹⁸ Wills cannot give much detail about the dynamics of belonging. However, engagement with multiple parishes and institutions in the last will and testament might indicate different points of belonging throughout a lifetime. The parish structure placed obligations on the laity and a testator had a public duty to their parish church in their will.¹⁹ Judith Middleton-Stewart argues this in relation to legacies for tithes forgotten. Legacies to pious institutions demonstrate where the testator considered they belonged and felt an obligation to provide patronage for at the point of their death.²⁰

There are many elements in wills that suggest belonging to a particular grouping that revolved around a pious institution. In 1418, Richard Bokelond requested burial next to his pew, presumably his family pew, in the church of Holy Cross, demonstrating his belonging to the 'community' in the parish church. His use of the pew as a burial place reflects his use of it during his life.²¹ Similarly, requests for burial by the bell ropes or in the bell tower of a church demonstrate a lifetime connection with and role within the church as a bell ringer. John Barell the younger requested burial in the belfry of Holy Trinity in 1406 near the bell ropes.²² John Ailleward of St Werburgh died in 1427 and also wanted to be buried in the bell tower of his church.²³ However, these types of examples are rare. Three more common types of request or bequest, that indicate belonging to a local grouping or community and that are common enough to allow meaningful comparison, are tithe legacies, bequests to fabric and requests

¹⁸ N. Yuval-Davis, *The Politics of Belonging: intersectional contestations* (London, 2011), p. 200.

¹⁹ A. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury 1250-1500* (Oxford, 1995), p. 67.

²⁰ J. Middleton-Stewart, *Inward Purity and Outward Splendour: Death and Remembrance in the Deanery of Dunwich, Suffolk, 1370-1547* (Woodbridge, 2001), p. 43.

²¹ Bristol, Bristol Archives, JOr/1/1, f. 134r-135r; R. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c.1215-c.1515* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 123; K. French, 'The Seat Under our Lady: Gender and Seating in late medieval English Parish churches', in *Women's Space: Patronage, Place and Gender in the Medieval Church*, (ed. by V. Chieffo Raguin, S. Stanbury, (New York, 2005), p. 142.

²² London, The National Archives, PROB 11/2A/219

²³ JOr/1/1, f. 153r.

for burial. Tithes legacies and fabric bequests suggest belonging out of obligation to reconcile any neglected tithe and fabric payments through means of the will. Burial does not represent obligation (as one did not have to be buried in one's home church), but instead demonstrates an element of choice whereby an individual placed themselves where they wanted to be remembered.²⁴

2.2.1: Tithes forgotten

Tithes were payments made by the laity throughout their lifetime to their parish church in the later Middle Ages.²⁵ They were obligatory, and were regarded as one of the most important duties placed on the laity by the Church at the Fourth Lateran Council.²⁶ They were to be paid to the church in which the individual received the sacraments, as Pope Lucius III clarified to the Archbishop of Gran in 1181.²⁷ Norman Tanner and Sethina Watson describe tithes as a 'non-sacramental obligation' which was 'intrusive and onerous'.²⁸ In preparing for death, Rob Lutton and Middleton-Stewart regard a payment for tithes forgotten in the will to be indicative of the testator's obligation and public duty to their parish.²⁹ It can be reasonably assumed that this reflects the obligations held by the laity during their lifetimes: that they left legacies for tithes to the parishes that they belonged to during their lifetimes. Legacies for tithes forgotten served a purgatorial function in the will. By making a final payment for tithes forgotten, a testator was settling a debt which would lighten the burden on their soul and speed its passage through purgatory.³⁰ Ensuring that one had paid all of one's tithes through

²⁴ However, some wills demonstrate that there was pressure to be buried in your home parish so that the church could benefit from the income raised from burial and funerals. This is evident in Isabel Barstaple's will, JOr/1/1, ff. 114-115, and disputes over burial elsewhere in England. In the thirteenth-century, statutes were brought in to compensate churches when a testator was buried outside of the parish. See C. Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England* (London, 1997), pp. 83, 102; I. Forrest, 'The Politics of Burial in Late Medieval Hereford', *English Historical Review*, 125/516 (2010), p. 1114.

²⁵ Helmholz, *The Oxford History of the Laws of England*, p. 433-6.

²⁶ Canon 54, Fourth Lateran Council (1215): <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/lateran4.asp> Accessed 24/01/2019

²⁷ A. G. Little, 'Personal Tithes', *The English Historical Review*, 60/236 (1945), p. 68.

²⁸ N. Tanner and S. Watson, 'Least of the laity: the minimum requirements for a medieval Christian', *Journal of Medieval History* (2006), p. 414.

²⁹ Lutton regards tithes forgotten as an obligation, while Middleton-Stewart regards them as part of the testator's public duty to their parish: R. Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England: reconstructing piety* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 130; Middleton-Stewart, *Inward Purity and Outward Splendour*, p. 43.

³⁰ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, pp. 356-7.

a ceremonial legacy in a will may also have been motivated by a desire to be seen as a good Christian who was moral, pious and fulfilling one's obligations to one's parish churches. Watson and Tanner suggest that the amount left for tithes forgotten was symbolic, and Colson finds that this was the case in his comparison of tithe assessments and wills.³¹ Indeed,

	High Altar	Rector	Prior	Vicar	Curate	Parson	Parish Priest	Church/parish church	Fabric	Priest and Curate	Altar	Keepers of the oblation box	Unspecified	Total Number of wills for the decade
1400-09	2	15	3	23	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	78
1410-19	2	21	5	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	62
1420-29	4	18	5	13	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	34
1430-39	1	5	1	6	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	18
1440-49	3	7	0	9	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	24
1450-59	0	3	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
1460-69	1	5	1	9	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
1470-79	0	9	2	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	31
1480-89	3	7	0	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	36
1490-99	18	2	0	12	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	51
1500-01	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
Totals	36	92	18	120	8	7	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	389

Table 3: Recipient of bequests for tithes forgotten to home parishes and additional parishes.

³¹ Tanner and Watson, 'Least of the laity', p. 415; Colson, 'Local Communities', pp. 219-220, Table 7.

the most common amount left for tithes forgotten, in most decades, in fifteenth-century Bristol was 6s. 8d. (Table 4) which is similar to Colson's findings in London.

Small tithes were paid to the vicar of a parish church, whereas great tithes were paid to the rector of the church.³² A testator would leave a tithes legacy to either rectors, priors or vicars of parish churches. Bristol's testators left their tithe legacies to these personnel, as outlined in Table 3. The recipients of tithe bequests may be reflective of the small and great tithes that they paid in life. A legacy left to the vicar may be indicative of a personal relationship with the recipient or local knowledge of the church's clergy. For example, Robert Colville and Philip Ketford both left a legacy for tithes to the vicar of St Mary Redcliffe, William Dudebury or Dowdelbury in 1422 and 1433 respectively.³³ A payment of small tithes meant that the legacy remained within the parish church and was used by the community of clergy and chaplains working there, whereas great tithes left the immediate locality and were sent to the monastic house which often held the position of rector of the parish church.³⁴ This is detailed in Pope Nicholas IV's 1291 ecclesiastical taxation of England and Wales. It is clear from this information that some legacies for great tithes were collected by institutions inside Bristol: tithes left to the rectors of All Saints', St Augustine the Less's or St Nicholas's went to St Augustine's Abbey. Others would have left Bristol, such as tithes left to the rectors of St John the Baptist's, St Michael's, St Peter's or Holy Trinity's, all of which were held by Tewkesbury Abbey.³⁵ Whether testators directed their tithe legacy to the vicar or to the rector based on where they wanted the legacy to go cannot be known. Did William Morys of St Mary Redcliffe's leave his tithes legacy to the vicar of Holy Cross of Temple because he had a relationship with the church and wanted the money to benefit the church rather than the patron? However, as Table 3 shows, there is no great difference between the numbers of bequests for tithes left to vicars or rectors. There are 120 legacies to vicars and 110 legacies

³² Helmholz, *The Oxford History of the Laws of England*, pp. 437

³³ PROB 11/3/134; PROB 11/3/317.

³⁴ Helmholz, *The Oxford History of the Laws of England*, p. 438; Little 'Personal Tithes', pp. 73, 86. Local vicars were able to extract tithes in kind more easily compared to absentee rectors. Tithe payments contributed towards the vicars' income.

³⁵ Taxatio database: <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/taxatio/search?form=allnames&name=bristol> accessed 18.10.2018. The only churches in Bristol that were not patronised by a monastic house were St Mary Redcliffe's and St Thomas the Martyr's. These were both part of the prebend of Salisbury. There are no legacies to the rector of these two churches in the surviving fifteenth-century wills.

to rectors or priors (in the case of the parochial-monastic church, St James's Priory).³⁶ This suggests testators were not particularly concerned about the recipient of their tithe legacies, but were more motivated by a wish to reconcile their tithe obligations and pay their debts as they died.

Thirty-eight left legacies for tithes forgotten to additional parish churches. One such individual was Richard Erle of Holy Trinity parish who left legacies to the high altars of three parish churches in Bristol in 1491. He left 3s. 4d. to his home parish church of Holy Trinity in which he was buried, 6s. 8d. to the high altar of SS Philip and Jacob's church, and 3s. 4d. to the high altar of St Leonard's church. These bequests to the high altar can be taken as a payment towards tithes. He also left 6s. 8d. to St Augustine's Abbey for an anniversary to be celebrated there for him on the 16th of June. This anniversary was also to be kept in Holy Trinity by his executors for eight years after his death. He requested burial on the north side of the high altar in the chapel of St Michael the Archangel within the parish church of Holy Trinity and requested a chaplain to celebrate daily in the chapel for his soul, the souls of his late wife Thomasine, of his parents, Thomas and Margery Erle, and others. This chaplain was also to join in with the singing of canonical hours in the parish church.³⁷ Erle's will demonstrates his relationship with several parish churches and a monastic house. It is highly unlikely that these three bequests indicate that he was receiving the Eucharist in all three parishes on a regular basis. Instead, it might be that he was reflecting on past associations with the parish churches of SS Philip and Jacob's and of St Leonard's when he came to write his will. The specification of his anniversary being held on the 16th of June, the day after the writing of his will, might suggest that he was on his deathbed knowing that he was very close to death.³⁸ If this was the case, it is significant that he appears to have taken pause to reflect on previous parochial associations as he lay on his deathbed with the end of his life so imminent. Each of the three legacies is similar or greater to the mode for tithe legacies in the 1490s (Table 4). It is interesting that he left twice as much money to SS Philip and Jacob's than

³⁶ Legacies for tithes forgotten were left to the prior of the monastic-parochial church of St James's Priory. From Henry Meriman's will, we can see that the prior served the same function as the rector. 'Item lego domino Priori rectori eiusdem ecclesie iij s iij d.' (Also I leave to the Lord Prior Rector of the same church 3s. 4d.). PROB 11/7/71.

³⁷ JOr/1/1, ff. 242v-243r. Burgess argues that a chantry chaplain was a generous gift to the parish, and this was clearly the case for Erle's bequest too. Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, p. 134.

³⁸ However, it may also be the case that his executor filled in the detail retrospectively on the instruction of Erle who may have wished for the will to state the date.

to St Leonard's and his own parish church, Holy Trinity. This might demonstrate a stronger association with SS Philip and Jacob's, or perhaps the perception that he failed to pay more tithes when living in this parish.

Decade	Mean	Mode	Total Number of wills for the decade
1400-09	11s. 10d.	6s. 8d.	78
1410-19	13s. 10d.	6s. 8d.	62
1420-29	11s. 5d.	6s. 8d.	34
1430-39	9s.	6s. 8d.	18
1440-49	11s. 0d.	6s. 8d.	24
1450-59	£2 4s. 2d.	£2	19
1460-69	7s. 7d.	6s. 8d.	25
1470-79	13s. 4d.	£1	31
1480-89	10s.	6s. 8d.	36
1490-99	9s. 9d.	3s. 4d.	51

Table 4: Legacies for tithes forgotten from Bristol's testators, 1400-1500.

2.2.2: Legacies to the church's fabric

As well as legacies for tithes forgotten, testators also left bequests for the fabric of additional parish churches in Bristol. There are 329 bequests to church fabric within the wider corpus of Bristol wills. There were thirty-seven bequests to the fabric of additional churches in the selected wills and seventeen bequests to the church generally which could also be taken as bequests to the fabric. These bequests were often mixed in with payments for tithes forgotten, and sometimes suggest a hierarchy in the eyes of the testator between the multiple institutions.

Donations to the fabric of the church are a sign of belonging because it was the duty of the parishioners and landowners within the parish to look after the fabric of the nave and

tower of their church, and the responsibility of the clergy to look after the chancel, from the thirteenth century onwards.³⁹ While a standard clause of the will, fabric legacies could show 'intimate concern and familiarity with' a church building.⁴⁰ This was the case throughout the fifteenth century and is reflected in requests for burial where the laity asked for burial in the nave, and the clergy in the chancel, of the churches.⁴¹ These bequests would provide for the repair of the building and devotional items used in the church such as ornaments and books. During their lifetimes, parishioners would collect donations for fabric in alms boxes, and there was considerable concern that the money should stay in lay hands and be kept separate from the money in the tithes box.⁴² Table 2 shows bequests that are specifically for the fabric of the church, such as John Cheppystone's 1401 bequest, 'Item lego fabric ecclesie sancte Jacobi predicti iij s iij d' (Also I leave to the fabric of the parish church of St James aforesaid 3s. 4d).⁴³ Others are bequests of material items to the church, such as John Haveryng's gift of vestments to the church of St Thomas in 1417.⁴⁴ Bequests that were to the church generally or to 'the work' of the church are included as 'unspecified' as they were not explicitly for the fabric but may have served this function. When leaving money to the work of the church, the phrase used in the will is 'Item lego ad opus ecclesie...' (Also I leave to the work of the church...). Bequests of this wording suggest that the legacy was for the fabric of the church, as donations to the church's fabric paid for objects used in the devotional and sacramental work of the

³⁹ Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, p. 111 fn. 117; C. D. Cragoe, 'The Custom of the English Church: parish church maintenance in England before 1300' *Journal of Medieval History*, 36/1 (2010), pp. 20-21; Mason, 'The Role of the English parishioner', pp. 23, 29; Duffy, *The stripping of the Altars*, pp. 132-3; French, *The People of the Parish*, p. 27; B. Kümin, *The shaping of a community. The rise and reformation of the English parish c. 1400-1560* (Brookfield, 1996); Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*; C. Drew, *Early Parochial Organisation in England: The origins of the Office of Churchwarden* (London, 1954), pp. 11-12.

⁴⁰ J. Kermode, *Medieval Merchants: York, Beverley and Hull in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 138.

⁴¹ For example, Henry Chestre requested burial in the middle of the nave of All Saints' Church in 1471. C. Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol, Part 3: Wills, The Halleway Chantry, Records and Deeds* (Bristol, 2004), p. 21. John Halle, a rector, requested burial in the chancel of his church in Buscot, Oxfordshire, in 1401 and John Mason, clerk and vicar, requested burial in the chancel of the church of Holy Cross of Temple, Bristol, before the cross in 1489. JOr/1/1, f. 77; PROB 11/8/394. However, burial in the chancel was also an option for those of highest status. Individuals such as Thomas Norton of St Peter's parish requested burial in the chancel of the parish church beside the tomb of his mother and father in 1449. London, Lambeth Palace Library, V/A/11 ff. 184v-185r.

⁴² Drew, *Early Parochial Organisation in England*, pp. 17-18.

⁴³ JOr/1/1, f. 81v.

⁴⁴ 'Item lego capelle sancte Thome Bristollia unum par rubiorum [sic] vestimentorum panni aurei' (Also I leave to the chapel of St Thomas in Bristol one pair of red vestments of cloth of gold). JOr/1/1 ff. 129v-130r. There are more examples of these kinds of bequests in Table 6.

church, such as vestments or chalices, as well as for work to maintain, repair, and develop the church building.⁴⁵

Decade	Mean Average in Pounds Sterling
1400-09	£2 5s. 8d.
1410-19	18s. 1d.
1420-29	£2 2s.
1430-39	£2 14s. 7d.
1440-49	£1 6s. 3d.
1450-59	£2 0s. 8d.
1460-69	8s. 9¼d.
1470-79	£2 12s.
1480-89	£2 19s. 6d.
1490-99	£1 5s. 8d.
1500-01	11s. 8d.

Table 5: Mean of fabric bequests by decade.

Legacies to the church fabric were left in two forms: cash bequests and material objects. Throughout the fifteenth century, the mean cash bequest to the fabric of a church was £1 5s. 5d. (Table 5).⁴⁶ These bequests range from 2d. to £40, with a mode of 4s. Most bequests that were specifically for the fabric of the church were left in cash sums. For example, Richard Forster of Holy Cross of Temple left 13s. 4d. in 1450 ‘for the fabric of St Mary Redcliffe.’⁴⁷ Others left money to purchase specific material to repair the church.

⁴⁵ A good example of this is in Richard Vener’s 1413 will. JOr/1/1, f. 120v.

⁴⁶ This includes legacies to fabric of churches that were not parochial: for example, John Bannebury’s legacy to the church and house of the friar minors of Limerick in 1404. JOr/1/1 f. 90; Only one individual was taken out of this mean but was included in Table 6. She left money from the sale of her goods, but as there was no monetary value she was excluded from the averages above.

⁴⁷ *The Great Red Book of Bristol Text (Part II)*, ed. by E. W. W. Veale (Bristol, 1938), pp. 212-213

Thomas Aisshe of St Thomas the Martyr left 100s. for the glazing of a certain window in the church of the Blessed Mary of Redcliffe in 1457.⁴⁸

Testators also contributed to the fabric of their church through giving material objects (Table 6). The most popular object left to church fabric was woad, a blue dye, which was often bequeathed in pipes or pieces.⁴⁹ The different quantities of woad left are detailed in Table 7: the most popular quantity was a quarter (presumably a quarter of a pipe). Most of the objects left by testators had a practical use to the church or potential commercial value and could be sold to purchase equipment or maintain the church building. Manuals, ordinals and psalters left as bequests could be used by the clergy of the church, aiding the maintenance of their education, pastoral duties, and the conducting of divine service. Bequests of vestments, chalices and torches could all be used in religious services within the church, while silver girdles, gold tablets and robes would be sold for the benefit of the church. Woad would also be sold, and such bequests had a high commercial value.

The prevalence of woad in wills shows that some objects were to be sold for the benefit of the parish church. Lewis Mores, of St Mary Redcliffe's, left a quarter of woad in 1464 for the repairs to the church of St Leonard.⁵⁰ Woad was a plant from which blue dye was extracted, and was imported into Bristol during the spring. It was likely used in Bristol's cloth industry and sold to the dyers by merchants. A bequest of woad could come from testators in a range of vocations such as dyers, weavers, or merchants. Indeed, of the fourteen testators who left woad as a fabric legacy, four were merchants, one was a weaver and one was a dyer.⁵¹ It appears to have been used often as a currency in the practice of testamentary giving found in the Bristol wills. In the custom valuations from Bristol for 1479-1480, a measure of

⁴⁸ 'ad vitrini cuiusdem fenestre in beate marie de Redclif Bristollie c s' (to the glazing of certain windows in the Blessed Mary of Redcliffe, Bristol, 100s.). *The Great Red Book of Bristol Text (Part III)*, ed. by E. W. W. Veale (Bristol, 1950), pp. 111-113.

⁴⁹ Pipes of woads often comprised of sixteen measures. E. M. Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol of Bristol (in the Later Middle Ages)* (Bristol, 1937), p. 337.

⁵⁰ *The Great Red Book (Part III)*, pp. 111-113.

⁵¹ The rest of the testators' occupations could not be identified.

Total Number of wills for the decade	78	62	34	18	24	19	25	31	36	51	5	
Flour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Household objects ⁵²	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Torches	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	0	0	9
Clothing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Woad	0	0	0	0	1	1	8	3	6	4	0	23
A gold tablet	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Drinking vessels ⁵³	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	3	1	0	0	9
Missal	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	8
Cloth ⁵⁴	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	5
Ornaments	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Books	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	6
Psalter	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ordinal	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Manual	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Immovable property	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Vestments	1	4	1	1	2	0	1	4	0	0	1	14
Money from the sale of goods	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Jewellery	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
Utensils ⁵⁵	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	6
Girdle	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
	1400-09	1410-19	1420-29	1430-39	1440-49	1450-59	1460-69	1470-79	1480-89	1490-99	1500-01	Totals

Table 6: The Number of Testators who left items to church fabric, 1400-1501.

⁵² Includes a chest and a bed.

⁵³ Includes cups and chalices of various materials.

⁵⁴ Includes a variety of types of cloth: table cloth, sloop of velvet, altar cloth, a red banker - a bench covering, towel of drapers.

⁵⁵ Including pots, pans, bowls and platters.

woad was valued between 3s. 3/4d. and 7s. 4d.⁵⁶ The most common value of a measure of woad was 6s. 3d., although some woad was distinctly less valuable.⁵⁷ This valuation suggests that a bequest of woad to church fabric was of comparable monetary value to cash bequests to the church's fabric (Table 7).

	1 measure	2 measures	3 measures	1/4 of a pipe ⁵⁸	1/2 a pipe ⁵⁹	A pipe containing 10 measures	1 pipe	2 pipe	A setting	Not specified
Number of bequests	1	1	1	8	3	1	1	1	1	2
Estimated value of each bequest	6s. 3d.	12s. 6d.	18s. 9d.	£1 5s.	£2 10s.	£3 2s. 6d.	£5	£10	?	-

Table 7: Quantities of woad left by Bristol testators between 1440 and 1499 and estimated valuations.

Others left money for the purchase of devotional objects within the life of the church. John Barre of St John the Baptist left a set of vestments to the church of St Leonard costing £30 in 1450.⁶⁰ The inclusion of the value of the vestments instead of descriptive detail suggests that they were to be purchased by the executors of John Barre and given to the

⁵⁶ This is worked out from custom valuations in the port of Bristol between the 29th September 1479 and the 3rd July 1480. Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol*, pp. 272-279. However, the number of measures in a pipe of woad was variable: Richard Pury left a legacy of a small pipe of woad containing ten measures. Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol*, p. 337.

⁵⁷ Woad described as 'of Caen' valued at 9d. a measure and the woad of three shippers that arrived on the Jamys of Bayonne on 11th April 1480 at 3s. 3/4d. a measure. There were normally sixteen measures of woad in a pipe.

⁵⁸ Includes bequests described as a quarter or 4 measures of woad.

⁵⁹ Includes bequests described as 8 measures, two quarters of half a pipe of woad.

⁶⁰ 'Item I bequeth to the parissh church of saint Leonard a par of vestment... valu of xxx li'. PROB 11/13/149.

church.⁶¹ He was describing a general product to be commissioned, not an item already in his possession.⁶²

Some left money for the repair of ornaments in a second parish church. Thomas Mede of St James's parish left 6s 8d to the fabric of a certain cross of silver to be refurbished and returned to the church of St Ewen of Bristol as a gift in 1455.⁶³ This legacy was intended to repair a devotional implement that enabled communal worship in the church, including the mass. The bequest's specific direction for the refurbishment of the cross suggests that Mede had knowledge of the parish's needs and its possessions when he made his will. He directed his legacy at a specific object: a 'certain cross'. This likely referred to a cross that would have sat on an altar in the church, whether this was on the main altar or a side altar. His bequest implies familiarity with St Ewen's church during his lifetime, which was not his first parish church, but an additional or supplementary church. As well as enabling the performance of the liturgy, the bequest would have helped the population of the parish in their upkeep of church fabric and relieved some of the financial burden that was placed on them for such upkeep.⁶⁴ For both reasons, the legacy for the cross would have encouraged remembrance of him. This bequest certainly suggests a genuine connection with the parish and belonging to its lay community during his lifetime and after his death. He may have been a parishioner there at some point, or may have visited the church (perhaps through association with the guild of St John the Baptist that met there) and felt he had a meaningful connection with it.

⁶¹ Wills often describe personal items that are being bequeathed in some detail. Agnes Wellishorte's will is a good example of this. It describes a bed as 'of aras', distinguished beads as 'the better pair of coral beads with silver gilt gauds' and describes a 'standing cup with a flat maser with an image of St John in the Burcells with a wooden cover decorated with silver gilt': PROB 11/4/230. Richard Paans's 1406 will explicitly expressed that money was being left to purchase items for the church. He left two thirds of the remainder of his money to buy sacred books and vestments for his own parish church of St Stephen's: JOr/1/1 ff. 103r-105r.

⁶² Hannah Ingram discusses *post-mortem* commissions such as black gowns and gold rings. H. Ingram, *Archetype and Individuals: Reconstructing the Users of the Westminster Status Staple Court, 1485-1531* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2018), p. 207. The way that Barre describes the object is very different from female testators who often left cloth and clothing that they already had in their possessions, and that they described in terms of themselves and their own bodies. K. French, *The Good Women of the Parish: Gender and Religion after the Black Death* (Philadelphia, 2008), pp. 17-20.

⁶³ PROB 11/4/41.

⁶⁴ C. Burgess, 'An Afterlife in Memory': Commemoration and its Effects in a Late Medieval Parish', in *The Church, The Afterlife and the Fate of the Soul: Papers read at the 2007 Summer Meeting and the 2008 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, eds. by P. Clarke & T. Claydon (Woodbridge, 2009), p. 203; R. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, p. 232.

Four people in the sample left books to a second parish church: two lay people and two clergymen. The clergymen were Nicholas Pittes, vicar of St Mary Redcliffe, and Henry Darleston, prior of the Kalendars' Guild. Pittes left a manual to the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr. The motivation for this was clear; this was the church where he requested masses for his soul.⁶⁵ Darleston's bequests were more complicated. The Kalendars Guild was comprised of clergy: it was not a lay fraternity. The house of the Kalendars was attached to All Saints' parish church and included an extensive library from the 1440s. Despite being prior of this house, Darleston left his best ordinal to the church of St Thomas the Martyr.⁶⁶ This was a service book that detailed different services for different times in the year and feast days. Ordinals were often chained to the choir, where the clergy and singers sat, to help direct whoever was taking the service. Darleston's will shows that he had two that were at his disposal to bequeath.⁶⁷ His identification of the ordinal as his 'best' suggests that it was of high quality and demonstrates the value that he placed on St Thomas the Martyr and his preference for it above the Kalendar Guild, its library, and All Saints' parish church.⁶⁸ Another ordinal in his possession was left to the church at Toddington in Gloucestershire.⁶⁹ Darleston also left his manual, a portable book that detailed how to serve the sacraments, to the service of the church of All Saints. His bequest of the manual to All Saints' may reflect his daily association with the church, as this book, which included services such as baptisms, marriages, and funerals, would have been used more intimately by a member of the All Saints' clergy, whereas the ordinals would have been used for general reference.⁷⁰ The manual may even have been subsequently used by Thomas Marshall, vicar of All Saints and executor to

⁶⁵ Gloucester, Gloucestershire Archives, D3439/1/443

⁶⁶ 'Item I leave one best ordinal to the church of St Thomas, Bristol.' Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 3* (Bristol, 2004), p. 13.

⁶⁷ C. Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 1* (Bristol, 1995), p. xlv.

⁶⁸ Testators in other sets of wills also demonstrate that they had the vocabulary to place personal value judgements of the objects that they bequeathed. See L. Liddy, 'Affective Bequests: Creating Emotion in York Wills, 1400-1600', in *Understanding emotions in early Europe*, ed. by M. W. Champion & A. Lynch (Turnhout, 2015), p. 274.

⁶⁹ Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saint's Church, Bristol: Part 1*, p. xlv.

⁷⁰ Members of clergy elsewhere in Bristol leave devotional or liturgical books to their parish churches – presumably to aid worship there. For example, John Mason of Holy Cross of Temple left three books to Temple: *Sermones quadragesimales de legibus* by *Leonardu Matthaei of Utino*, *Sermones aurei de sanctis fratris Leonardi de Utino*, and *Liber de Veritatibus/Dictorium Theologicum* by Thomas Gasoigne. He also left a book to the church of Egmond which was probably his former church. 'Item lego ecclesie de Egmond librum de sermonibus sancti Magdalene' (Also I leave to the church of Egmond a book of sermons of St Mary Magdalene). PROB 11/8/394.

Darleston. Darleston was the prior of the Kalendars' Guild from at least 1388, when he appears in Joan Halleway's will as her executor. Before this, he appears to have served as a clerk in the church of St Thomas, appearing as such in a quitclaim from 1380.⁷¹ His bequests to Toddington may indicate where he came from prior to 1380, and his bequest to St Thomas the Martyr certainly demonstrates his role there as a clerk, as it was the type of book used by clerks. As prior of the guild, Darleston was connected to other members of the clergy in the town, apparent in his naming of Sir Thomas Lye, rector of St Peter's, as another of his executors. Quite what the nature of their connection was is unclear, but it is likely that he would have known other parochial clergy and those attached to pious institutions as colleagues within the wider church. These glimpses of his life from 1380 suggest that he was reflecting back on his life or acting on established relationships with other churches in the town when he wrote his will. Both are reasonable explanations for providing donations to the fabric of other parish churches in a way that might indicate a degree of belonging.⁷²

Two lay men left books to multiple parish churches: Belinus Nansmoen of the parish church of St Mary Redcliffe and John Clyve of the parish of Holy Trinity. Clyve, who had been a merchant, tax collector and twice the Mayor of Bristol during his career, left a mass book to the church of St John the Baptist, his neighbouring parish church, in 1431.⁷³ His bequest enabled the most important service in the life of the parish, the mass, and fits into the wider trend of lay people leaving books to aid religious services in Bristol.⁷⁴ He gave a similar, yet superior, gift to his own parish of Holy Trinity: his best missal.⁷⁵ Clyve lived on Broad Street which ran from the parish of Holy Trinity into the parish of St John the Baptist. He also named the vicar of All Saints as his executor. This shows that he engaged with the parish churches

⁷¹ Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 3*, p. 424; Bristol, Bristol Archives, P. St T/D/53.

⁷² This lifecycle for members of holy order is apparent in other Bristol testators. John Mason also gave texts to previous parishes (see footnote 70), demonstrating that Darleston's possible career journey was not unique.

⁷³ John Clyve, *The History of Parliament*: <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/clyve-john-1431> Accessed 10/12/2018; JOr/1/1, f. 155r-158r.

⁷⁴ For example, in 1435 Edmund Bierden left a bible to the rector of his parish church which had previously belonged to a chaplain, Thomas Blount left a book called an 'Antiphenall' to his home parish church in 1441, and Richard Paans left the residue of this estate to purchase sacred books for his home parish church of St Stephen's in 1406. JOr/1/1, ff. 103r-105r, 165r-166v, 171v-172r.

⁷⁵ The missale left to St John the Baptist was described as 'alius missale' (another missale) whereas the missale left to Holy Trinity was described as 'optimum missale meum' (my best missale).

and parochial communities in his immediate neighbourhood and suggests that he was familiar with multiple parishes.⁷⁶

However, some bequests to fabric were more functional than the bequests already discussed: they were made to cover the cost of burial rather than to fulfil a testator's lifetime obligation to their parish church.⁷⁷ This is evident from the context of some testators' wills. John Hunte, a parishioner of Holy Trinity, left 6s. 8d. to the fabric of St Werburgh's. This probably contributed to the cost of his burial in the same church next to his mother's grave. He left 40d. to the rector of Holy Trinity for tithes forgotten and 40d. to the church's fabric, suggesting that he was fulfilling his obligations to his home parish church. The sum for burial is perhaps greater as it reflects the reality of costs of burial, while the bequests to Holy Trinity were a ceremonial attempt to fulfil his obligations to the community that he belonged to. Thomas Mede's bequest to the fabric of St Mary Redcliffe was certainly to cover the cost of his burial as he explicitly states this, bequeathing a pipe of woad from Toulouse and 40s.⁷⁸ Where there is no burial request, however, bequests to the fabric of a second parish church demonstrate continued belonging to the community and imply use of the church during the lifetime of the testator. Alice and John Wodeley each left 6s. 8d. to the fabric of their neighbouring parish church, Holy Cross of Temple, in 1405 and 1406 respectively, despite both being buried in the church of St Thomas the Martyr of which they were parishioners.

2.2.3: Burial

Burial is another way in which testators demonstrate belonging to a pious institution and its community in their wills, but in a less direct way than tithes and fabric. Burial was not associated with an obligation to the parish as tithes forgotten or fabric bequests were. A testator could choose to be buried anywhere. The choice of a place for burial might suggest several things about the motivations of the testator: the site at which they wanted to be

⁷⁶ However, the appointment of Marshall as an executor could also show that he simply knew the vicar of All Saints and trusted him to be his executor.

⁷⁷ Although, burial could also show belonging to a parish in life as will be discussed in the next section.

⁷⁸ 'Item lego fabrice ecclesie Beate Marie de Redclyf predictus pro sepultura mea *ibidem*... unam pipam gaide de Tolosa et xl s.' (Also I leave to the fabric of the church of the Blessed Mary of Redcliffe aforesaid for my burial in the same place... one pipe of woad from Toulouse and 40s.). PROB 11/4/41. It is possible that this might also have been to cover funeral costs as no explicit provision was made for this in his will.

remembered through chantry masses, anniversary masses, or kins-people or friends mourning at the grave.⁷⁹ The place where they chose to be buried was a place where they felt entitled to be buried. When they specified a burial place outside of the parish, it indicates that it had been a place that held significance for them because their kin were buried there.⁸⁰ Concerns about purgatory may have influenced the choice of a testator's burial place. They may have wanted to be buried near to living kin to ease their commemoration. The choice of burial place, then, suggests something of the testator's pious life that had gone before them and something of where they were positioning themselves in relation to the pious communities as they made their journey into death. Swanson has also argued that there was an element of establishing ownership over the parish church through the building of a memorial in that space. Through creating a monument, which might have an inscription or effigy, the individual implemented some ownership over the 'ecclesiastical decoration' of their parish church.⁸¹

Sixteen people requested burial in a parish church that was not their own within the sample of wills.⁸² Some specify a very straightforward justification for their burial request: to be near to deceased kin. In 1405, Robert Crosman requested to be buried before the High Cross in All Saint's where his parents, Agnes and Thomas, had been buried.⁸³ In 1407, Alice Wodeford requested burial in the chapel of St Thomas the Martyr before the rood and near the tomb of her husband William Wodeford. In doing so, she privileged her relationship with her previous parish of St Thomas the Martyr over the parish she was a member of at the time of writing her will, and chose to be put to rest with Wodeford.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Burgess, "An Afterlife in Memory", pp. 210-211. An anonymous author from St Albans Abbey, 1428, treated tombs and monuments as sites that could trigger the celebrations of obits and benefactions for the deceased person in the tomb: N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (Oxford, 2009), p. 85.

⁸⁰ This only applies to burial requests where the testator died at home and did not die while away from Bristol or while travelling.

⁸¹ Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, p. 123. He argues that this was the case for the gentry, but that lower ranks of society (such as burgesses) also had these aspirations too.

⁸² Others requested burial outside of the institution of the parish church all together. This will be explored further in chapter 4.

⁸³ Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 1*, pp. 11-12; Burgess, 'The Right Ordering of Souls', p. 112.

⁸⁴ PROB 11/2A/238.

2.2.4: Tithes, fabric legacies and burial requests in the context of the will

As evident from some of the examples that have been explored so far, most wills demonstrate belonging to multiple parochial communities through a mix of tithe legacies, bequests to fabric, and burial requests. Each individual testament is highly personal and distinct, and deserves qualitative analysis.⁸⁵ One example of this individuality is William Folkysnull who requested burial in the chapel of St Mary within the church of St Augustine in 1405. He left £10 to the fabric of St Augustine's, 40s. to the fabric of St Mary Redcliffe, 40s. to the fabric of St Werburgh's, and 10s. to the rector of St Werburgh's for tithes forgotten.⁸⁶ Clearly, he left more money to St Augustine's to cover the cost of his burial, but he demonstrates a clear association with St Mary Redcliffe's and St Werburgh's also. It is significant that he was buried in a different church from the one he left tithes to. The payment for tithes fulfilled obligations that he held in life, whereas his burial placed his body into the ecclesiastical setting that he wanted to be part of in death. St Augustine's was clearly the most important parish church to him, evident in his burial request and sizable donation of £10 to the church's fabric. St Werburgh's was the church of secondary importance, leaving it legacies for tithes and fabric, and St Mary Redcliffe was of least importance as he only left money to the fabric. His legacies for tithes forgotten to two parish churches and bequests to the fabrics of three parish churches demonstrate a connection to all three, and a sense of belonging to each of them to some extent. This suggests that the will looked back on his life and his associations with parish churches, as well as forwards to his death and commemoration. It also demonstrates how he saw a personal hierarchy between these churches. However, the explanation for his inclusion of the three churches is unclear from the initial reading of the will, and the wider causes and personal motivations behind leaving legacies to additional churches in a way that might suggest 'belonging' in the wider corpus needs to be explored in relation to other testators.

⁸⁵ E. Salter, *Cultural Creativity in the Early English Renaissance: Popular Culture in Town and Country* (Basingstoke, 2006), p. 14.

⁸⁶ JOr/1/1, f. 93r.

2.3: The impact of topography and neighbourhood on testators' religious associations

This section considers the impact of the topography of late medieval Bristol as a factor that shaped patterns of devotional giving to additional parish churches in wills. As mentioned, there were two rivers, the Frome and the Avon, which ran through the fifteenth-century town. These rivers created gateways and barriers between the central town and the northern and southern suburbs. There were several bridges across the Frome to the northern and eastern suburbs, but only one bridge across the Avon to the southern suburb. This layout governed the movement of people around the town and affected their relationships with secondary churches. The topography created distinct neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods were social, made up by the laity and the relationships that they had with each other and with institutions.⁸⁷

Figure 3 gives an overview of patterns of giving to multiple parishes, using Network Analysis of wills that left bequests to multiple parish churches.⁸⁸ It visualises obligatory bequests for tithes and fabric legacies, and other bequests that show a strong, voluntary relationship with additional parish churches made between 1396 and 1500, such as requests for burial.⁸⁹ Figure 3 represents ninety-four wills and includes 150 actors or nodes and 259 edges.⁹⁰ Friaries, chapels, monastic houses, and hospitals have been included in the graph in cases where they have been presented as central to the piety of the testator or serving the same function as the parish church. The criteria for this are legacies for tithes or to the fabric,

⁸⁷ For a similar approach to neighbourhood see A. Kissane, 'Lay Urban Identities in Late Medieval Lincoln, 1288-1400 (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2013), pp. 75-76.

⁸⁸ Figure 3 is laid out in force atlas format with a 20,000 repulsion. This moves the nodes further apart and makes the graph clearer. The same patterns and associations emerge in other layouts, so I am confident that my choice of layout here is not manipulating the output of the data. To make the Bristolian parish churches clearer, I have rendered these in blue. The parish churches and institutions mentioned outside of Bristol are in grey to make them secondary to the parish churches within the town. Monastic houses in Bristol are in purple, friaries are in green and chapels are in orange.

⁸⁹ The bequests made by Belinus Nansmeon are an excellent example of bequests that indicated strong relationships with multiple additional churches, discussed on page 63 ff.

⁹⁰ An actor or node is a testator or a religious institution such as a parish church, a friary, a monastic house or a chapel. An Edge is the relationship between two actors.

or where there is no mention of a parish church and the friary, chapel, hospital, or monastic house takes a central place in the will.

The impact of the town's topography on neighbourhood formation is most evident in the southern suburb of the town. There is a cluster in Figure 3 between the churches of St Mary Redcliffe and St Thomas the Martyr. These parishes sat next to each other in the southern suburb of Bristol. At their foundation, they were both chapels to the mother church of St John the Baptist in Bedminster, but had become their own parishes by the later Middle Ages.⁹¹ This institutional and geographical relationship between the two appears to have been maintained by fifteenth-century parishioners, and the two parishes appear to have formed a neighbourhood. The church of the Holy Cross of Temple, a neighbour to these two churches, is also close to St Mary Redcliffe's and St Thomas's in the graph. Temple was also regularly mentioned alongside St Mary Redcliffe's and St Thomas's by testators in the suburb, but not as consistently as St Mary Redcliffe's and St Thomas's were mentioned together. This suggests that Temple was part of the wider neighbourhood in the suburb. This is unsurprising as the three churches shared the southern suburb and were separated from the rest of the town by the River Avon, demonstrating the impact of the river and the town's topography on the laity's religious associations. The hospital of St John the Baptist is at the edge of the network in Figure 3, closest to St Mary's Redcliffe and St Thomas's. This is also the case for the parish church of St John the Baptist in Bedminster, just south of Bristol and Redcliffe. The placement of these nodes within the network graphs further demonstrates the importance of topography in the laity's interaction with pious institutions. However, although there is a recurring pattern of testators from the southern suburb leaving legacies within the suburb, testamentary legacies were not contained to the suburb. The parish churches continued to be part of the wider network. They were not isolated and show connections (through testators) to other parish churches in the town. Although the River Avon, with its one crossing, must have restricted movement between the south and north of the town, it did not stop it.

⁹¹ C. S. Taylor, 'The Chronological Sequence of the Bristol Parish Churches', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 32 (1909), p. 203.

The river is less important as a boundary than has been postulated by previous historians who have considered the laity's associations and relationships in the town.⁹²

There are fifty-four wills from the parishes of St Mary Redcliffe, St Thomas the Martyr, and Holy Cross of Temple. The details of these wills give a further insight into the relationships that made up the neighbourhood in the southern suburb. In 1405 John Wodeley, of the parish of St Thomas, made his will. He left 6s. 8d. to the fabric of Holy Cross of Temple, 6s. 8d. to the vicar of St Mary Redcliffe for tithes forgotten, and 6s. 8d. to the fabric of his home parish. He was buried in St Thomas's, so the fabric legacies to Temple were certainly not for burial expenses. Instead, the bequests suggest a familiarity with and obligation to his neighbouring parishes alongside his own parish.⁹³ His tithe legacy to St Mary Redcliffe's might suggest that he once received the sacraments in the church, while his fabric bequests to Holy Cross of Temple may indicate that he owned property in the parish. The bequests to both churches suggest some level of belonging through attachment and commitment to both churches. Alice Wodeley, his widow, made her will a year later. She wished to be buried in the chapel of St Mary within St Thomas the Martyr and left a legacy of 10s. to the fabric of the choir of St Thomas's. She also left 6s. 8d. for tithes forgotten to the vicar of St Thomas's and legacies to Holy Cross of Temple: 6s. 8d. to the church's fabric and 6s. 8d. towards ornaments at the altar of St Mary in that church.⁹⁴ The detail in her will for the fabric of the choir of St Thomas's and the ornaments at the altar of St Mary in Temple church suggests her familiarity with the churches interiors and subsequently her devotional practice during life. She targeted her bequests at areas of the churches that she either valued greatly, was familiar with, or saw as needing further patronage. Interestingly, she did not leave anything to St Mary Redcliffe's. John Wodeley might have previously been a parishioner of St Mary Redcliffe's, and they both might have held property in Temple parish, but were parishioners of St Thomas's at the time

⁹² The split in the bishoprics is regarded as important in studies of heresy. See K. B. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the beginnings of English nonconformity* (London, 1952), p. 127; C. Kightly, 'The Early Lollards: a survey of popular lollard activity in England, 1382-1428' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 1975), p. 217; A. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite texts and Lollard history* (Oxford, 1988), p. 122-123.

⁹³ PROB 11/2A/199.

⁹⁴ PROB 11/2A/221.

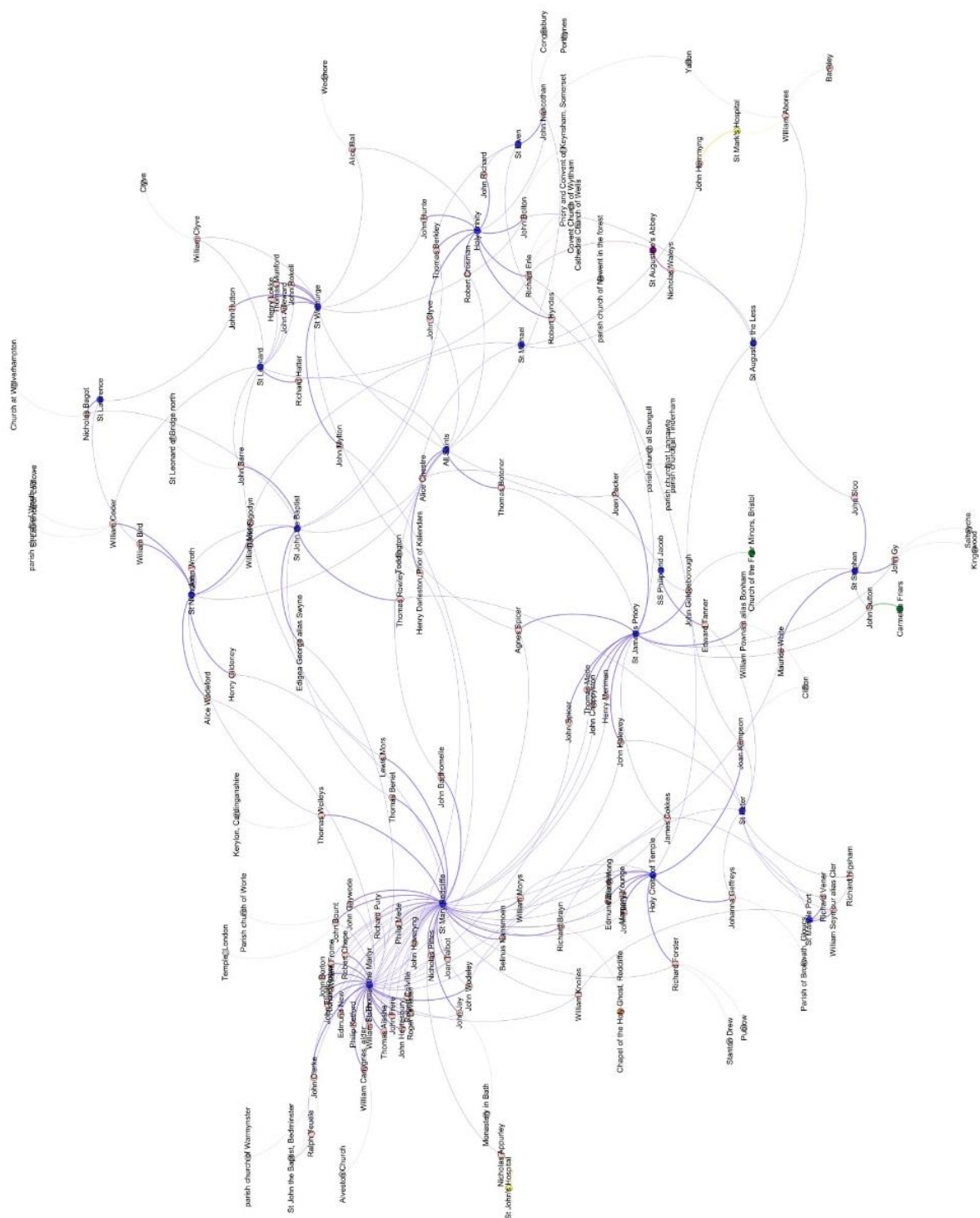


Figure 3: Gephi graph showing testators' bequests to multiple parishes across the fifteenth century in force atlas layout with a 20,000 repulsion.

of their deaths. Between them, the couple's tithe legacies to St Thomas's and St Mary Redcliffe's fit into the wider pattern identified through network analysis that these two parishes formed a primary neighbourhood within the suburb, whilst their bequests to the church of Holy Cross of Temple suggest a sense of belonging to the wider neighbourhood of the southern suburb.

Another testator who provides an excellent insight into this neighbourhood is Belinus Nansmoen who made his will in 1416.⁹⁵ He was a parishioner of St Mary Redcliffe's who left books to that church in exchange for prayers for his soul and for his anniversary to be upheld.⁹⁶ However, Nansmoen specified that if the clergy at St Mary Redcliffe's failed to perform these services, these books were to go to St Thomas the Martyr on the same terms, then to Holy Cross of Temple, and then to the hospital of St Katherine south of the town in Bedminster. This suggests that Nansmoen felt that he could expect other parish churches in Bristol to perform *pro anima* services for him, even if he was not a parishioner there at the time of his death. It also shows that Nansmoen saw the churches in the southern suburb in a hierarchy. For him, St Mary Redcliffe's was the most important church, then St Thomas's, and then the church of the Holy Cross of Temple. Whether this was a view generally held or was

⁹⁵ JOr/1/1, f. 127.

⁹⁶ 'Et volo quod duo libri mei quarum vnus dicitur sextus contiens textum & glosam ordinariam una cum doctoribus Johanne Andrea Archidiacono bonanne & domine digne & alius liber continent doctors super Clementinos videlicet Pauli Jacelyn & alios claudantur in ecclesia beate Marie de Redeclyve sic quod vicarius & capellam ibidem in ecclesia predictam beate Marie studium possent in eis cum eis placuerint. Et quod idem vicarius sacerdotes & clerici quolibet anno teneant anniversarium meum et Alexandrum Bagenham prout decot in choro sumptibus suis & si ijdm desisterint vel neclixerint seu recusanerint id facere volo quod ipsi libri remaneant in ecclesia parochial sancte Thome martiri sub forma predicta Ita quod ipsi teneant anniversarium meum ut prefertur & si ipsi recusanerint id facere volo quod ipsi libri remaneant in ecclesia sancte crucis de Temple sub forma predicta Ita quod ipsi teneant anniversarium meum ut prefertur & si ipsi recusanerint id facere predictae remaneant hospitali sancte Katerine habend predictos libros sub sub [sic] forma predicta; (I wish that my two books of which one is called the sixth contain texts and documents, with Doctor John Andrea, archdeacon of Bologna, lord of high office, and the other book containing doctors above Clementines namely Paul Jacelyn and others, be shut up in the church of the Blessed Mary of Redcliffe so that the vicars and chaplains there in the aforesaid church of St Mary can study them when they please. And that the same vicar, priests and clergy to keep my anniversary every year and that of Alexander Bagenham in a fitting manner in the choir at their own costs. If they should neglect or refuse to do so, the said books are to remain in the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr under the same conditions, so that they themselves should keep and give preference on my anniversary, and if they should neglect or refuse to do so, the said books are to remain to the parish church of the Holy Cross of Temple in the aforesaid way so that they themselves should keep and give preference on my anniversary, and if that church fails to do so, then they are to go to the hospital of St Katherine under the same conditions).

Nansmoen's opinion is open for debate, but his request does follow the broader pattern that there was a stronger sense of neighbourhood between St Mary Redcliffe's and St Thomas's and a wider network that included Temple.⁹⁷ The hierarchy of his requests also reveals that he regarded the hospital of St Katherine as capable as a parish church of taking care of *pro anima* services, but as a last resort. This use of neighbouring institutions was also specified by Alice Chestre, widow of Henry Chestre, and parishioner of All Saints' in central Bristol. She specified that the commemoration of herself and her husband was to be passed to the Kalendars' Guild if the churchwardens of All Saints' failed in their duty to manage her commemorations. The Kalendars were not strictly speaking part of the institution of the parish, even though their house was within the building of the parish church of All Saints'.⁹⁸ These examples demonstrate that testators were willing to look outside of their home parishes to guarantee their commemoration across the town of Bristol, and in Bristol's southern suburb this was attainable through using multiple parish churches.

Although there is not another significant cluster in Figure 3, there are some other associations between parish churches which indicate neighbourhood associations. The proximity of the parishes that sat at the crossroads of central Bristol, as depicted in Ricart's contemporary map (Figure 1), appears to have created a neighbourhood around the town's High Cross. The churches of St Ewen's, Holy Trinity's, and All Saints' are close together in the network graph and sat around the high cross in reality too. St Nicholas's parish church is the closest northern parish to St Thomas the Martyr's. These churches were at opposite ends of the Bristol Bridge and so the relationship between them in the network graph reflects their geographical position and perhaps the ease of movement between them. It also adds to questions about the river as a physical boundary, and whether the split in jurisdiction between the bishops had an impact on lay people's devotional affiliations. St Mary's le Port and St Peter's are also close to each other in the graphs and were neighbouring churches. These associations reinforce the significance of the link between topography and neighbourhood, and that testators left bequests to churches in a second parish that they were familiar with, perhaps because these churches were neighbours. There is no evidence for

⁹⁷ The reasoning behind this hierarchy (in terms of the wealth and size of the churches) will be discussed in section 2.5.

⁹⁸ Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls'*, p. 136.

specific church attendance in the town and so no firm conclusions can be drawn, but it is possible that a testator may have visited a neighbouring church regularly during their lifetime or financially supported other parishes. In these instances, neighbourhoods crossed and encompassed parish boundaries, and it appears that obligations and belonging traversed these boundaries as well. The proximity of these churches to each other enabled the testator to become familiar with other parish churches in addition to their own. The fact that testators tended to give to additional parish churches in their immediate neighbourhood in central Bristol is perhaps best exemplified by John Clyve who, as already discussed, engaged with his home parish of Holy Trinity, the parish church of St John the Baptist, and appointed the vicar of All Saints' as his executor. All of these churches were on Broad Street on which Clyve himself lived.⁹⁹

Broadly, the network analysis shows that many testators gave to an additional parish church on the basis of neighbourhood, and it is possible to speculate that these neighbourhoods were shaped by the topography of the town. However, there are some cases within the graph that do not fit this pattern. The parish church of St Michael's appears well connected to the central parishes despite being in the northern suburb of the town. On the basis of the pattern outlined, it would be expected that it would be on the periphery of the graph, and that it would be more closely associated with the parish church of St Augustine the Less which was also in the town's northern suburb. The graph is not meant to replicate geography, but in many places it does. This does not, however, mean that St Michael's non-geographical position in the graph is a mistake in the analysis. Instead, it demonstrates that testators who left legacies to St Michael's as a second parish church were not doing so because it was their neighbouring parish as they appear to have been for the other parish churches.

The case of St Michael's highlights the how uneven survival of evidence limits the completeness of this approach. The lack of testamentary evidence for this parish means that its position in the graph is distorted as the information we get about St Michael's comes largely from outside of this parish. Four people left a bequest to St Michael's as a second parish church. Nicholas Waleys asked to be buried in St Augustine's Abbey, left 13s. 4d. to the

⁹⁹ JOr/1/1, ff. 155r-158r.

vicar of St Augustine the Less (perhaps for tithes forgotten), and 10s. to the fabric of St Michael's from four shops on Horsstrete.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, John Hemmyng who was a resident of St Mark's Hospital in the parish of St Augustine the Less left 20d. to St Michael's. He did not leave anything to the church in whose parish he resided.¹⁰¹ These two examples fit the pattern of interaction with neighbouring parishes outlined above, suggesting that the wider trend was present in this parish too even if it cannot be reconstructed properly. The other two testators who bequeathed to St Michael's, Alice Chestre of All Saints' and David Sigodyn of St Nicholas's, were from central parishes. This distorts St Michael's place in the network and pulls it closer to the central parishes. David Sigodyn left 12d. to the church of St Michael's.¹⁰² Alice Chestre left two torches to St Michael's, as well as two to the crypt of St Nicholas's, one to the crypt of St John the Baptist's and one to the parish church of SS Philip and Jacob.¹⁰³ Gephi does not account for missing information, and the lack of surviving wills from the parishioners of St Michael's has meant that their social networks are underrepresented in this analysis, meaning that the network graphs that are the product of their analysis are slightly distorted. This distortion is also seen with the parish church of SS Philip and Jacob in Figure 3. This is probably also a result of Alice Chestre's bequest that connects this parish with the central parishes.

Figure 3 covers the whole of the fifteenth-century which is somewhat problematic. It reflects several generations of testators and so is not representative of the historical reality.¹⁰⁴ Yet, the graph gives a general overview of the patterns in testamentary behaviour. When it is broken down into twenty-five year segments, the same patterns continue (figures 4 to 7). Throughout the century, there is a close relationship between St Mary Redcliffe's and St Thomas the Martyr, and Holy Cross of Temple to a secondary degree (with the exception of the final segment, 1475-1500, as a result of the lack of surviving evidence as discussed). Neighbourhood associations between St Peter's and St Mary le Port (Figures 4, 7), St Werburgh's and St Leonard's (Figures 4, 5, 6) and the three churches around the High Cross

¹⁰⁰ JOr/1/1, f. 83.

¹⁰¹ Perhaps he had come from St Michael's before becoming a resident of St Mark's hospital in St Augustine's parish. PROB 11/11/599.

¹⁰² D3439/1/445.

¹⁰³ Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 3*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the abstraction from the historical reality is something that Innes has highlighted in her article, J. Innes "'Networks" in British History' *The East Asian Journal of British History*, 5 (2016), p. 60.

(Figures 4, 5, 6) also largely continue throughout the century. In the first quarter of the century, there is a clear association between the parish churches of the northern suburb, St Michael's and St Augustine's the Less, through the will of Nicholas Waleys. This demonstrates the point that lack of evidence distorted St Michael's place in the network that covers the whole century in Figure 3, and reaffirms the idea that neighbourhood was an influential factor in the laity's association with a second parish church. Some nodes cease to be part of the network at some points of the century which is a result of poor survival of evidence,

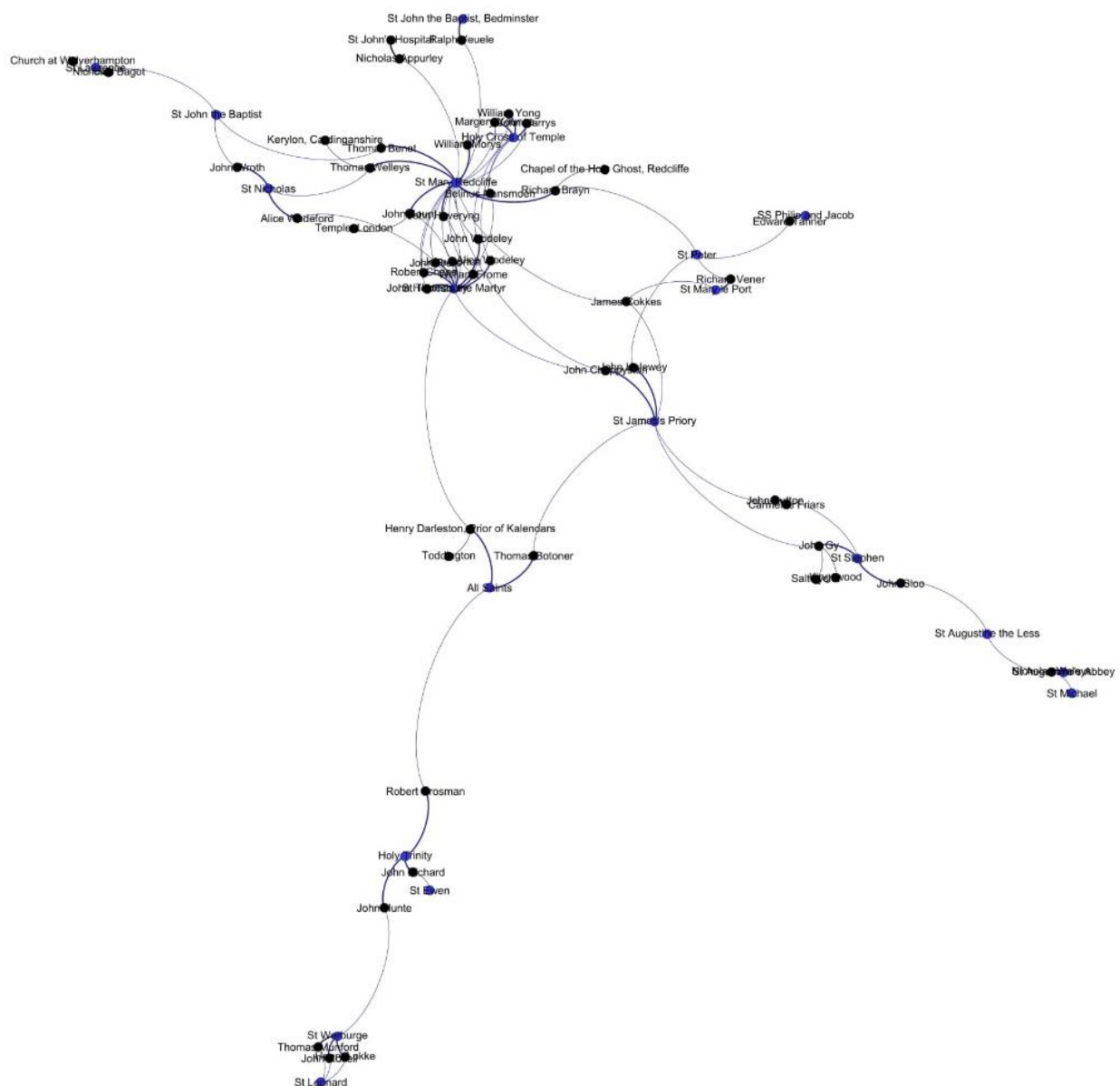


Figure 4: Gephi graph showing testators' bequests to multiple parishes, 1400-1425.

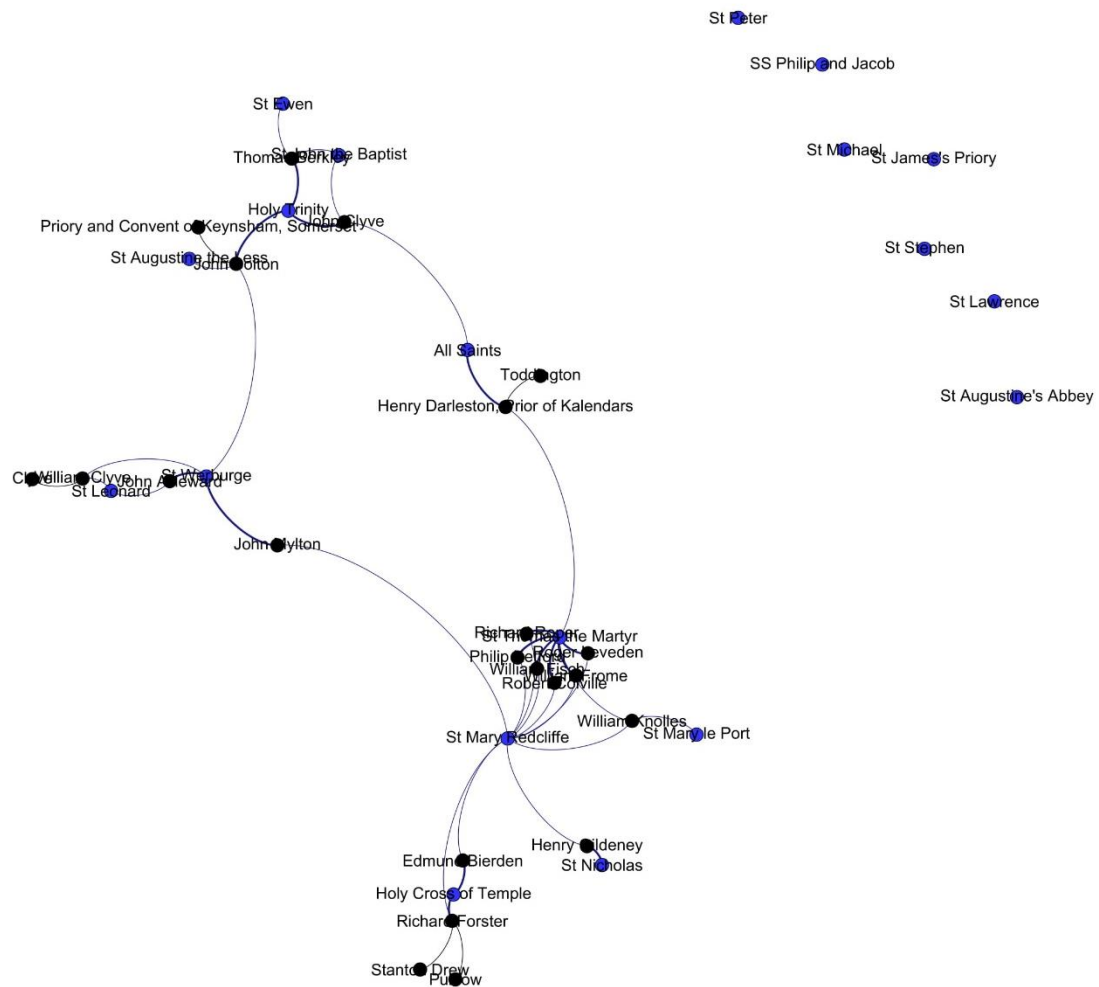


Figure 5: Gephi graph showing testators' bequests to multiple parishes, 1425-1450.

particularly in the middle segments. In the final segment, 1475-1500, neighbourhood and topography are less apparent than in the rest of the century. This may be because institutions such as St Mark's Hospital became prominent in the sample of wills, detracting from parish churches.

While these graphs demonstrate that there was a general pattern of giving to additional parish churches, Joanna Innes's question remains: would the historical subject under study have thought of themselves as part of a network? It is likely that the testators would have thought of themselves as part of a neighbourhood, hence their bequests to

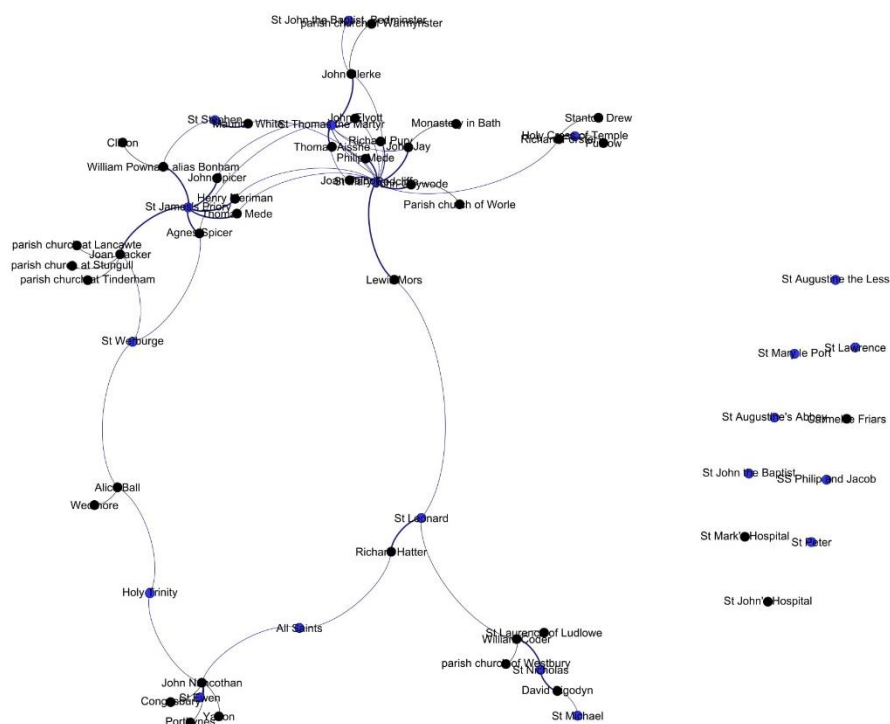


Figure 6: Gephi graph showing testators' bequests to multiple parishes, 1450-1475.

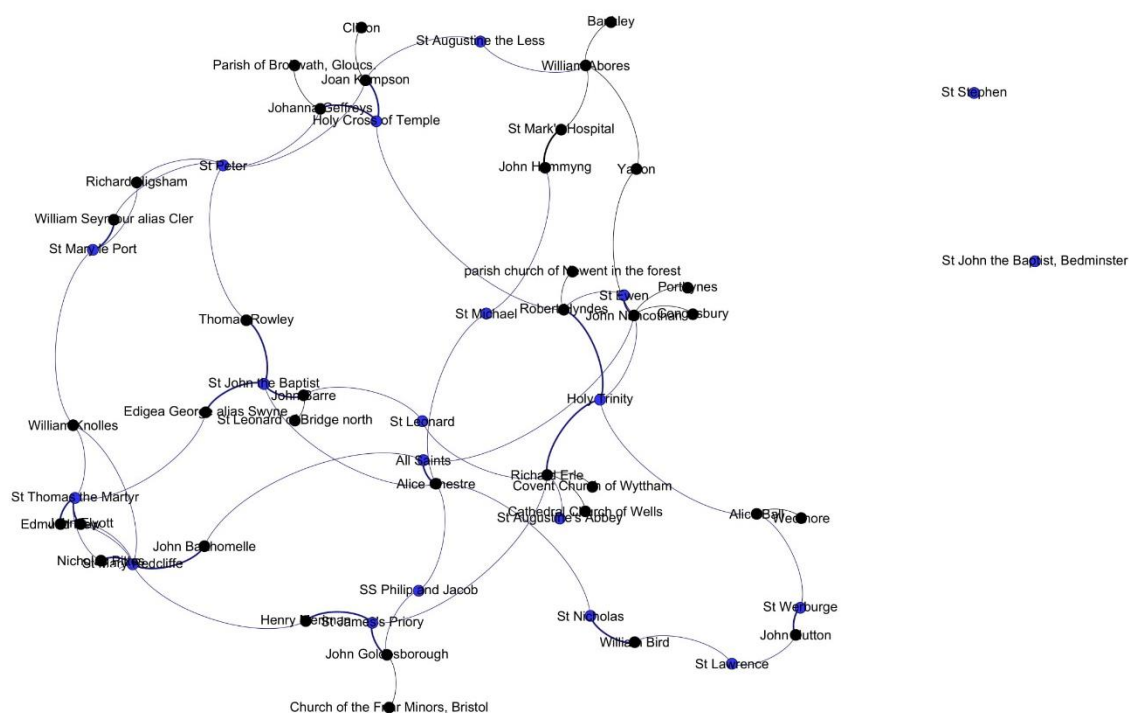


Figure 7: Gephi graph showing testators' bequests to multiple parishes, 1475-1500.

additional parish churches on this basis. In this instance network analysis has been able to reconstruct these neighbourhoods, and this reconstruction shows a perception of neighbourhood extending beyond the parish as these testators would have seen it. The network analysis is not an abstract historical concept from the surviving evidence.

2.4: Personal motivations for bequests to multiple parishes

While the neighbourhoods that arose from the town's topography appear to have broadly governed testators' relationships with a second parish church, individual factors were also important. The motives discussed below, put into broad categories, apply specifically to the individual under consideration in each example, but they are also indicative of broader reasons that people considered themselves to have a relationship with more than one parish church at the time of making their will. They suggest that testators viewed their pious lives as stretching beyond the limits of a single parish, and beyond the situation they found themselves in on their deathbed.

2.4.1: Lifecycle and kin

Henry Culmer left two legacies for tithes forgotten in 1407: 6s. 8d. to the high altar in the church of Holy Trinity in 'Kerlyon' (Cardiganshire), Wales, followed by 6s. 8d. to his parish church of St Stephen in Bristol.¹⁰⁵ He identified himself as a Burgess of Bristol, but gave very clear motivation for his tithe legacy to the church in Wales: it was his previous parish church. Having moved from Cardiganshire to Bristol he had become a Burgess of the town. At different points of his life he had received the sacraments in each of these parish churches, and this is reflected in his will through efforts to reconcile any unpaid or overlooked tithes to each. His will shows that he was actively remembering both but was not, at the time of its making, a member of two parish churches simultaneously. His membership of previous parishes appears to have been an important part of his piety on his death-bed, and through tithe legacies to multiple parishes he accessed several parochial communities, giving

¹⁰⁵ 'Item lego summo altari ecclesie mee nuper parochiali sancte Trinitatis iuxta Kerlyon in Wallia pro decimis meis oblitis... vjs viijd... Item lego summo altari ecclesie mee parochi sancte Stephine Bristollia pro decimis meis oblitis... vjs viijd' (Also I leave to the high altar of the church of Holy Trinity next to Kerlyon in Wales, lately my parish, for tithes forgotten... 6s. 8d.... Also I leave to the high altar of my parish church of St Stephen Bristol for tithes forgotten... 6s. 8d.). PROB 11/2A/269.

donations to illicit prayers and remembrance, as he prepared to die. Culmer provides a clear example of how lifecycle and migration could result in tithe bequests to multiple parishes and belonging to multiple geographies. However, the picture is less clear for testators who demonstrate a relationship with more than one parish church within the close urban context of Bristol.

For some women, the effect of their lifecycle and remarriage on their parochial association was strongly gendered. If a woman remarried she would often move which could mean attending a different parish. The impact of a remarriage on parish association is evident in Alice Wodeford's will. She made this in 1407 and identified herself as 'Alicia Wodeford de a *parochia sancte Nicholi Bristollia*' (Alice Wodeford of the parish of St Nicholas, Bristol), north of the Bristol Bridge in the centre of the town.¹⁰⁶ However, she requested to be buried in the chapel of St Thomas the Martyr before the rood, near the tomb of my husband William Wodeford.¹⁰⁷ She also requested *pro anima* services in the church of St Thomas for the souls of both her husbands, Nicholas Chapman and William Wodeford.¹⁰⁸ Both Chapman and Wodeford appear to have been involved in mercantile trade, both owning cargo on ships bound for the continent in the late fourteenth century. Chapman had also been a Constable of Bristol's Staple Court.¹⁰⁹ The reason for her bequests to multiple parish churches is clearly her two marriages. It is difficult to tell which man she was first married too, but the use of the name 'Wodeford' suggests that he was her second husband.¹¹⁰ If this was the case, she may have returned to her first parish of St Nicholas, where Chapman may have been from, after the death of Wodeford. Yet, if she used William Wodeford's name because it was of most significance to her, the possibility remains that she may have moved to St Nicholas's for her second marriage. Either way, her will demonstrates that she engaged with two parish

¹⁰⁶ PROB 11/2A/238.

¹⁰⁷ 'et corpus meum ad sepeliend in capella *sanctis Thome Martiris* coram cruce iuxta tumulus Willelmi Wodeford matri mei' (and my body to be buried in the chapel of St Thomas the Martyr in the presence of the cross next to the tomb of William Wodeford my husband).

¹⁰⁸ She requests that James Cokes of Bristol find a chaplain to celebrate in the chapel of St Thomas in a temporary chantry for two years after her death and asked that her executors find a chaplain to celebrate for a year for the souls of her husbands.

¹⁰⁹ Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol*, for Chapman see pp. 180, 183, 300, for Wodeford see pp. 185-6, 192, 197, 201, 300.

¹¹⁰ There are no surviving wills for Chapman and Wodeford, which would have showed when they died and provided more context for Alice Wodeford's will.

churches in Bristol because of her two marriages. She may have engaged in commemoration in both parishes for her deceased husbands until her own death, further suggesting that she was part of these two communities within parish churches. The mention of both churches suggests that both were important. She indicated that she belonged to both in life, but chose one to belong to in death.

However, not all widows who remarried embraced the parish church that accompanied their second marriage when they made their wills. The will of Isabel Ruddok alias Clive provides a stark contrast to that of Alice Wodeford.¹¹¹ Ruddok made her will in 1434 and at this time was the widow of two men: first of David Ruddok of St Thomas's parish who died in 1426 and second of John Clyve of Holy Trinity who died in 1431.¹¹² Unlike Alice Wodeford's will, Isabel's demonstrated a relationship with St Thomas the Martyr only. It is only through the 'alias Clive' in Isabel's will coupled with the mention of her in John Clyve's will that any connection between her and Holy Trinity can be made. Therefore, although she would have been a part of both of these parishes during her lifetime, she chose St Thomas's at her death. Her will left 20s. to the chaplain William Scragge. This is likely the William Cragge who was chaplain to the St Nicholas Altar in the church of St Thomas in the early fifteenth century, around the same time that Isabel and David would have been parishioners there, and who was clearly still in Bristol in 1434 when Isabel wrote her will.¹¹³ This demonstrates that, although a member of multiple parishes in her lifetime, her interest remained with her first marriage and the community within the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr. Wodeford and Ruddok's wills show how personal the reasons behind bequests to multiple parishes could be, and why a gendered 'one-size-fits-all' explanation is inadequate. Widowhood and remarriage could be the reason behind bequests to multiple parishes, but a woman could also turn away from her relationship with one parish when writing her will.

However, lifecycle did not just affect women and their association with a second parish church in the writing of a will. James Cokkyng made his will in 1430 and was a parishioner of St Nicholas's parish church. He left tithe and fabric legacies to St Nicholas's and requested that the chaplain Thomas Holme pray for his soul in the church. However, he

¹¹¹ PROB 11/3/343.

¹¹² JOr/1/1, f. 155r-158r.

¹¹³ Taunton, The Somerset Heritage Centre, D/D/breg/4, f. 188v-189r.

requested burial ‘in ecclesia parochiali beate Marie de Redclif sub lapidem *ibidem* in qua nomen meum ac nomen Alicie uxoris mee sunt suprascript’ (in the parish church of the Blessed Mary of Redcliffe under the stone in the same place on which my name and the name of Alice my wife is above written).¹¹⁴ It was common for husbands and wives to have joint monuments in parish churches. The monument would be made at the death of the first spouse, and the second spouse would be interred with them when they subsequently died.¹¹⁵ The wording and details of his burial request imply that his wife was buried in St Mary Redcliffe’s church and Cokkyng probably had oversight of his wife’s burial.¹¹⁶ It is uncertain whether he chose to bury her in a different parish to the one he resided in, or whether he buried her in their current parish church, St Mary Redcliffe’s, but then moved parish after her death. If he had moved away then, like Alice Wodeford, James Cokkyng would probably have continued to be involved in the culture of memorialisation in St Mary Redcliffe’s during his widowhood to aid the salvation of Alice’s soul. If, despite Alice and he being parishioners of St Nicholas’s, he had decided to bury her in St Mary Redcliffe’s, it demonstrates that he forged a meaningful connection with a second parish church during his lifetime. His will shows that he had property in Redcliffe Street, Redcliffe Hill, Redcliffe Pit, and by the cemetery of St Mary Redcliffe, all of which lay in the parish of St Mary Redcliffe. He also held property elsewhere in the town. If he moved from Redcliffe to St Nicholas’s, this mobility meant that he had to leave his wife’s memorial in another parish, and that he then maintained a relationship with two parish churches during his life and in his death.

The lifecycle of some of the testators prompted movement around the town. James Cokkyng is a good example of this, but there are other cases that can be reconstructed in greater detail. Simon Canynges died in 1413 and was a parishioner of St Stephen’s church in central Bristol.¹¹⁷ His father, William Canynges the elder, and his brother, John Canynges, were both parishioners of St Thomas’s parish, and so it is reasonable to suggest that Simon Canynges also originated from this parish.¹¹⁸ He did not mention St Thomas’s or any other

¹¹⁴ JOr/1/1, ff. 158v-159r.

¹¹⁵ Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 99-100.

¹¹⁶ It is likely that James Cokkyng would have been Alice Cokkyng’s executor if she made a will. On the rare occasions that wives made wills, husbands often took on this role.

¹¹⁷ JOr/1/1, f. 120r.

¹¹⁸ *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills in the volume entitled the Great Orphan Book or Book of Wills in the Council House at Bristol*, ed. by T. P. Wadley (Bristol, 1886), pp. 48-49; JOr/1/1, ff. 88v-100r

parish church in his will, but the extracts of the Church Book of St Nicholas's church show that he was the churchwarden there in 1389.¹¹⁹ His mobility around the town had meant that he was part of at least three parishes during his life time, but that he chose not to mention them all in his will. Mobility around the town and people leaving parishes was clearly a problem in Bristol. In 1409, the church of St Nicholas created a rule so that a person would lose their pew rights if they left the parish. This implies that people were moving from the parish but continuing to use their pew, or at least wanted it to continue to be reserved for them.¹²⁰ These examples show that mobility around the town was common, and so it is reasonable that mobility effected engagements with multiple parishes in the will.

Although Simon Canynges clearly moved around the town in his life, it is not reflected in his will. However, the movement of Thomas Mede during his lifetime is. He was a parishioner of St James's Priory at the time of his death in 1455, as he left legacies for tithes forgotten and prayers for his soul to the prior, as well as money to named chaplains, to the parish clerk, and to the fabric of the parochial-monastic church. He also funded a chaplain to celebrate in St James's, in addition to the chaplain he funded to celebrate in St Mary Redcliffe's where he is buried. His burial in St Mary Redcliffe's demonstrates some association with this church, to be discussed in the next chapter. He left legacies for tithes and fabric to St Mary Redcliffe's, as well as to the chantry and for the vicar of St Mary Redcliffe's to pray for his soul. His legacy for the silver cross to St Ewen, and a further legacy to the fabric of St Luke's of Brislington (south of Bristol) add further weight to the notion that his will reflects his associations with parishes throughout his lifetime, and that he belonged to each of these communities during periods of his life.

Moving on often meant that you left the graves of your kin behind, and this appears to have been a motivation for engaging with a second parish church in the will. Testators of both genders request burial next to children's graves in another parish church or churchyard. Elena, late wife of John Candevere of Bristol, of St Leonard's parish, requested burial in the

¹¹⁹ E. G. Cuthbert, & F. Atchley, 'On the Medieval Parish Records of the Church of St. Nicholas, Bristol', *St Paul's Ecclesiological Society Transactions*, VI (1906), p. 38.

¹²⁰ Cuthbert and Atchley, 'On the Medieval Parish Records of the Church of St. Nicholas', p. 45.

church of Holy Trinity Bradford next to her son's grave in 1406.¹²¹ This suggests that she moved to Bristol: either with John Candevere or to marry him as a second husband. Either way, it demonstrates that movement impacted the geography of her piety and that she maintained a relationship with the parish church in Bradford through her son's grave there. Likewise, Richard Forster of Holy Cross of Temple requested to be buried near his children's grave in St Mary Redcliffe's cemetery in 1450, and Agnes Loftys of St Thomas the Martyr among her children, who were also in the grave yard at St Mary Redcliffe, in 1498.¹²² Again, this might show that children had been buried in a parish that the parent had then moved away from. However, requests for burial in a second parish, specifically in St Mary Redcliffe's churchyard, may also have had a practical function. St Mary Redcliffe's had the largest burial ground in the southern suburb (probably because it was nearest the periphery of the town and had the most space to expand into).¹²³ For Forester and Loftys, of the two neighbouring parishes, their children may have been buried in St Mary Redcliffe's churchyard as a pragmatic decision dictated by available space. Their burial in the churchyard detached them from the commemorative activities that happened around monuments in church buildings and so the children's burials did not necessarily mean that they were engaging in the commemorative culture of the parish. It is perhaps the case, then, that some of these relationships are the result of pragmatic demands on testators and the available burial space in Bristol, while others, especially those where a testator has clearly moved to Bristol and left children buried elsewhere, demonstrate a continued relationship with a second parish church.

As well as leaving deceased children behind in previous parishes, mobility also often meant that a testator would leave their parents too. John Wroth requested burial in St Nicholas's crypt next to his mother in 1410. His will reads:

...corpusque meum ad sepeliendum in cripa ecclesie ecclesie [sic] *parochia sanctis Nicholai Bristollia iuxta sepultura matris mee* Item lego Rectori ecclesie *parochialis sancta Johannis Bristollia per decimis et oblacionibus meis retracts et oblitis et ad orandis pro anima mea* vj.s. viij. d Item lego vicario ecclesie *parochialis sancti*

¹²¹ PROB 11/2A/224. This is likely to be the church of the Holy Trinity in Bradford upon Avon, Wiltshire, rather than Bradford in West Yorkshire.

¹²² *The Great Red Book (Part II)*, pp. 212-213; PROB 11/11/436

¹²³ See map at Appendix 1.

Nicholai Bristollia pro decimis meis et oblacionibus retractis et oblitis et ad orandis pro anima mea vj.s. viij. d Item lego fabrice euisdem ecclesie xl. d. Item lego fabrice ecclesie sanctis Johannis predicti xl. d.

(... and [I give] my body to be buried in the crypt of the parish church of St Nicholas of Bristol, next to my mother's grave. I give to the rector of the parish church of St. John of Bristol, for my tithes and offerings withdrawn and forgotten, and to pray for my soul, 6s. 8d. I leave the vicar of the parish church of St Nicholas Bristol for my tithes and offerings withdrawn and forgotten and to pray for my soul, 6s. 8d. I leave to the fabric of the same church 40d. I leave to the fabric of the church of St John aforesaid 40d.)¹²⁴

He demonstrates a strong belonging to both parish churches. It seems likely that he was a parishioner of St John the Baptist's at the time of making his will because he privileged it by making the first legacy to it after the burial clause. If this was the case, the secondary parish church was St Nicholas's and his relationship with this church was based on his mother's grave being there. The legacies for tithes and fabric suggest that he had a continuing relationship with the church of St Nicholas after his mother's death. Perhaps his relationship with this parish was because of his mother's physical and bodily presence in the church through the materiality of her grave. It may also be that his mother's parish church was the church he grew up in and so, like others, he was reflecting on previous associations in his will.

The motivation behind Wroth's burial request was relatively common. Children regularly maintained a relationship with a second parish church which housed their parent's tomb. Burgess has identified instances of this in All Saints' Bristol.¹²⁵ Joan Twynyhoo made a will while her husband was still alive in 1489.¹²⁶ At this point, she lived in Frome, Wiltshire, and requested burial in the chapel of St Nicholas within the parish church of St John the Baptist in Frome. She demonstrated no connection to Bristol, where she was born, apart from through one bequest: 6s. 8d. to the reparations of St John the Baptist's in Bristol in which her mother and father were buried. She was the daughter of the Rowleys who were buried in the

¹²⁴ PROB 11/2A/351.

¹²⁵ Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 1*, pp. 11-12; Burgess, 'The Right Ordering of Souls', p. 112.

¹²⁶ *Somerset Medieval Wills (1383-1500)*, ed. by F. W. Weaver (London, 1901), pp. 284-285.

crypt of the church a few years previously.¹²⁷ Having grown up in Bristol with her parents, she had probably been a member of St John the Baptist's. Her bequest to the fabric of the church suggests that she continued to feel an obligation to provide for the church's fabric even after her marriage and move to Frome. Her reflection of her family's monuments and membership of the church is fascinating motivation for her engagement with the parish in a way that suggests belonging. However, as the case of William Canynges the Younger demonstrates, the burial of parents in a parish was not always a reason to maintain a connection with the parish church in the last will and testament.¹²⁸

2.4.2: Social climbing

Attempts at social climbing were sometimes reflected in the will, particularly in the wills of men. Thomas Mede, from the parish of St James, requested burial in the new works of the parish church of St Mary Redcliffe in 1455.¹²⁹ Here, he managed to establish a permanent memorial in the north-eastern corner of the church in the chapel of St Stephen which became a place of burial for his descendants. His son, Philip Mede, was also buried there in 1471 and his grandson, Richard Mede, in 1491.¹³⁰ Thomas Mede was born in Somerset, as reflected in his mention of St Luke's, Brislington, in his will. This demonstrates his move from Somerset into the town of Bristol, as although he was a parishioner of St James's Priory at his death, Mede chose burial in St Mary Redcliffe's. Linda Monckton has argued that the idea that William Canynges (the elder) was largely responsible for the rebuilding of St Mary Redcliffe's is largely mythical. Instead, she argues that St Mary Redcliffe's was 'the product of a huge mercantile patronage' and 'collective enterprise'.¹³¹ Perhaps it was the status that was associated with St Mary Redcliffe's that made the church an attractive burial place for Thomas Mede and encouraged him and his descendants to invest in St Stephen's chapel within the church as a place for their burial. In death, they were able to project a perception of

¹²⁷ D3439/1/439.

¹²⁸ The Canynges family was from St Thomas the Martyr. William Canynges the younger moved to St Mary Redcliffe and there is no reference to St Thomas's in his will.

¹²⁹ PROB 11/4/41 '...corpusque meum sepeliendum in ecclesia parochia Beate Marie Redclyff Bristoll Bathon et Wellen diocesis viderit in boriali parte nova operis *ibidem*'.

¹³⁰ PROB 11/6/321; D3439/1/334.

¹³¹ L. Monckton, 'The Myth of William Canynges and the Late Medieval Rebuilding of St Mary Redcliffe', in Keen, *Almost the Richest City*, p. 57, 66.

themselves as a dynastic family and a permanent part of Bristol's pious fabric going into the future. They used their burial space to socially climb.

Some men requested burial alongside other men to whom they do not have any apparent family tie. For example, Richard Roper requested to be buried alongside John Talbot at St Mary Redcliffe's in 1443.¹³² Richard Hatter requested to be buried by the Hallewey chantry in the church of All Saints, despite being from the parish of St Leonard.¹³³ The Hallewey chantry was an important part of the life of All Saints' parish, as Burgess has aptly demonstrated, and the Halleweys were important people in the life of the town.¹³⁴ Hatter invested greatly in the chantry and so was clearly active in All Saints' during this time. Indeed, although Hatter and his wife were of St Leonard's parish, Burgess has argued that they should be considered as important in the life of All Saints' parish and has included them in his analysis.¹³⁵ Hatter's burial next to the chantry reflected his engagement with it and his contribution to it in his life, and the making of a burial place nearby it allowed Hatter to associate himself with the Hallewey name which may have provided him with social capital.¹³⁶ Burial next to unrelated men, then, had a social benefit for an individual's posthumous reputation in the town.

There was perhaps an element of status in burial in some of the churches in Bristol. William Canynges the younger gave instructions for the construction of two tombs: one in the northern transept of St Mary Redcliffe's that affirmed his role as an important mayor and merchant of Bristol, and another in the college in Westbury-on-Trym which depicted him as the pious dean of the college.¹³⁷ The two tombs were a conscious decision to display a rounded view of his roles during his life, and the burial of members of his household (such as

¹³² V/A/11, f. 118v. Talbot was bailiff of the town in 1429 and Roper was bailiff in 1435. They may have known each other through common office holding. Thomlinson, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* (London, 1872), p. 38-39.

¹³³ Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 3*, pp. 18-19.

¹³⁴ Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls'*, ch 7.

¹³⁵ Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls'*, p. 88.

¹³⁶ Hatter put £66 into the funds of the chantry. Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol: Part 3*, pp. 85, 88.

¹³⁷ Westbury-On-Trym was roughly 4 miles north of Bristol. It had a college and a parish church. *Westbury-on-Trym: Monastery, Minster, and College*, eds. by N. Orme & J. Cannon (Bristol, 2010). The latter tomb has subsequently been moved to St Mary Redcliffe's so that, today, both tombs rest in the northern transept of St Mary Redcliffe's.

his cook) in the same transept of St Mary Redcliffe's demonstrates his domination and ownership of this part of the church.¹³⁸ Unlike the Medes, whose family monuments in St Stephen's chapel in St Mary Redcliffe's accumulated over generations, William Canynges the Younger's move away from his family's parish of St Thomas the Martyr allowed his monument to stand alone.¹³⁹ It is possible that those who were buried in a second parish church were using their burial to project their status, or the status they wished to have. Canynges's burial in two institutions shows his power and roles in each institution.

2.4.3: Property

The sample of wills that survives for late medieval Bristol comes from the wealthier inhabitants of the town. This demographic were also often property owners and so another possible explanation for relationships with multiple parish churches could be the ownership of property in multiple parishes. Whilst tithes were paid to the parish church where an individual received communion, the cost of maintaining the church's fabric was theoretically placed on the shoulders of property owners in the parish.¹⁴⁰ A very clear example of this is the case of John Goldesborough of St James's parish who died in 1496 and requested burial in the church of the Friars Minor. He had a garden in the parish of SS Philip and Jacob which he left to his wife, Anastasia, and specified that she had to continue to pay the churchwardens of SS Philip and Jacob 4d. for the garden.¹⁴¹ Churchwardens clearly took an interest in property owners from outside of their parish. The Church Book of St Nicholas's parish, now no longer in existence, contained copies of wills of testators from other parishes. William Younger's 1417 will was copied into the Church Book over three folios. He was probably from the parish of Holy Cross of Temple, as he was buried in the cemetery there and founded a

¹³⁸ Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, p. 123.

¹³⁹ This idea is also put forward in Monckton, 'The myth of William Canynges'.

¹⁴⁰ Drew, *Early Parochial Organisation in England*, pp. 17-18. This included non-resident property owners. However, this was only in theory and in reality fabric costs were often not levied from them.

¹⁴¹ 'Item do et lego Anastasie uxor mee totum illud gardinium cum *pertinentiam* situatem et iacentem in parochial sanctorum Philippi et Jacobi in suburbia ville Bristollie... Et eciam *prefata* Anastasia durante cita sua solute *procuratoribus* ecclesie *parochia* sanctorum Philippi et Jacobi pro *gardino predicto annuum* quatuor denarius.' (Also I give and leave to Anastasia my wife all those gardens with their appurtenances situated and lying in the parish of SS Philip and Jacob in the suburb of the town of Bristol... And also the same Anastasia during the term of her life to released 4d. a year to the churchwardens of the parish church of SS Philip and Jacob for the garden). PROB 11/11/73.

chantry in that church for ten years. However, he left some property to the parish of St Nicholas's that clearly concerned and interested the churchwardens.¹⁴²

Of the thirty-seven testators who left a legacy to the fabric of a second parish church, eighteen wills contain details of property ownership. Twelve of these wills show property in the same parish as the second parish church. Nicholas Waleys of St Augustine's parish left 10s. to the parish church of St Michael in 1403. He also owned shops on Horsstrete in St Michael's parish.¹⁴³ Thomas Benet of St Mary Redcliffe's left 40d. to the parish church of St John the Baptist and owned a tenement on Gropelane in the same parish in 1405.¹⁴⁴ However, six of these also detail property in other parishes to which they do not leave fabric legacies. William Yong of Holy Cross of Temple left 10s. to the fabric of St Mary Redcliffe's and the reversions of property to the churchwardens, responsible for the fabric, of St Nicholas in 1417. However, he also held property in Marsh Street in St James's parish, Worship Street that ran between St Mary's le Port and St Peter's, St Michael's Hill in St Michael's parish, and in Brislington, outside of Bristol in north Somerset. He did not leave any fabric legacies to these parishes.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, Lewis Mors of St Mary Redcliffe's left a quarter of woad to the fabric of St Leonard's in 1464. He held property in Corn Street, presumably in the part of this street that lay within St Leonard's parish. However, he did not leave any legacy to the parish church of St Stephen despite owning property on The Quay that lay within this parish.¹⁴⁶

Some testator's wills show no connection between the second parish church and the property that they held. John Cheppyston of St James's parish only mentioned property in Lewins Mede, a street in the parish of St James, which was his dwelling house. He did not mention property in the parish of St Mary Redcliffe to which he left 2s. towards the fabric of the church.¹⁴⁷ Similarly, William Bird of St Nicholas's parish only appears to have had property

¹⁴² No other copy of Younger's will survives and, as the information that this thesis has about it is a summary by Cuthbert and Atchley, it has not been included in the corpus of wills under study here. However, it is a clear example of how wills from other parishes were important to churchwardens on the basis of property. There are other examples of wills from other parishes in this Church Book too. Cuthbert and Atchley, 'On the Medieval Parish Records of the Church of St. Nicholas', pp. 37-8, 40.

¹⁴³ JOr/1/1, f. 83. 'Horsstrete' is now Colston Street and Host Street.

¹⁴⁴ JOr/1/1, f. 96r.

¹⁴⁵ *The Great Red Book (Part II)*, pp. 209-210.

¹⁴⁶ *The Great Red Book (Part III)*, pp. 111-113.

¹⁴⁷ JOr/1/1, f. 81v.

on St Nicholas Back next to the river Avon, despite also leaving a silver basin with one ewer to the parish church of St Lawrence.¹⁴⁸ However, the possibility remains that they may have held property for which arrangements had already been made. This would have meant that there was no need for this to be mentioned in the will.

Although not an obligation based on property, some other testators also left legacies for tithes forgotten to second parish churches in parishes where they seemingly had no property. A legacy for tithes forgotten suggests that the testator had previously been an inhabitant of that parish, and may have retained ownership of property in that parish before moving on. John Sutton asked to be buried in the Carmelite church in 1415. It is unclear which parish he was from as he left 6s. 8d. to the prior of St James's and 6s. 8d. to the rector of St Stephen's for tithes forgotten.¹⁴⁹ This might imply that he had once received the sacraments in both parishes.¹⁵⁰ His will mentions property in several parishes across Bristol: Holy Cross of Temple, St Nicholas's, St James's, and St Werburgh's. He did not leave any legacies to the fabric of parish churches in any of the parishes in which he had property, suggesting that he did not have to, and, according to his will, did not have any property in the parish of St Stephen to which he left a tithe legacy. There might be several explanations for this. While thirteenth-century statutes outlined that landowners of the parish had to pay for the upkeep of the parish church's fabric, this may have been ignored as the urban landscape of Bristol developed from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. With burgesses owning property across the town, this may have been too costly and impractical. The stipulations of the thirteenth-century Synod of Exeter had not stretched into the fifteenth, or testators may not have felt that this was an obligation that needed to be included in the will; the statutes only specified that parishioners should give to the church fabric during their lifetimes.¹⁵¹ While in

¹⁴⁸ *The Great Red Book (Part III)*, pp. 152-154.

¹⁴⁹ JOr/1/1 ff. 126r-127v.

¹⁵⁰ Little, 'Personal Tithes', p. 68.

¹⁵¹ Chapter 9 of the Synod of Exeter, 1287, clearly stated that the burden of the construction and restoration of the chancel should be placed on the rector of the church, while the burden of the nave's upkeep should be placed on the parishioners of the church. 'Ad haec, onus hujusmodi constructionis et reparationis cancelli matricis ecclesiae ad ipsius ecclesiae rectorem; navis vero ecclesiae ad parochianos volumus et praecepimus pertinere, consuetudine contraria non obstante.' *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae, a Synodo Verolamiensi, A.D. CCCXLVI. Londinensem A.D. M DCCXVII. Accedunt Constitutiones et alia ad historiam Ecclesiae Anglicanae spectantia*, vol. 2, ed. by D. Wilkins (London, 1737), p. 138.

some cases the testator's possession of property in a second parish might go some way to explain a bequest that suggests belonging to a second parish church in life, there seems to be little link between property and engagement with a second parish church in the will.

2.4.4: Charity

Six testators left bequests to all the parish churches in Bristol or to the poorest parish churches in Bristol specifically.¹⁵² Charity is an important dimension in wills. Provision for the poor was part of preparing for death as it gained the donor the highly valued prayers of the poor that would help their soul through purgatory.¹⁵³ These bequests were not included in the networks graphs because they are not indicative of pre-existing relationships. Instead, they show a different relationship with the town, and demonstrate a tradition of giving motivated by a wish to obtain prayers for the testator's soul.

Robert Lygh is a clear example of a testator who gave to poor churches as an act of charity to elicit prayers. In 1401, he left a silver bowl to make a chalice for the poorest parish church in return for a celebration for his soul and that of Maud Lygh, presumably his wife.¹⁵⁴ The clause specified the poorest churches in the country, but it is likely that his executors would have looked at the poorer churches in the town and its surrounding areas. Johanna Geffreys also did this when she left the torches from her funeral to be distributed to all the parish churches in Bristol in 1494.¹⁵⁵ This donation to the parish churches of Bristol does not demonstrate that she had a relationship with each of them. Instead, it served a mortuary function and was intended to attract prayers and commemoration in each parish and from all of their parishioners.

¹⁵² For example, Thomas Blount left silver vessels and jewels to be made into chalices for poor churches after his wife's death in 1441, Robert Hyndes left 3s. 4d. to 'the rest of the parish churches in Bristol in the Dioceses of Worcester', while Johanna Geffrey's left funeral torches for the poor churches in Bristol in 1494 but did not specify which churches these were. JOr/1/1, ff. 171v-172r; PROB 11/6/358; PROB 11/10/236 .

¹⁵³ Burgess, "An Afterlife in Memory", p. 203.

¹⁵⁴ 'Item lego pauperissime ecclesie istius patre una crateram argenti ad componend unum calicem per uisum executor meorum ad celebrand pro anima mea et pro anima Matildie Lygh.' (Also I leave to the poorest church of this country one silver bowl to make a cup to be considered by my executors to celebrate for my soul and the soul of Maud Lygh). JOr/1/1, f. 78r.

¹⁵⁵ PROB 11/10/236.

Some of the testators also left legacies to every parish church in Bristol to pray for them, showing a desire to be prayed for across the town. This reflected something of their status and the perceptions of themselves as deserving of commemoration by the whole town. John Shipward the elder requested twenty-four torches to be burnt around his body on the days of his obits and month's mind. He left two of these torches to his home parish of St Stephen's for a daily requiem for the first month after this death until his month's mind. The torches were to be held by two poor men in return for a daily penny and meat and drink from his executor. He left the remaining torches to the rest of the parishes in Bristol at the discretion of his executors.¹⁵⁶ Here, it was not the recipient that was important but the act of charity and the participation of all of the town in his commemoration. John Barstaple, who died in 1411, also requests the use of chaplains from all of Bristol's parishes to serve a mortuary function.¹⁵⁷ Bequests that attracted the attention of all of the town parishes demonstrate the importance of the town in the commemoration of the individual. But the act of civic piety by the testator also benefitted the whole town through their donation of material objects, such as torches, to each of the parish churches.¹⁵⁸ However, this does not mean that the testator had any former relationship with these parish churches in life.

Only one testator bucks this trend of charitable and civic testamentary giving, and that is Alice Chestre of All Saints'. She made her will in 1485 and, among other things, left two torches to the crypt of St Nicholas', two torches to the church of St Michael, one torch to the crypt of St John the Baptist's, and one torch to the parish church of SS Philip and Jacob.¹⁵⁹ The leaving of torches to poorer parishes by widows is a documented practice in London, so the presence of such a practice, although less common in Bristol, is unsurprising.¹⁶⁰ Her bequests to the crypts of SS John's and Nicholas's were probably directed at the fraternities that met there. The bequests to the other two parish churches suggest more of a genuine connection, hence she singled them out from the rest of the parishes in Bristol. Burgess has regarded these bequests as acts of charity to poorer parish churches within the town. He highlights how Alice Chestre appears in the church book of St Ewen's between 1472 and 1473 as a donor

¹⁵⁶ JOr/1/1, ff.206r-209r.

¹⁵⁷ D3439/1/452; JOr/1/1, f. 144r-v.

¹⁵⁸ Burgess, "An Afterlife in Memory", p. 198.

¹⁵⁹ Burgess, *The Pre-Reformation Records of the All Saints' Church Bristol: Part 3*, pp. 22-23

¹⁶⁰ Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, p. 130, footnote 35.

to the church. However, he argues that this does not mean that she had a pious relationship with the church, only that she acted out of charity to her neighbouring parish.¹⁶¹ Yet, if the relationship with the parish church was one of charity, it nonetheless demonstrates an important engagement with more than one church during the lifetime of Alice Chestre. Her pious giving extended beyond the boundaries of her home parish of All Saints': charitable giving to several parish churches appears to have been an important, and perhaps central, feature of her piety and her perception of her own responsibilities as a rich Christian woman and, particularly, as a vowess in her widowhood.¹⁶² Even if she did not participate in the sacraments in these other churches, she still knew their status well enough to know that they might require patronage. The bequests in her will are a result of her singling out individual institutions based on her knowledge of their needs. It is on this reasoning that Chestre's charitable bequests to multiple parish churches were included in the network analysis above.

Bequests to all parish churches, whether as acts of charity or as an expression of civic piety, suggest that the testator looked beyond the parish to the town more broadly, and that they belonged to the religious life of the town more generally, as well as to a parochial community. However, with the exception of Alice Chestre, it does not mean that they engaged with all of the parish churches on an individual basis during their lifetimes.

2.4.5: Sub-parochial groupings

Occasionally, an association with a second parish church can be explained through a testator's activity within that parish church: specifically, through a testator's membership of a guild that met within the church building.¹⁶³ John Richard's will is a good example of this. He was from the parish of Holy Trinity when he made his will in 1411.¹⁶⁴ He left 20s. to the fabric of the

¹⁶¹ C. Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service': Chantries in the Parish in late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36/1 (1985), p. 64.

¹⁶² Burgess, 'The Right Ordering of Souls', pp. 130-134. This attitude of praying for a collective is evidenced elsewhere too. For example, Sarah Rees Jones and Felicity Riddy have argued that, in the Bolton Hours from York, prayers were intended to benefit the 'nation, town, or neighbourhood'. Piety, in cases like the Bolton Hours or like Alice Chestre, was aimed at benefiting a collective. S. Rees Jones & F. Riddy, 'The Bolton Hours of York: Female domestic piety and the Public Space', in *Household, Women, and Christainities in late antiquity and the Middle Ages*, eds. by A. B. Mulder-Bakker & J. Wogan-Browne (Turnhot, 2005), p. 227.

¹⁶³ Brown has found that in larger towns, craft guilds extended beyond the parish and created multiple loyalties that cut across the boundaries of the parish. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 146, 153.

¹⁶⁴ JOr/1/1 ff. 116.

neighbouring church of St Ewen. He then left 6s. 8d. to the Fraternity of St John the Baptist that was housed within the church of St Ewen. There is little evidence that survives from Bristol's guilds, and certainly no lists of members, so we cannot verify his membership. But his will suggests that he may have been part of it during his lifetime. The fraternity of St John the Baptist was a guild that met in a chapel of St John the Baptist within the church of St Ewen and can be regarded as sub-parochial.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, it seems that through his relationship with the guild, John Richard left a fabric legacy that suggested that he belonged to the parish church during his lifetime. It may be reflective of his devotional practices in two parish churches simultaneously: Holy Trinity where he was a parishioner and received the sacraments, and St Ewen's where he engaged in the fraternity of St John the Baptist. Guilds and fraternities have been viewed as part of the parish in which they sat, and so Richard's engagement with the guild meant that he was part of the life of the parish more broadly and this is reflected in his legacy to the church's fabric in his will.

2.5: Dynamics between the parishes in Bristol

Throughout the discussion in this chapter, St Mary Redcliffe's has emerged as a prominent church in Bristol's pious landscape and this is quantifiable through network analysis. Figure 8 shows the in-degree centrality of the parish churches within the social network analysis through the size of the node. The in-degree measure of centrality assesses the number of connections that are directed towards a node. In this case, it is representative of the number of bequests being sent to a parish church. A high in-degree centrality is indicative of a larger number of testators leaving bequests to a specific parish church. What is clear from Figure 8 is that St Mary Redcliffe's had the largest number of bequests made to it in the fifteenth century. This indicates its popularity, and shows that many felt they had a meaningful connection with it as reflected in their wills, even though they were not parishioners there.

¹⁶⁵ G. Rosser, 'Communities of parish and guild in the late Middle Ages', in *Parish, Church and People: local studies in lay religion, 1350-1750*, ed. by S. J. Wright (London, 1988), pp. 29-55.

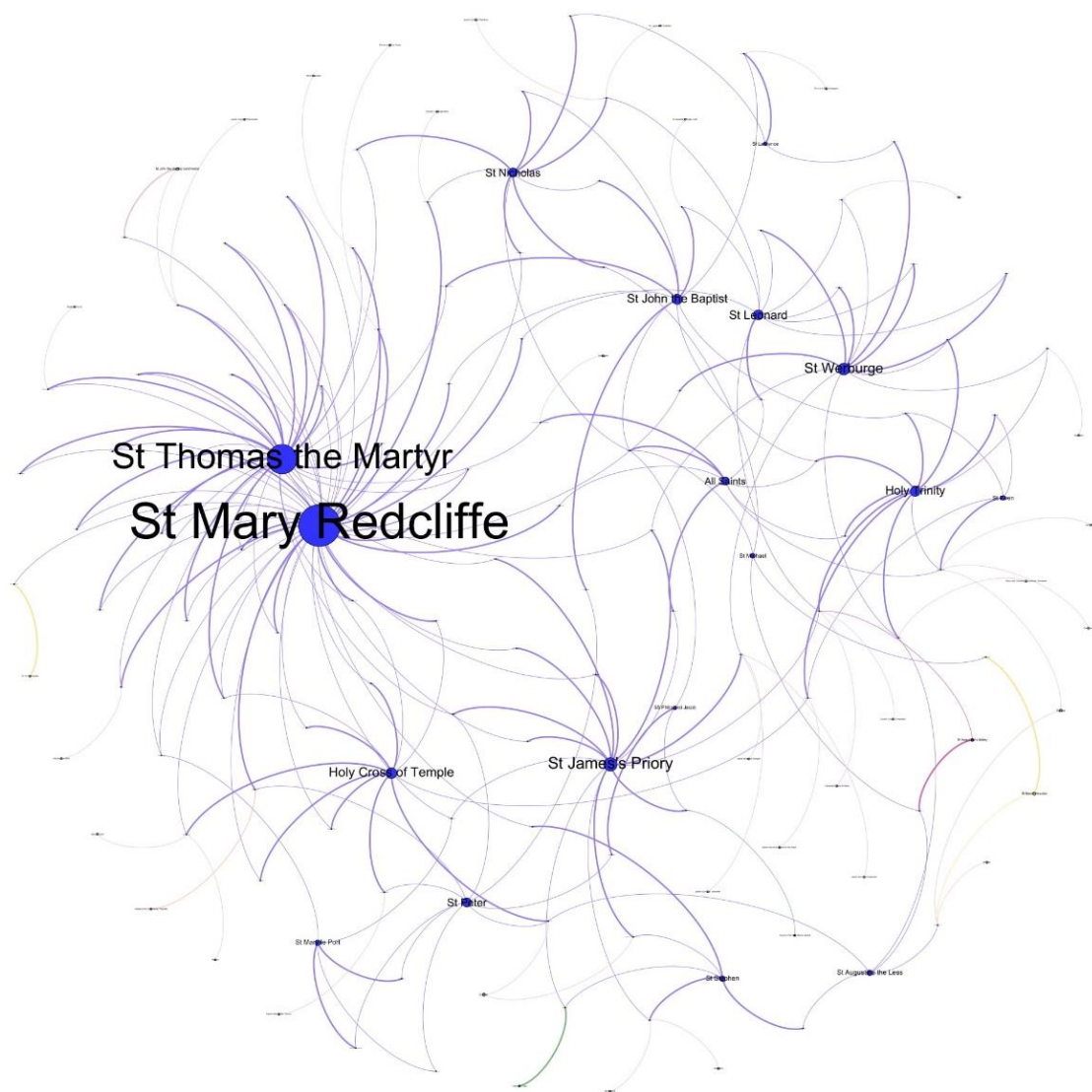


Figure 8: The in-degree centrality of parish churches in Bristol receiving bequests as a secondary parish church in the fifteenth century.

Redcliffe's was the largest parish church in Bristol.¹⁶⁷ Monckton argues that it was popular because of its reputation as a merchant church, which prompted William Canynges the younger to move to this parish and be buried there in 1474.¹⁶⁸ This prompted families such as the Medes, who had worked to increase their social standing in Bristol society, to come to the church. Indeed, with the absence of a cathedral in Bristol at the time, St Mary Redcliffe's appears to have taken on this role.¹⁶⁹

The chapel to the Blessed Mary was in the south porch of the church. Seafarers visited this chapel before departing the port.¹⁷⁰ This may have appealed also to the merchants who comprised a large portion of the town's ruling oligarchy.¹⁷¹ It is important to remember that the popularity of St Mary Redcliffe's is derived from a sample of wills that is representative of the wealthy elite of the town and so the phenomenon may be limited to this social and economic group. But it is likely that the church appealed differently to other social groups too. From Canynges and Mede's wills, we know that there were altars and chapels to SS Katherine, George and Stephen in the church, which were venerated by the burgesses of the town. However, there was also an altar to St Blaise who was a less usual saint. He was the patron saint of wool combers. The altar is only mentioned in the will of Robert Bonce who was a weaver and burgess of the town. His burial request read, '*...corpus que meum ad sepeliendum in ecclesia beate marie de Redeclyve coram altar sancta Blasij iuxta sepultura Johannis filij mei.*' (and my body to be buried in the church of the Blessed Mary of Redcliffe in the presence of the altar of St Blaise next to the cross of John my son).¹⁷² His vocation suggests a clear motivation for his choice of burial place. It implies that he and his son may have venerated St Blaise during his life time to aid him in his vocation. Indeed, his burial near the altar of St Blaise may have objectified his identity as a weaver and the cult of St Blaise may have aimed its appeal at the weavers as a socio-economic group. Different parts of the church

¹⁶⁷ William Worcester: *The Medieval Topography of Bristol*, ed. by F. Neale (Bristol, 2000).

¹⁶⁸ Monckton, 'The Myth of William Canynges', p. 65.

¹⁶⁹ In other urban centres in England such as Hereford, the cathedral had a monopoly on burial in the town. Forrest, 'The Politics of Burial', p. 1114.

¹⁷⁰ William Worcester, p. 277.

¹⁷¹ P. W. Fleming, 'Telling Tales of Oligarchy in the Late Medieval Town', in *The Fifteenth Century II: Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England*, ed. by M. Hicks (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 177-193.

¹⁷² JOr/1/1, f. 139.

of St Mary Redcliffe, then, appear to have catered to different social groups, addressing their devotional needs.

2.6: No parish churches

The examples discussed in this chapter, if taken to show normative behaviour and practice, skew the picture of late medieval pious life in Bristol among the burgesses of the town. They give the impression that they were zealous, pious men and women who cared deeply about the devotional practices within the parish churches of Bristol. While this is probably the case for the likes of Alice Chestre or Thomas Mede, some testators did not engage with any parochial community, or indeed any institution that would provide for their devotional needs, when they made their will. One such individual was Thomas Malverne who died in 1416.¹⁷³ There is no explicit mention of a parish church in his will, but he held property near St Bartholomew's Hospital, on Horsstrete, and on St Michael's Hill, and he appointed Sir John Boure, rector of St Michael's, as his overseer. All of this suggests that he was of St Michael's parish. He appears unconcerned about his burial, simply commending '*corpus meum terre*' (my body to the earth). This is not to suggest that he was irreligious or a proto-atheist, but that he did not consider his home parish church a priority when he came to write his will. Instead, he was interested in his property and ensuring that it was passed on to his heirs. This example casts a very different view to the arguments of Burgess, Emma Mason and Dorothy Owen about the centrality of the parish to the testator.

2.7: Conclusion

A proportionally significant group (35 per cent) of wills exhibited a relationship with more than one parish church in fifteenth-century Bristol. Through considering sociological frameworks, this chapter has established comparable clauses of the will (tithes, burial and fabric) that suggest that a testator belonged to a parochial community during their life and after their death. Broadly, the topography of Bristol created neighbourhoods, and it was within these neighbourhoods that testators' piety appears to have functioned. This was particularly the case in the southern suburb and central parishes of Bristol. The lack of evidence for the parish of St Michael, however, prevents a full and meaningful analysis for

¹⁷³ JOr/1/1, f. 130v.

the northern suburb. Despite this, it is very much evident that some churches, such as St Mary Redcliffe's, appear to have been popular with testators across the town. This may have been because of its size and prestige, and its reputation as a merchant church. Testators, particularly William Canynges and Thomas Mede, appear to have chosen St Mary Redcliffe's for burial because of the church's prestige. Mede's will demonstrates that he had climbed up the social ranks of Bristol, reflecting on where he had come from through his legacy to his first church in Brislington. His choice of burial place ensured his family's legacy in the church and dominance over the space of the church.

Beyond the broader influences of topography and neighbourhood, personal reasons for bequests to multiple parishes have been explored.¹⁷⁴ Often, the lifecycle of a testator was reflected in their will. It appears common for a testator to remember their previous churches and leave legacies to reconcile any unpaid oblations there as a measure to ensure that they had fulfilled their obligations and so were able to die well without outstanding debts. Mobility throughout a lifecycle often meant that a testator left deceased kin in previous parishes, and this appears to have been a clear motivation for engagement with multiple parish churches in the will. However, as the case of Isabel Ruddok demonstrates, a testator could ignore some of their parochial associations in life and focus on the parish that they most favoured as they prepared for death. This choice by the testator suggests that those who included additional parish churches in their wills did so because they were important to them, and so this should be treated seriously by historians. It also challenges the notion that the testator only chose to record their immediate pious associations on their deathbed and suggests that the term 'deathbed piety' could capture a wider view of the testator's devotional activities throughout their lifetimes and not just at the point of their death. Indeed, it suggests that the testator would use the will as autobiography in a less intentional and obvious way than Caroline Barron has found in the will of Thomas Salter.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ In Burgess's work, he has explored the ties of marriage and kinship, or to the Kalendars' Guild as reasons that some testators strayed from the parish. Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, pp. 83-84.

¹⁷⁵ C. Barron, 'The Will as Autobiography: The case of Thomas Salter, Priest, died November 1558', in *Medieval London: Collected Papers of Caroline M. Barron*, eds. by M. Carlin, & J. T. Rosenthal (Kalamazoo, 2017), pp. 213-264.

There has been discussion of the link between property ownership in a second parish and bequests to the parish church throughout this chapter. While this appears to have been the case in some places, there are other examples where there appears to be no property connection between the testator and the additional parish church, or where the testator had property in parishes that they did not mention in their will. I think this demonstrates the difference between theory and practice: while testators should have left a legacy for the fabric of a church in whose parish they owned property, they often did not. It also demonstrates the testator's prioritisation of some parish churches over others. In cases where a testator only left legacies to some of the parish churches in whose parishes they held property, there is a strong argument that this demonstrates a genuine connection with the church in life. It might be reflective of previous attendance in that parish over the course of their lifetime.

When testators left a bequest to all the parish churches in Bristol, this was often an act of charity or an expression of civic piety. Their gift to these churches is not indicative of their attendance at additional parish churches alongside their home parish church, or of any involvement with the devotional practice of the church, and this is a major caveat to the broader argument of this chapter. Instead, it was perhaps a bid to obtain the prayers of the poor for their soul's passage through purgatory. However, it also demonstrates a broader concern with the state of religious provision within the town of Bristol more widely.

Engagement with sub-parochial groups in an additional parish church is perhaps the only motivation that suggests attendance at religious services in two parishes simultaneously. The testator probably continued to receive the sacraments in their home parish church but attended other services in an additional parish church that housed the guild.

While motivations cannot exactly be pinned down and remained personal, individual, and qualitative, this chapter begins to demonstrate that individuals reached beyond their parish and participated in the 'communities' of other parishes through their engagement with tithes and gifts to fabric during life, as well as participation in the commemorative culture and church fabric in their deaths. This demonstrates that these individuals belonged to these parish churches to varying extents throughout their lifetimes, and continued to do so as they wrote their wills and were remembered after their deaths. This suggests that religious lives

were not contained by the boundaries of the parish, but were influenced more broadly by topography and neighbourhood, lifecycle and life events, kinship, property ownership, mobility and migration, and social aspirations. It also demonstrates that wills provide a unique insight into how the testator regarded themselves in relation to the parochial structures around them and how, in the urban setting of Bristol at least, the parish did not always confine their pious and devotional lives.

At the beginning of this chapter, I outlined instances where historians had identified testators leaving legacies to multiple parish churches in their wills.¹⁷⁶ These other cases demonstrate that this phenomenon was not unique to Bristol, but the reasons given for the leaving of legacies to multiple parishes were very specific: often they were the result of migration away from a home parish or of widowhood. This chapter has demonstrated that there were lots of reasons for leaving legacies to multiple parish churches in the close urban setting of late medieval Bristol. How this compares to other urban settings is difficult to gauge, as studies of this sort have not been undertaken for them. In Norwich, for example, Tanner shows that testators engaged with a range of institutions, but does not provide information about legacies to multiple parishes within the same city.¹⁷⁷ In York, Rees Jones and Riddy regard Micklegate as a holy neighbourhood, characterised by the religious culture and veneration of saints. The idea of neighbourhood is comparable to what has been found in Bristol, even if the focus of the investigation into neighbourhood in Bristol is based on institutions rather than cultural practices.¹⁷⁸ However, this study of largely mercantile testators provides a contrast to Jennifer Kermode's work on York where she finds merchants present a parish-centric piety in their wills.¹⁷⁹ The best comparison for the findings presented in this chapter is Colin Rose and Niall Atkinson's work on late medieval and early modern Florence. They found that lived experience transcended institutional boundaries of the parish in the city, as also appears to have been the case in Bristol.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People*, p. 4; French, *The People of the Parish*, p. 23; Colson, 'Local Community', p. 221.

¹⁷⁷ N. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich, 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984).

¹⁷⁸ Rees Jones & Riddy, 'The Bolton Hours of York', p. 243.

¹⁷⁹ Kermode, *Medieval Merchants*, pp. 126, 153.

¹⁸⁰ Rose, 'Thinking about using DECIMA'; Atkinson, 'Seeing Sound'.

3: Extra-parochial piety

3.1: Introduction

‘In primis lego animam meam Ihesus Xpisto deo meo qui me suo sanguine redemit’
(First I leave my soul to Jesus Christ my God who redeemed me through his blood).¹

So starts the will of Nicholas Appurley esquire who made his will in 1404. This opening preamble is notably different from most other preambles in Bristol wills in which testators left their souls to God, the Blessed Virgin and all the saints in heaven.² He requested burial in the church of the Austin friars of Bristol that was situated in Temple parish. He left 6s. 8d. to the parish church of St Mary Redcliffe and 6s. 8d. to ‘ecclesie mee parochia infra domum sancti Johannis predictis’ (my parish church within the house of St John aforesaid). However, St John the Baptist’s hospital was not a parish church. It sat within the southern suburb of the town and in the parish of Redcliffe and, as the name suggests, was a hospital: a religious house which would have provided hospitality to the poor, sick, travelling or aged.³ The church that Appurley referred to was the chapel attached to the hospital, which makes his referral to it as ‘my parish church’ noteworthy. It suggests that the church served the same function as the nearby parish church of St Mary Redcliffe for Appurley and that he felt that he belonged to the community within St John’s Hospital more than he belonged to the parochial community of St Mary Redcliffe.

The specifics of Appurley’s case are unique to his will, but nonetheless it is indicative of a broader pattern seen in the wider corpus of Bristol’s testamentary evidence, that testators looked beyond the parish to a multiplicity of pious institutions to serve their

¹ London, The National Archives, PROB 11/2A/136.

² Generally, preambles of wills have been regarded as formulaic, the product of scribal preference and unfitted to tell us about change of belief during the sixteenth-century Reformations: M. Spufford, ‘Religious Preambles and the Scribes of Villagers’ Wills in Cambridgeshire’, in *Till death do us part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, eds. by T. Arkell, N. Evans & N. Goose, (Oxford, 2000), pp. 144-157; M. L. Zell, ‘The Use of Religious Preambles as a Measure of Religious Belief in the Sixteenth Century’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, (1977), pp. 246-249. However, it is acknowledged that there are exceptions to this, and Nicholas Appurley is one such example.

³ N. Orme and M. Webster, *The English Hospital, 1070-1570* (New Haven & London, 1995), pp. 107-117. For the position of St John’s Hospital, see map in Appendix 2.

devotional and spiritual needs in both life and death, and that this was reflected in their last wills and testaments. This is largely the result of the urban environment where the intensity of religious provision enabled the laity to engage with a range of ecclesiastical institutions which provided them with choice in their devotional practice and religious expression. Indeed, Martha Skeeters suggests that the laity were exposed to many forms of religious expression in late medieval Bristol, such as parochial services and outdoor sermons by friars.⁴ Yet, Clive Burgess and Gervase Rosser have argued that this was complementary to parish life. This chapter argues that some of these institutions were more central to testators' piety than their parish churches, and that their engagement with hospitals, chapels and friaries took testators out of their home parishes for their devotion.⁵ This section asks the following questions: how did testators engage with different types of ecclesiastical institution in the urban context? How did their engagement with these extra-parochial institutions compare to their engagement with the parish church? Which institutions appear to have been most popular among the testators who largely represent the burgess class in Bristol?

3.2: The full network of testamentary bequests to pious institutions

Figure 10 shows the whole network of bequests to religious institutions between 1400 and 1500.⁶ The full network has 609 nodes and 1525 edges. One clear problem with this network graph is that its complexity renders it unreadable when presented in this format.⁷ Therefore, in-degree centralities are more helpful to consider here. An in-degree centrality is a measure of how many edges are directed at a node. In this case, the in-degree of a node that represents

⁴ M. C. Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation c. 1530-c. 1570* (Oxford, 2003), p. 11.

⁵ C. Burgess, 'Friars and the parish in Late Medieval Bristol: Observations and Possibilities', in *The Friars in Medieval Britain: Proceedings of the 2007 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by N. Rogers (Donnington, 2010), p. 79; G. Rosser, 'Voluntary Religion and Parochial Conformity', *Transaction of the Royal Historical Society*, 1 (1991), pp. 173-189.

⁶ The following colours have been used in this network to highlight specific types of institution. Parishes are blue (including cemeteries and side chapels), monastic houses are purple, hospitals are yellow, institutions outside of Bristol are grey, friaries are green, chapels are orange and fraternities are red.

⁷ This has been found to be a problem for other medieval historians using network analysis. See D. G. Shaw, 'Social Selves in Medieval England: The Worshipful Ferroure and Kempe', in *Writing Medieval History: Theory and Practice for the Post-Traditional Middle Ages*, ed. by N. Partner (London, 2005), pp. 10-11. The graph would have to be printed in A2 or larger to even begin to be readable to the reader. From here on in, I will be using zoomed in sections of the graph to illustrate specific points and in-degree centralities.

a pious institution tells us now many bequests were made to this institution and are set out in Appendix 2.

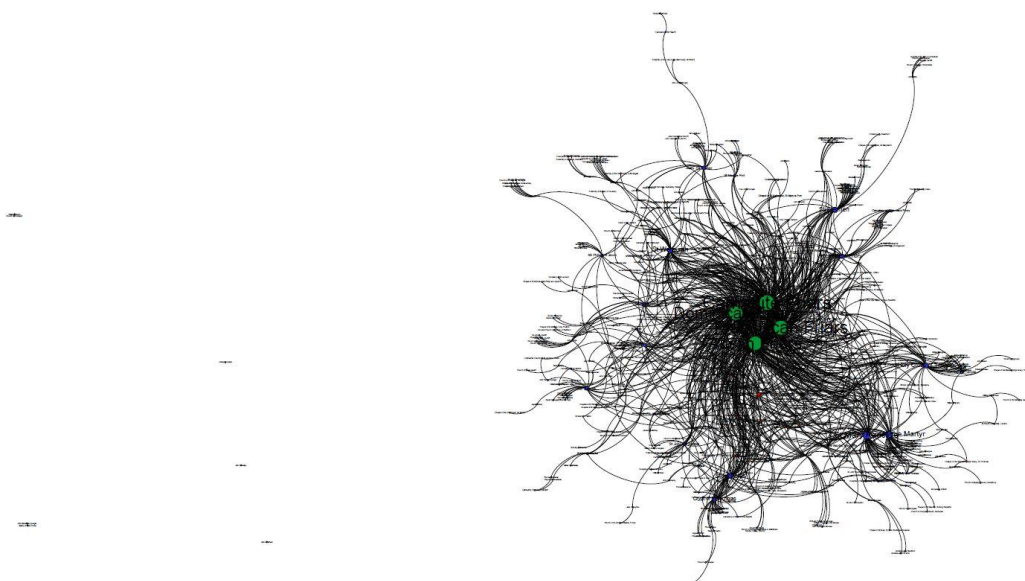


Figure 10: Full network of bequests to pious institutions, 1400-1500.

What is immediately apparent from the in-degree centralities is that the friaries have a high in-degree centrality, meaning that lots of testators left legacies to them. As Burgess has discussed, this is largely a result of their mortuary function and assistance in the funeral services within the parish, a fact which highlights that it is important not to take these in-degree centralities at face value.⁸ However, as will be discussed in this chapter, some bequests show a specific engagement with the friaries, but without weighting the connections in the network analysis and causing historical distortion, there is no way of differentiating.

To some extent, engagement with hospitals might be regarded as serving a purgatorial function. In some cases, a bequest to a hospital might be read as a donation to the poor to win their prayers (which had greater value in speeding the testator's soul through purgatory).⁹ Some hospitals only received bequests of this sort. For example, the hospital of St Bartholomew received ten bequests and, as this hospital housed the poor, it is likely that

⁸ Burgess, 'Friars and the parish', p. 76.

⁹ C. Burgess, 'An Afterlife in Memory': Commemoration and its Effects in a Late Medieval Parish', in *The Church, The Afterlife and the Fate of the Soul: Papers read at the 2007 Summer Meeting and the 2008 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, eds. by P. Clarke & T. Claydon (Woodbridge, 2009), p. 203.

these bequests served a purgatorial function. Low in-degree centralities show that some hospitals were not widely patronised by testators: the hospital of St Lawrence has an in-degree of four and the hospital of Holy Trinity at Lafford's gate has an in-degree of five. Both hospitals were on the eastern periphery of the town, outside of the town walls on the road to London. Their displacement from the centre of the town and the centre of power, around which most of the testators in this study lived, may account for their low in-degree centrality across the century and the lack of engagement by testators with them in their day-to-day lives.

However, not all hospitals were intended to house the poor. Some housed wealthy retirees and there is a greater engagement with this type of institution in the network analysis. The hospital of St John the Baptist in Redcliffe has an in-degree of thirteen. Although this low in-degree centrality might suggest it was not very popular among testators, those who left legacies to it appear to have been resident there or engaged with the devotional activities within the hospital. The hospital of St Mark has an in-degree of eight, yet the wills that engage with this institution demonstrate a strong connection to it and were largely from residents of the hospital. These types of hospital were rarely patronised solely for the benefit of the testator's soul in Purgatory but were more often left legacies that reflected a testator's relationship with the institution during their lifetimes. Interestingly, however, there are only bequests to the hospital of St Mark from 1450 onwards. This might show that the hospital only began to take on the role of 'parish' for its wealthy residents from this point, or it may simply be due to the survival of evidence.

Although the in-degree centralities for chapels are low, a qualitative analysis of the bequests demonstrates that, when a testator engaged with a chapel in their will, they did so in a way that suggests belonging to the institution. This is usually through burial in the cases of sub-parochial chapels, and burial and engagement with fraternities in standalone chapels. Indeed, the in-degrees for the fraternities of St John the Baptist and St Katherine, the town's two largest guilds, demonstrate that testators went beyond their parishes to pursue their piety.

This chapter will consider where chapels, friaries and hospitals sat in the pious lives of testators and will continue to problematize the view that the parish contained and fulfilled

the pious lives of the late medieval laity. It will instead argue that, in some cases, these places were as important as, and sometimes more important than, the parish in the minds of the late medieval testator, and in other cases, that these places held meaning for the testator's devotion alongside the parish in the urban context.

3.3: Chapels

Nicholas Orme and Sarah Thomas have discussed the different types of chapels in their work, with Orme identifying three types of chapel and Thomas identifying four.¹⁰ For the following analysis, a distinction is made between two types of chapels: parochial chapels, and extra-parochial or standalone chapels. *Parochial chapels* refer to chapels that resided within the parish church, whereas *extra-parochial chapels* stood alone from the parish church physically and appear to have had their own clergy and administration. One hundred and seven testators engaged with a chapel in their wills, which is 27 per cent of the source base. The saints venerated in Bristol's chapels are set out in Table 9. The chapels mentioned in parish churches are set out in Table 8 and the standalone chapels are set out in Table 10.

What is most apparent from Tables 8, 10, and 11 is that the chapels that housed fraternities or guilds were the most popular. St Katherine's Chapel in Holy Cross of Temple, which accommodated the weavers' guild, and the Chapel of St John the Baptist in St Ewen's church, which housed the Fraternity of St John the Baptist, were the most commonly mentioned chapels in this set of wills (Table 8). Similarly, the Chapel of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which sat over the Bristol Bridge, had a high number of bequests to it and it was likely that this was a result of the fraternity that met therein (Table 10). Indeed, when the specifics of bequests that were made to a chapel are considered, it is clear that those to fraternities were the most common: 73 per cent of the bequests to chapels were to the fraternities within them.

Although there were roughly equal levels of bequests to fraternities in both parochial and standalone chapels, when it came to burial, more people wished to be buried in parochial

¹⁰ N. Orme, 'The other parish churches: Chapels in late medieval England', in *The Parish Church in Late Medieval England*, eds. by C. Burgess & E. Duffy (Donnington, 2019), p. 83; S. E. Thomas, *The Parish and the Chapel in Medieval Britain and Norway* (Woodbridge, 2018), p. 5.

Number of testators	0	1	11	25	8	3	7	7	10	10	9	10	101
St James's Priory	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
St Mark's Hospital	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	4
St John the Baptist's Hospital	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
St Augustine the less	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
St Stephen	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
St Werburgh	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
All Saints	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Holy Trinity	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
St Ewen	1	0	1	10	5	1	2	1	4	2	1	1	28
St Nicholas	1	0	1	3	1	0	0	2	3	2	1	0	13
SS Philip and Jacob	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
St Peter	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	4	7
St Mary le Port	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Holy Cross of Temple	2	0	3	8	1	0	4	1	1	2	2	1	23
St Mary Redcliffe	4	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
St Thomas the Martyr	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Number of Chapels													
-1399													
1400-09													
1410-19													
1420-29													
1430-39													
1440-49													
1450-59													
1460-69													
1470-79													
1480-89													
1490-1500													
Totals													

Table 8: Numbers of testators giving to chapels within parish churches, 1400-1500.

	The Blessed Virgin Mary	St Katherine	St Stephen	St Nicholas	St John the Baptist	St Michael the Archangel	Transfiguration of Jesus	St Anne	Crypt	Chapel next to the chancel	Holy Cross	The Holy Ghost
St Thomas the Martyr	1											
St Mary Redcliffe	1		1	1								1
Holy Cross of Temple	1	1										
St Mary le Port		1										
St Peter	1											
SS Philip and Jacob				1								
St Nicholas									1			
St Ewen					1							
Holy Trinity						1				1		
All Saints	1										1	
St Werburgh	1							1				
St Stephen	1	1										
St Augustine the less	1											
St John the Baptist's Hospital	1											
St Mark's Hospital	1			1			1					
St James's Priory	1											

Table 9: Chapel dedications in Bristol parish churches mentioned in wills from 1400-1500.

chapels than standalone chapels. Burial requests in parochial chapels made up 41 per cent of the sample while only 16 per cent requested burial in standalone chapels. Of the sample, 44 per cent of testators also left general legacies to standalone chapels (which might have been for the chapel's fabric). Thomas Gloucester, who left 20s. to the fabric of the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the Bristol Bridge in 1407, is a clear example of this.¹¹ However, only 15 per cent of testators left legacies to the fabric of parochial chapels. John Cokkes left 20d. to the chapel of St John in the church of St Ewen in 1449. He was also left 3s. 4d. to the fraternity that met there.¹² This suggests that there was a sense of responsibility for the fabric

¹¹ Bristol, Bristol Archives, JOR/1/1, ff. 105v-106r.

¹² PROB 11/1/204.

of the chapels that housed fraternities and shows the testator's sense of belonging to the community of the fraternity.

	Chapel of St Jordan	Chapel of St John the Evangelist	Chapel of All Souls, Redcliffe	Chapel of the Assumption of the BVM on the Bridge	Chapel of Holy Trinity at Lafford's Gate	Chapel of St George, Guildhall	Chapel of St Anne, Bedminster	Chapel of St Anthony (Somerset)	Chapel of St George, CARM Bordeaux	Chapel of St Clements (St Bart's)	Chapel of St Clements in the marsh	Number of testators	Total Number of Testators
-1399	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	-
1400-09	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	78
1410-19	0	1	0	6	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	13	62
1420-29	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	34
1430-39	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	18
1440-49	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	24
1450-59	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	19
1460-69	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	25
1470-79	0	1	0	3	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	10	31
1480-89	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36
1490-1500	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	5	51
Totals	1	4	1	21	3	7	1	1	1	2	3		
Total Testators												45	393

Table 10: Numbers of testators leaving to chapels outside of parish churches, 1400-1500.

	Parochial Chapels				Extra-Parochial Chapels				Number of Testators	Total Number of Testators
	Chaplain	Burial request	Fraternity	to the chapel	Chaplain	Burial request	Fraternity	to the chapel		
-1399	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	-
1400-09	0	8	2	3	1	1	0	3	15	78
1410-19	0	4	20	1	0	4	9	1	24	62
1420-29	0	1	7	1	0	0	1	2	9	34
1430-39	0	3	2	0	0	0	1	1	5	18
1440-49	1	4	4	0	0	1	2	2	5	24
1450-59	0	3	4	0	0	0	1	0	6	19
1460-69	0	2	9	2	0	0	1	1	7	25
1470-79	1	4	7	3	0	2	2	6	13	31
1480-89	0	5	4	1	0	0	0	0	9	36
1490-1500	0	6	1	4	0	0	1	4	12	51
Totals	3	41	60	15	1	7	18	20		
Total Testators									107	393

Table 11: Types of bequests left to parochial and extra-parochial chapels, 1399-1500.

3.3.1: Guilds and Fraternities in chapels

The terms ‘guild’ and ‘fraternity’ are often used interchangeably to describe the same groups in late medieval society. Both describe an association of lay people who met in a certain space to venerate a specific saint and who engaged in devotional activities together.¹³ Guilds were sometimes comprised of a specific occupational group, such as the weavers who, in Bristol,

¹³ C. Barron, ‘The Parish Fraternities of Medieval London’, in *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society*, eds. by C. Barron & C. Harper-Bill (Exeter, 1985), p. 14. However, others would define guilds just by their economic function and their contribution to the market. For example, S. Ogilvie, *Institutions and European Trade: Merchant Guilds, 1000-1800* (Cambridge, 2011); S. Ogilvie, *The European Guilds: An Economic Analysis* (Oxford 2019).

were largely part of the guild of St Katherine in Temple parish, or the merchant tailors who were part of the St John the Baptist's fraternity in St Ewen's parish. But sometimes they were more occupationally or socially diverse. There is a distinction, then, between craft guilds and parish guilds.¹⁴ These guilds had ordinances, feasts and wardens and, although there is little surviving evidence from the Bristol guilds, are likely to have produced much documentation.¹⁵ Fraternities broadly describe collective acts of worship that were collectively organised and administered – even if there were no ordinances or fraternity feast. Bristol's testators appear to use the term 'fraternity' to describe both the devotional services that occurred at a specific altar or chapel and to describe the devotional dimension of an established guild. This

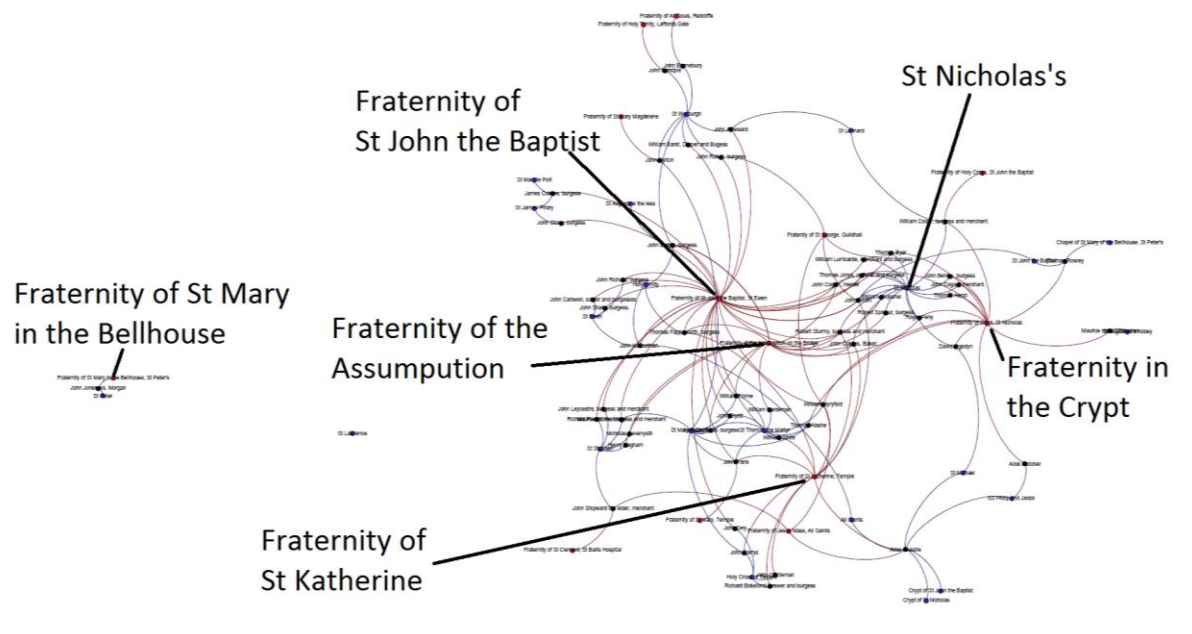


Figure 11: A network graph showing testators' bequests to fraternities in Bristol and the parishes that the testators came from, 1400-1500.

¹⁴ Brown has found that craft guilds transcended the boundaries of the parish whereas parish fraternities did not. A. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury 1250-1500* (Oxford, 1995), p. 155.

¹⁵ The only documentation from the Guilds of SS John the Baptist and Katherine come from *Some accounts of the ancient fraternity of merchant tailors of Bristol, with transcript of ordinances and other documents (1292-1831)*, ed. by F. Fox (Bristol, 1880); *Some Accounts of the Guild of Weavers in Bristol: chiefly from MSS.*, eds. by F. Fox & J. Taylor (Bristol, 1889). There are certainly no surviving membership lists.

is apparent in Figure 11 which shows testators' bequests to guilds in late medieval Bristol, and their connections to home parishes and connections to other parish churches through fabric legacies.

Figure 11 highlights how the fraternities drew their memberships from different bases in fifteenth-century Bristol. Craft guilds drew their members from all over the town. This was the case for the fraternities of St John the Baptist and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Figure 12). From the antiquarian transcriptions of the ordinances of St John the Baptist, members of the fraternity were required to come and hear the reading of the ordinances four times a year providing they were present in the town. This expectation, and caveat for being away from home, suggests that the membership was relatively local and comprised Bristol's residents.¹⁶ Other fraternities were clearly parish guilds because they functioned within a parochial context and drew their membership from the immediate parish. This was the case for the fraternity of St Mary of the Bell House in St Peter's church. John Jones alias Morgan left 3s. 4d. in 1499 to this fraternity. Unlike guilds with ordinances and membership lists, this fraternity was probably just a collectively supported religious service in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin in the bell tower of St Peter's church.¹⁷ He is the only person to mention this fraternity and may have been its founder.¹⁸ Another parish guild was the guild of the Holy Cross that met in the crypt of St Nicholas's, although some people from outside of the parish also left legacies to it (Figure 13). The fraternity of St Katherine in the parish of Temple drew membership from its immediate parish as well as the neighbourhood of the southern suburb (Figure 14). This was a craft fraternity with a strong parochial context. Some members came from the immediate parish, a place where weavers lived and worked, and some came from

¹⁶ Unlike other contemporary English guilds such as the Palmers' guild at Ludlow or the Coventry guilds.

¹⁷ PROB 11/11/681.

¹⁸ Or the fraternity may never have been popular. Barron, 'The Parish Fraternities of Medieval London', p. 21. Lots of fraternities did not meet the financial threshold to be included in the 1389 guild returns or the mid-sixteenth-century chantry returns. Instead, we can only find coincidental references to them in sources such as wills that reflect members giving a small amount of money to a light before an altar of a saint in the parish church.

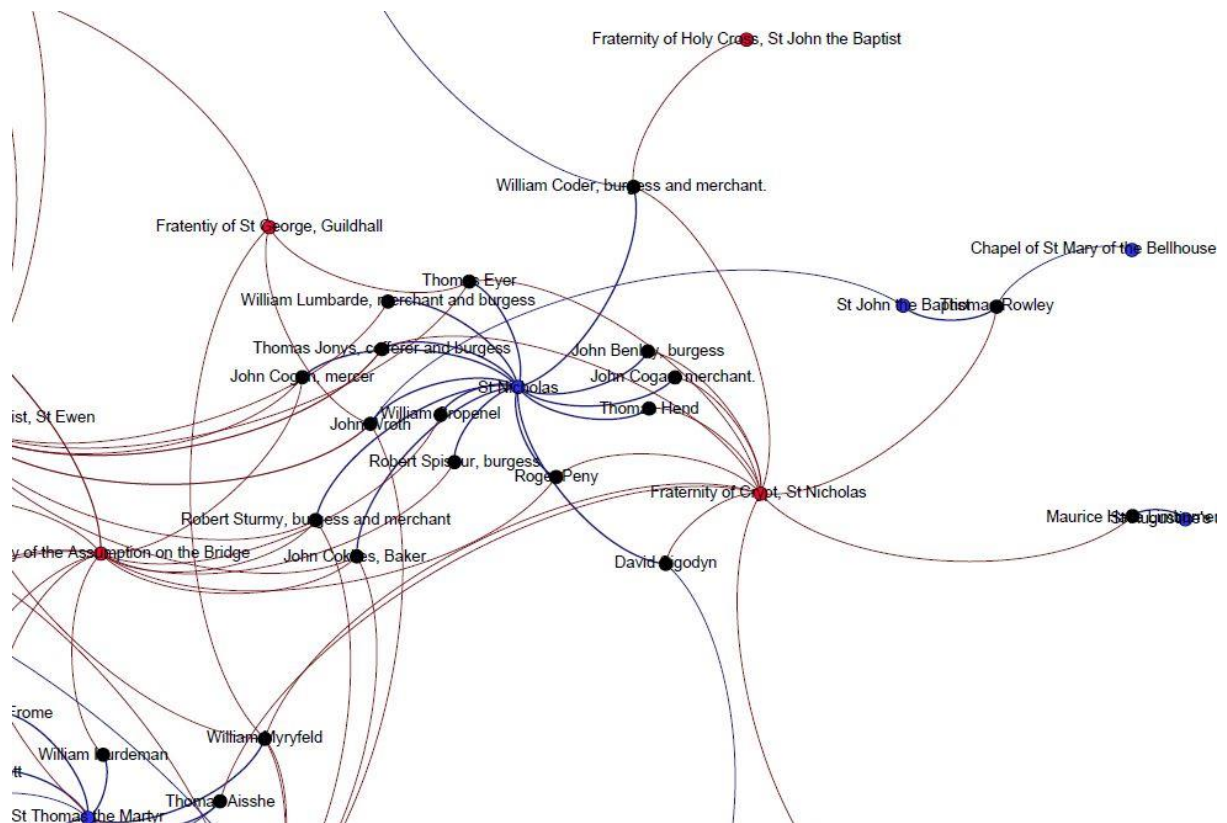


Figure 13: A network graph showing bequests to the fraternity in the crypt of St Nicholas; illustrating membership from the immediate parish and from other parishes in the town, 1400-1500.

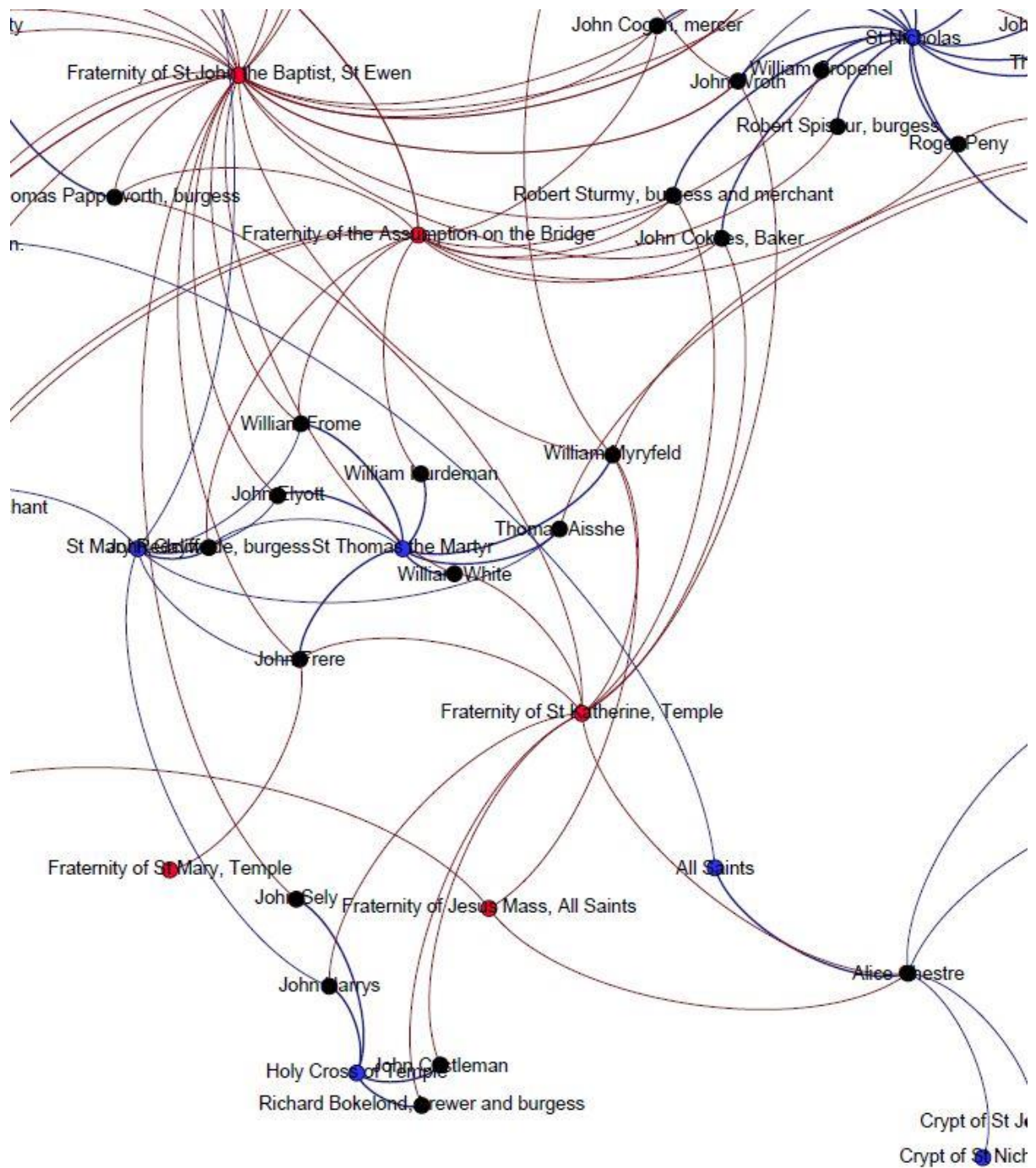


Figure 14: A network graph showing bequests to the fraternity of St Katherine; illustrating membership from the parish, suburb and rest of the town, 1400-1500.

In the context of a will, a legacy left to a fraternity can be taken to denote membership. Burgess has argued that bequests to guilds do not tell us much about the services they offered

testators.²⁰ However, fraternities were only obliged to pray for their own members after death, and so legacies left by testators may be reflective of members ensuring they were prayed for. Some testators also left legacies that explicitly demonstrated their membership through the giving of the fraternity's hoods. There are two instances of hoods being left in the surviving wills. Richard Bokelond left the Hood of St Katherine to John Grynder in 1418 while a baker called John Cokkes left his father, John Baker, his hood of the freedom of the Blessed Mary over the Bristol Bridge in 1449.²¹ These legacies denote membership of the guilds of the Assumption on the Bristol Bridge and St Katherine in Temple parish. Livery hoods were often bought by the members who belonged to the guild and worn as part of the guild's public ceremony and fraternity feast.²²

3.3.2: Requests for burial in chapels and the creation of dynasties

After engagement with a fraternity that met in a chapel, testators appear to have used (predominately parochial) chapels for burial (Table 11). Across the town, testators of burgess status or equivalent used chapels for their commemoration in a way which may have meant that the chapel functioned as a family mausoleum, in the sense that it was readily associated with a certain family.²³ Documentary evidence shows this happened in parochial chapels within parish churches in the town whose fabric has not survived to the present day. St Thomas the Martyr's is a good example of this. William Canynges the elder's will, made in 1396, requested burial in the chapel of the Blessed Mary within the church next to the tomb of John Stoke who was his father in law.²⁴ Stoke had made his will in 1381 and had left a messuage called Berewykesyn in Redcliffe-street to Canynges, and included Canynges in his chantry provision within the church of St Thomas.²⁵ John Canynges (son of William Canynges

²⁰ C. Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered', in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. by M. A. Hicks (Gloucester, 1990), p. 18.

²¹ JOR/1/1, ff. 134r-135r; PROB 11/1/204.

²² M. Davies, 'The Tailors of London and their Guild, c. 1300-1500' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1994), pp. 24, 26, 73, 108.

²³ It was not officially given the status of a mausoleum.

²⁴ E. E. Williams, *The Chantries of William Canynges in St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol; with a survey of chantries in general and some events in the lives of the Canynges* (Bristol, 1950), p. 45; *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills in the volume entitled the Great Orphan Book or Book of Wills in the Council House at Bristol*, ed. by T. P. Wadley (Bristol, 1886), pp. 48-49.

²⁵ He requested two chaplains to celebrate in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the parish church of St Thomas for the health of the King Richard II and his estate, the deceased King Edward III and his family, the

the elder) also requested ‘*corpus que meum ad sepeliendum in capella sancte Thome Martris Bristollicia in tomba mea infra capellam beate marie in orientali parte*’ (and my body to be buried in the chapel of St Thomas the Martyr Bristol in my tomb in the chapel of the Blessed Mary on the eastern part).²⁶ He may have requested this to situate his body close to where the mass happened and where Christ’s body was present within the church. By 1405 there were at least two Canynges tombs in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the church of St Thomas the Martyr, and in 1418, William White mentioned the tombs and chapel by referring to the ‘Canynges altar’ in his will. White’s reference to the altar in the chapel suggests that the Canynges family had managed to impose their familial identity on the chapel within the church, and that other parishioners such as White conceived of the space as belonging to the Canynges family.²⁷

There was a similar case in the church of the Holy Trinity in the centre of the town. John Clyve requested burial in the chapel next to the chancel of the church in 1431.²⁸ Five years later, his nephew Thomas Berkeley requested burial ‘*in capella avunculi situatus iuxta cancellum ecclesie Trinitatis* (in the chapel of my uncle situated near to the chancel in the church of [Holy] Trinity).²⁹ He identified the space for his burial as such because of his familial relationship with one of the inhabitants, but, seeing as Clyve had been Mayor of the town several times, it is also possible that his tomb dominated the chapel and that Berkeley was continuing to claim the space for his kin. Yet, there are also other possible motivations: like John Canynges, Clyve may have wanted to be buried next to the chancel because it gave his tomb proximity to the mass.³⁰ At the same time as creating a permanent memorial for themselves in a chapel, the uncle and nephew may also have wanted to be close to the mass and the focal point of collective worship of the parish.

testator’s wife, former wives and parents, the Mayor and Commonalty of the town, the souls of several burgesses including Canynges, and monks from Glastonbury.

²⁶ JOR/1/1, ff. 99v-100r.

²⁷ ‘Altar’ might refer to an altar tomb, a tomb that looked like an altar but was not used as much. Alternatively, it might refer to the altar in the chapel that had become so closely associated with the family.

²⁸ JOR/1/1, ff. 115r-158r.

²⁹ PROB 11/3/374.

³⁰ This has been found to be the case elsewhere too: particular areas of the church and churchyard were more desirable because of their proximity to the mass or a saint’s altars. C. Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England, 1066-1550* (London, 1997), pp. 96-101.

There is also evidence of this in the surviving church fabric of some parish churches in Bristol. William Canynges the younger was a parishioner of St Mary Redcliffe, detaching himself from his family's legacy and status within the life of the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr. Much attention has been paid to this member of the Canynges family, who died in 1474, and to his tomb in the south transept of St Mary Redcliffe's (see Figure 15).³¹ Here, he founded two chantries in the chapels of St Katherine and St George. These chapels functioned around altars that sat next to each other in the transept. As far as can be discerned from the chantry accounts and antiquarian drawings of the church's interior, it appears that there were no wooden screens around these chapels. This would have meant that the chapels were not closed off or concealed spaces from the rest of the parish church. However, the use of the space for his two chantries and his tomb, depicting himself as a merchant lying beside his wife, and the tombs of two members of his household, his steward and his cook, dominate the space.³² When the space was not being used for masses, the tomb continued to be a permanent reminder of Canynges, his place in the church and the town, and his wealth. The transept was visible to those in the centre of the nave and to those in the choir. Even after his death, his material commemoration in the church meant that he continued to have a part in the life of the parish church: both in the day-to-day services of the church and in the more exclusive activities connected to his chantry. By creating a monument in the church, he exercised ownership over part of the church's fabric and demonstrated his wealth and status as well as his piety.³³ When Canynges died in 1474, he had no surviving heirs. Burgess argues that chantries were generally set up by people who did not have offspring to pray for them

³¹ E. E. Williams, *The Chantries of William Canynges*; L. Monckton, 'The Myth of William Canynges and the Late Medieval Rebuilding of St Mary Redcliffe', in *Almost the Richest City: Bristol in the Middle Ages*, ed. by L. Keen (London, 1997), pp. 57-67.

³² This fits in the Swanson's argument about monuments and ownership of space in the parish. R. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215-1515* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 123.

³³ Swanson, *Religion and Devotion*, p. 123; Katherine French argues that the purchase of seats in church 'demonstrated more than piety' but also 'wealth and status'. The same is applicable to permanent monuments. K. French, 'The Seat Under our Lady: Gender and Seating in late medieval English Parish churches', in *Women's Space: Patronage, Place and Gender in the Medieval Church*. eds. V. Chieffo Raguin & S. Stanbury (New York, 2005), p. 142. Figure 16, a later floorplan of St Mary Redcliffe, shows two tombs: one as described depicting him as a merchant, the other depicting him as the dean of the college at Westbury-on-Trym. After his wife's death, Canynges ceased to be a merchant and entered holy orders, becoming the dean in 1467. This second tomb was in Westbury parish church and was subsequently moved to Redcliffe after the dissolution. C. Burgess, 'Canynges, William', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4581> Accessed 14/11/2019.

(and that they were a second-choice option for commemoration), and that merchants often invested in the fabric of their parish churches because they were often first or second generation in the locality and did not have an extended kinship network to pray for them.³⁴ While the former is certainly true for Canynges the younger, the latter is not. However, this domination of the space in the transept certainly encouraged the commemoration that would aid him after his death.

William Canynges, however, was not the only person to make a legacy for himself in the church.³⁵ The Mede family also succeeded in doing this in a different part of St Mary Redcliffe's. The first Mede to be buried in St Mary Redcliffe's was Thomas, who requested burial in the church in 1455 (Figure 16).³⁶ As suggested in the previous chapter, Mede's request to be buried in the part of the church which was being newly built might have been an attempt to establish a permanent and lasting place of prestige for himself and his heirs. After Thomas's burial there, his son Philip Mede requested burial in the same place in 1471 and his grandson Richard Mede was also buried there in 1491.³⁷ Unlike the Canynges memorials, the Mede's tombs were not as easily visible to the laity. They were in the chapel of St Stephen that sat north east of the high altar (Figure 15). Although less present in the minds of the parishioners at weekly services, it was closer to the mass that happened at the high altar of the church.³⁸ The monuments were imposing and dominated the space of the St Stephen's chapel (Figure 16).

These people were merchants and burgesses, but their behaviour concerning monuments and domination of exclusive spaces within the parish church is suggestive of

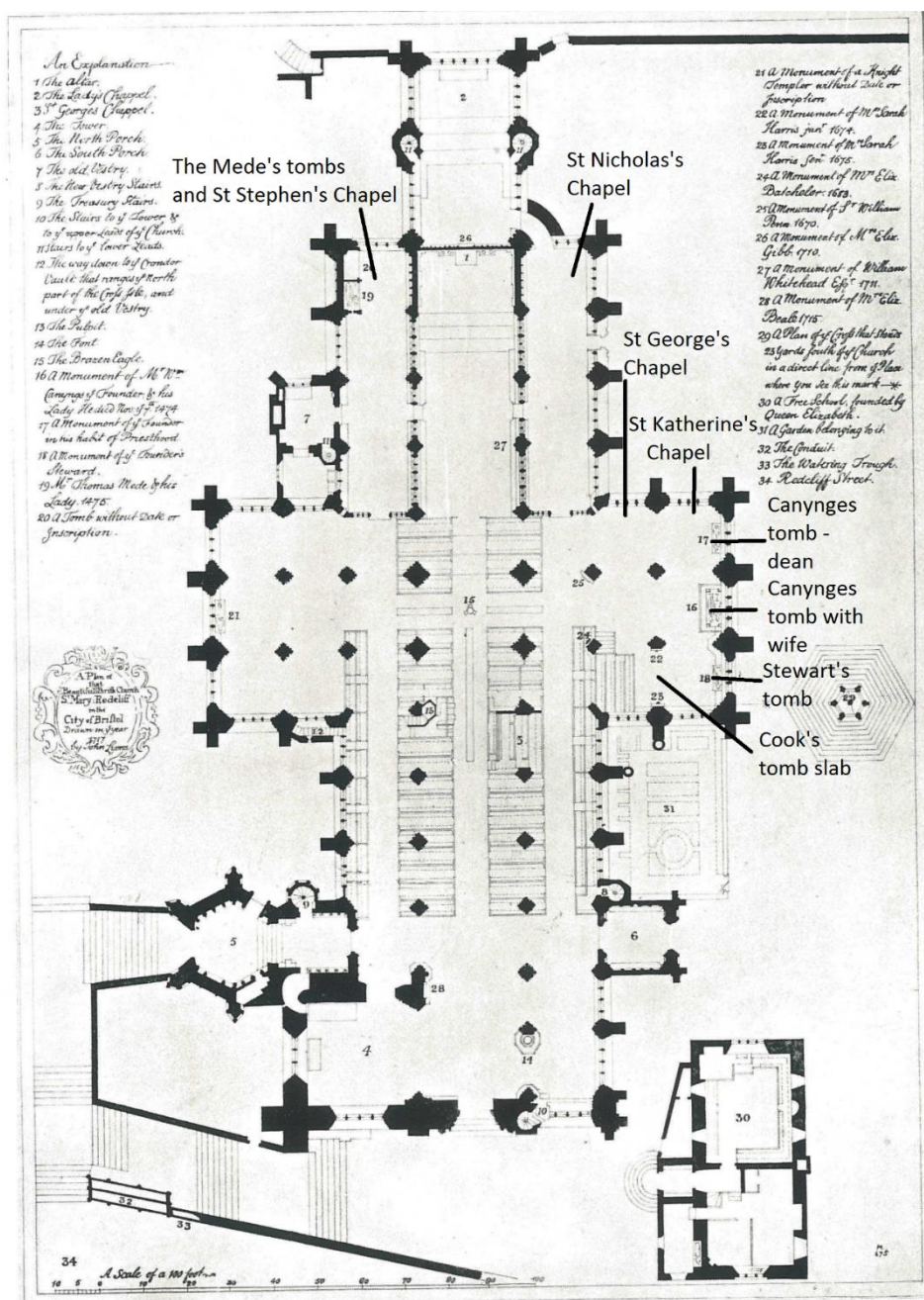
³⁴ C. Burgess, 'Chuntries in Fifteenth Century Bristol' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1981), C. Burgess, 'Making Mammon Serve God: Merchant Piety in Later Medieval England', in *The medieval merchant: proceedings of the 2012 Harlaxton Symposium*, eds. by C. Barron & A. F. Sutton (Donington, 2014), p. 195.

³⁵ Monkton argues that St Mary Redcliffe church was not the product of just the Canynges family's patronage. Instead, she argues that the strong association between the fifteenth-century development of the church and the Canyngeses is a myth created in subsequent centuries. The church is the result of the patronage for many groups including other burgesses of the town and gentry from the surrounding countryside. L. Monckton, 'The Myth of William Canynges', pp. 41-56.

³⁶ PROB 11/4/41.

³⁷ PROB 11/6/321; PROB 11/8/619.

³⁸ Daniell, *Death and Burial*, p. 101.



PLAN OF ST. MARY REDCLIFFE BY JOHN LYONS, 1717

From the Bourles Collection in the Museum and Art Gallery, Bristol

Figure 15: Annotated floorplan of St Mary Redcliffe, adapted from E. E. Williams, *The Chantries of William Canynges in St Mary Redcliffe Bristol* (Bristol, 1950), p. 123.



Figure 16: Two Mede tombs in St Stephen's Chapel, St Mary Redcliffe. (Author: Esther Lewis, 2018).

aspirations of a high social status: that of the gentry and aristocracy.³⁹ Indeed, John Clyve had familial links with the local aristocratic Berkeley family. The way that the testators set up their burial spaces and claimed them for their families reflected the Berkeley tombs in St Augustine's Abbey. The Berkeleys had a chapel with their tombs in St Augustine's Abbey, as well as tombs in other side chapels and along the corridor of the southern transept. Swanson has argued that installing a monument in a church implied ownership over part of the church's fabric.⁴⁰ This appears to have happened in these parochial chapels in Bristol, particularly with

³⁹ Saul talks about the 'self-glorification' of the gentry in their parish churches through the installation of monuments and family insignia in chancels, aisles and transepts of parish churches. N. Saul, 'The Gentry and the Parish', in *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, eds. by C. Burgess & E. Duffy (Donington, 2006), p. 250. Burgess says that merchants often have a lot in common with people of the ranks of society that were above them such as their orthodoxy, investment in and rebuilding of parish churches, and their burial in marker tombs. Burgess, 'Making Mammon Serve God', p. 185.

⁴⁰ Swanson, *Religion and Devotion*, p. 123.

the Canynges tombs in St Thomas the Martyr. Katherine French, when discussing the purchase of church pews, stated that these purchases demonstrated piety, but also the wealth and status of the testator. This argument can be applied more broadly to the fabric of parish churches: by installing monuments into the parish churches the testators exhibited their wealth and status as well as their piety. The use of exclusive spaces within the church to demonstrate and project wealth and status is evident in the cases outlined above.

Standalone chapels were also used by prominent townspeople for their burials. Thomas Knappe founded the chapel of St John the Evangelist that sat on the edge of the River Avon in St Nicholas's parish. Early twentieth-century transcriptions of the Church Book of St Nicholas show that its administration was incorporated into the parish records.⁴¹ Knappe founded it to host his chantry, but also intended it to be a chapel for mariners, servants, and workers. It provided a mass at five o'clock in the morning to facilitate the daily worship of these groups before they went to work.⁴² He requested to be buried there in his 1404 will.⁴³ This chapel was founded to help the devotion of the poorer people of the town, not just to create a monument for Knappe. However, in helping the poor, he may have anticipated their prayers for his soul in return for his provision for and enabling of their devotion. Unlike the 'Canynges altar' in the side chapel of St Thomas the Martyr, Knappe is not referred to in connection to this chapel in the subsequent surviving wills.⁴⁴ This suggests that, while it was his chapel, it did not become as closely associated with him and his family as other chapels in the town did with other families.⁴⁵ Although Knappe was from the parish of St Nicholas, it appears that he felt that the poor needed an exclusive place for worship outside of the parish church. Indeed, two of the subsequent wills that request burial clearly conceptualise the chapel as being part of the parish. For example, John Cokkes, Baker, conceptualised the chapel

⁴¹ J. Bettey, 'The Pre-Reformation Records of St Nicholas', in *Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol: Essays in Memory of Elizabeth Ralph, 1911-2000*, ed. by J. Bettey (Gloucester, 2001), p. 60.

⁴² L. S. Woodger, 'Knap, Thomas (d. 1404), of Bristol', in *The History of Parliament 1386-1421*, eds. by J. S. Roskell, L. Clark, C. Rawcliffe (1993): <http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1386-1421/member/knap-thomas-1404> Accessed 22/11/19.

⁴³ JOR/1/1, ff. 87v-88r.

⁴⁴ JOR/1/1, ff. 130v-131v; PROB 11/1/204; PROB 11/6/232.

⁴⁵ This is certainly the case within the testamentary evidence, but Christian Liddy has shown that more broadly the chapel was associated with Knappe. In c. 1480, William Worcestre called it 'Thomas Knappe's chapel.' C. D. Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance in late Medieval English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350-1400* (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 204.

within the parish in his request for burial in 1449: '*corpusque meum sepeliendum in capella sancta Johanni Evangeliste super baccum Avone infra limines [sic] eiusdem parochial*' (and my body to be buried in the chapel of St John the Evangelist on Avon Back within the limits of the same parish).⁴⁶ Likewise, John Cogan asked for 'my body to be buried in the chapel of seint John the evangelist in the parish of seint Nicholas in Bristowe' in 1474.⁴⁷ This chapel appeared to be an extension of the parish for all parishioners, not just an exclusive space for the rich as appears to be the case elsewhere in Bristol.

Another standalone chapel dedicated to Holy Trinity at Lafford's Gate (on the eastern edge of the town) was founded by John Barstaple and became his burial place and the burial place of his wife Isabel.⁴⁸ They made their wills in 1411 and 1412 respectively and were from the parish of St Werburgh. Their choice of burial meant that they were buried outside of their parish. Isabel Barstaple compensated the rector of St Werburgh's for the income he lost as a result of her burial outside of the parish. She left him this money on the condition he did not prevent her body being taken to Holy Trinity Chapel for burial there.⁴⁹ Her will was made five months after her husband's will was proved. He did not make such an arrangement, and so it is possible that she might have anticipated some dispute or that there may have been some ill feeling over her husband's choice of burial place. However, John Barstaple left 10 marks to the rector of St Werburgh for tithes forgotten, an unusually large amount that may have gone some way to compensate the rector for the loss of income compared to the mean average in the 1410s of 13s. 10d. and the modal average of 6s. 8d.. From their wills, the motivation to be buried in a place outside of their parish is not clear.

The chapel was attached to the hospital of Holy Trinity which was founded by John Barstaple by at least 1410.⁵⁰ Petitions were sent to the Crown in 1427 regarding the legality

⁴⁶ PROB 11/1/204.

⁴⁷ PROB 11/6/232.

⁴⁸ PROB 11/2A/409; PROB 11/2A/373.

⁴⁹ '*Item lego domino Willelmo Hawnyle Rectori ecclesie sancta Werburghe tres libram sterlingorum condicione tunc? si ne ipse nec aliquis aliis suo nomine impedes vic corpus meum... ad prortam [sic] capella*'. (Also I leave to Lord William Hawnyle rector of the parish church of St Werburgh three pounds of sterling on the condition that neither he or anyone else stops my body being transported to the chapel) PROB 11/2A/373.

⁵⁰ London, The National Archives, SC 8/96/4772. This record of foundation is dated 12 Jun 11 Henry IV (1410) but was formerly attached to SC 8/96/4770 which has been dated by The National Archives Record Specialist to 1427.

of the chapel's foundation and include reference to the guilds of the Holy Trinity and St George. John Barstaple left bequests to '... Fraternitati beate Trinitas de La Fordysgate post decessum Isabelle uxoris mee duo ciphons argenti cum cooperculis [sic] suis qui remanere debent *ibidem* imperpetem' (... to the Fraternity of the Blessed Trinity of Lafford's Gate after the death of my wife, Isabel, two silver cups with covers to remain there forever). This suggests that John Barstaple engaged with activities in the chapel during his lifetime that he chose to reflect in his will. Similarly, Isabel requested commemoration in the chapel, stating that Sir Thomas Thropp was to celebrate for her there and receive 20s. for this service. It seems, then, that they chose to be buried outside of their parish because they were engaged in devotional activities at Lafford's Gate. This suggests that the parish did not meet their devotional needs. Indeed, they left their parish to pursue their piety, engage with guilds and arrange their commemoration in another ecclesiastical institution within the same locality.

Yet of the two, John Barstaple appears more engaged with the parish. Both request for the ringing of bells, presumably for their funeral services, in St Werburgh's parish. John left 2s. and Isabel left 40d.. John requested that twenty-eight pounds of wax was to be bought to make five tapers to be used at his burial and ten tapers to be burnt around his body. He wished the clerk to recite the psalter in the presence of his body, receiving 4d. for each psalm. He also left 12d. for each of the chaplains celebrating divine service in the church, as well as all the chaplains celebrating in the town to pray for his soul. Isabel left 12d. to each of the priests in St Werburgh's church, but her main commemoration is in the chapel of the Holy Trinity at Lafford's gate. As well as leaving 20s. to Thomas Thropp who appears to be the main celebrant in the chapel of Holy Trinity, she also left 10 marks to the chaplain Sir William Rijs to celebrate for her and her husband's soul in the chapel of the Holy Trinity. Perhaps she did not need to pay for specific services in the parish as she had already compensated the rector. Although both engage with their parish, it appears that they were both more interested in their commemoration in the chapel and the devotional activities happening there. We can speculate what motivated this association: it may have given them the opportunity to engage more closely with the poor who may have lived in the hospital and gain themselves more prayers.⁵¹

⁵¹ Daniell, *Death and Burial*, p. 100.

After the will of Isabel Barstaple in 1412, there is little interaction with the chapel in the wills until 1473, when John Shipward of St Stephen's parish left 40d. to the chapel of Holy Trinity at Lafford's gate. He appears to have also given similar sums to the Chapel of St Mary on the Bristol bridge, and torches to All Saints' church and St Bartholomew's hospital for the use of fraternities therein (in this case small fraternities that kept a light).⁵² The impression we get of this chapel from the surviving testamentary evidence is that it was not used for burial or commemoration by the burgesses of Bristol to the same extent that other chapels were. Indeed, it appears that the Barstaples were the only family who were interested in the chapel. The continued familial interest in the chapel is evident in a series of petitions dated 1427, which granted their son, Nicholas, the right to grant lands to the hospital.⁵³ The petitions were concerned with the legality of the hospital's foundation by John Barstaple. The Mayor and commonality of Bristol petitioned the King to give the hospital its full rights and powers according to the will of John Barstaple and to consider the gifts given to the hospital valid, and was granted in November 1427.⁵⁴ The case demonstrates that the hospital and chapel was still considered to be John Barstaple's over seventeen years later and that the burgesses of Bristol considered it important to uphold these arrangements, and that they were willing to actively ensure the continued legacy and commemoration of John Barstaple and his family. More broadly, there appears to have been an accepted culture of the creation of dynastic memorials in parochial and standalone chapels in the fifteenth-century town.

3.3.3: Parochial chapels and exclusive spaces

Where a chapel was within the building of the parish church, the wills from Bristol continue to suggest that the testators largely saw these as separate or exclusive spaces. A good example of this is the crypt of St Nicholas's church, which sat below the nave of the church. The wills give the sense that it was a public space which was accessible to the laity. It was used for burial and for other devotional activities. The surviving church fabric shows that, as St Nicholas's church sat on a hill, the church was accessible from street level on the north side and the crypt was accessible from street level on the south side of the church. Testators such

⁵² JOR/1/1, ff. 206r-209r.

⁵³ SC 8/96/4770, 4771, 4772, 4773. SC 8/96/4773 in particular.

⁵⁴ SC 8/96/4770.

as David Ap Pollanghan in 1495 requested burial in the crypt, and left legacies to the church.⁵⁵ This suggests that he conceptualised them as two distinct spaces. In total seven testators left legacies to the fabric of the crypt as well as the fabric of the church. For example, William Coder left 13s. 4d. to the ‘procuratoribus’ (churchwardens) of the crypt for his burial there in 1474.⁵⁶ Sometimes testators left money for the devotional activities happening within the crypt, whether this was to the fraternity of the Holy Cross that met in this space, or to the chaplain there. Thomas Rowley left 20s. to the chaplain in the crypt of St Nicholas on the condition that he was remembered in the prayers at the time of mass, implying that the sacraments were being performed in the crypt beneath the church as well as in the main church above it.⁵⁷ Indeed, as William Coder’s will demonstrates, the crypt appears to have operated with a level of independence from the rest of the church. This suggests that the crypt was being managed separately from the church and so, although within the same parish, represented a different grouping of devotional activity.

Indeed, within the crypt there were also different spaces with different devotional focuses, such as an altar to St Citha and a Lady altar.⁵⁸ There does not appear to have been any conflict between the crypt and the main church: parishioners left legacies to the crypt, the nave and the fraternity. In doing so they engaged with the range of devotional activities that all three had to offer. This would suggest that, in the case of the parish of St Nicholas’s, there was an expansion in the diversity of religious experience within the confines of the parish as Rosser has argued.⁵⁹ As a space accessible to the public, it had the potential to serve everyone’s needs, but the burial spaces and fraternity also meant that it was a place for those who were interested in the fraternity and for the wealthy.

⁵⁵ JOR/1/1, f. 294r.

⁵⁶ JOR/1/1, ff. 197v-198v.

⁵⁷ PROB 11/6/456.

⁵⁸ JOR/1/1, f. 294r; E G. Cuthbert & F. Atchley, ‘On the Medieval Parish Records of St. Nicholas, Bristol’, *St Paul’s Ecclesiological Society Transactions*, VI (1906), p. 40.

⁵⁹ Rosser, ‘Voluntary Religion and Parochial Conformity’.

3.3.4: Chapels that are not mentioned in the Bristol wills

None of the wills under study here mention St Vincent's Chapel, which was in the rock of the Avon Gorge.⁶⁰ Visitors to the chapel had to scramble up or down the rock of St Vincent's Cliff to access it. This chapel was granted an indulgence by the Bishop of Worcester in 1492 which identified Thomas Dene as the warden of the chapel and specified that he should visit the chapel, having previously failed to maintain its lights and ornaments.⁶¹ This implies that Dene had been neglecting these duties and that the chapel was not adequately maintained. Clay says that the chapel was visible from the bottom of the Avon Gorge, but that its position in the rock made it a secluded place. It was possibly used by religious dissenters for meetings at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century.⁶² This notion comes from the trial records of suspected lollards in Coventry in the early sixteenth century who mentioned the chapel in the context of dissenters' meetings.⁶³ Coupled with the 1492 indulgence, which implies that the chapel was not always looked after and that there was rarely clergy present, heretical meetings there may have been possible.⁶⁴ The economic position of the later group of lollards in Bristol, to be discussed in the next chapter, was generally lower than the burgesses' and wealthy testators whose wills survive. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the chapel was not a part of the burgesses' social network by the end of the fifteenth century and hence why it is not present in the corpus of wills.

There were other chapels outside of the main town, and the only one to appear in a will was St Anne's chapel in Bedminster. In 1491, Maud Esterfeld of St Werburgh's parish bequeathed rings to several chapels in and around the town.⁶⁵ The single mention of the chapel in the collection of surviving wills might suggest that it was broadly unpopular with the

⁶⁰ Orme, 'The other parish churches', p. 81; R. H. Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England* (London, 1914), pp. 44-45.

⁶¹ This was the Register of Bishop John Alcock, Bishop of Worcester, detailed in Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England*, p. 44.

⁶² Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England*, p. 44-5.

⁶³ *Lollards of Coventry, 1486-1522*, eds. and trans. by N. Tanner and S. McSheffrey (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 225-226. Tanner and McSheffrey do not identify this chapel as being the chapel referenced in the trial, but it is likely to be the same one. This is because it is called St Vincent's chapel and it is set in the cliff called St Vincent's cliff. There appears to have been no other chapel in the Clifton area.

⁶⁴ Although I am not arguing that it was solely or exclusively used for this purpose.

⁶⁵ JOR/1/1, ff. 258r-259r.

townspeople, but it is more likely that, again, it was not widely venerated by the testators whose wills survived. William Worcestre, who visited the chapel in c.1480, recorded that it was adorned with two square candles, one of which was gifted by the Weavers' craft guild and the other by the Cordwainers' craft guild, and thirty-two ornamental boats.⁶⁶ He valued the silver boats at 20s..⁶⁷ These were likely votive gifts: offerings that had been given by people who, when at sea, had prayed for God to deliver them (often from a storm or immediate peril). They gave the gift at a shrine or altar in recompense for God's answer to their prayers.⁶⁸ Votive gifts were often made of wax, but some higher status shrines such as that of Richard Scrope in York had votive items that were mainly made out of silver or gold.⁶⁹ Worcestre's valuation demonstrates that the boats in St Anne's chapel were expensive items and made of precious metals, and this perhaps reflects the wealth of the mercantile and burgess residents of Bristol. Their placement within the chapel to St Anne makes sense, as Diana Webb argues that St Anne was often venerated by seafarers. Records from other parishes show that there were ships that may have served a similar purpose in other churches in Bristol.⁷⁰ Votive giving rarely appears in the will: it was generally not part of the deathbed piety of the testator and examples of testamentary votive giving in England are rare. In 1451, Thomas Fen of Groton in Suffolk left a votive silver ship valued at 26s. 8d. to the church in Groton and a similar ship to the church of Boxford, but there are no comparable examples in Bristol's surviving wills.⁷¹ It is, then, unsurprising that this chapel was not widely patronised in the available testamentary evidence, but it does not mean that it was not on the radar of the testators. The chapel simply did not have a commemorative or mortuary function for the testators of Bristol.

⁶⁶ There are several weavers' wills that survive, but few from cordwainers.

⁶⁷ *William Worcestre: The Medieval Topography of Bristol*, ed. by F. Neale (Bristol, 2000), pp. 56-59.

⁶⁸ M. Champion, 'The Medium is the Message: Votive Devotional Imagery and Gift Giving amongst the Commonality in the Late Medieval Parish', *Peregrinations: Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture* 3/4 (2012), pp. 108-110; E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*, 2nd Edition (New Haven, 2005), pp. 197-198; D. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England* (London, 2000), pp. 81, 106, 117.

⁶⁹ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 197.

⁷⁰ D. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England* (London, 2000), p. 106; The church of St Nicholas appears to have had a silver ship that appears in inventories of the church's jewels and books from the late fourteenth century onwards. Cuthbert & Atchely, 'On the Medieval Parish Records of the Church of St. Nicholas', pp. 35-6, 39.

⁷¹ Champion, 'The Medium is the Message', p. 109.

Again, it appears that the burgesses of the town did not venture far beyond the limits of the town into the immediate locality to pursue their piety. Instead, indicators of devotional activity beyond the town in wills are connected to places that were further away, and likely that resulted from commercial activities or migration from there to the town. Neither did the testators under study engage with the chapels in the Castle. The explanation here is probably somewhat different: that the religious activities that went on within the castle were confined to those who were resident within the Castle, and not the burgesses of the town.

3.4: Friaries

There were four friaries in fifteenth-century Bristol. The Franciscan, Dominican, and Carmelite friaries sat within the diocese of Worcester, outside of the town walls in the suburbs. The Austin friars were in the diocese of Bath and Wells and sat near the town's walls at the edge of Temple parish. They were highly educated, preached, provided pastoral support for the laity and performed mortuary and *pro anima* services, but there is little surviving evidence from inside Bristol's friaries themselves.⁷²

Burgess's work on the friars of Bristol within the testamentary evidence has demonstrated that the fraternal houses continued to be popular in the town throughout the later Middle Ages, with a dip in popularity at the end of the fifteenth century. However, he suggests that this is probably reflective of poor survival of testamentary evidence in the late fifteenth century. He finds that the friaries were more popular in the wills than monastic foundations, but largely attributes this to their role in mortuary ceremonies and services within the parish.⁷³ However, other work on friaries demonstrates how fraternal houses were often used to help with public devotion, and how, specifically in Bristol, they were an established part of public ceremony in the town.⁷⁴ Elsewhere, Nick Holder and Jens Röhrkasten have both found

⁷² Burgess, 'Friars and the parish', p. 81; *Victoria County History: Gloucestershire, volume 2*, ed. by W. Page (London, 1907), pp. 109-111.

⁷³ Burgess, 'Friars and the parish', p. 76; In his work on All Saints, he has written about the friars as aiding the work of the parish, particularly in the commemorations of parishioners. See Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, p. 64.

⁷⁴ F. Andrews, *The Other Friars. The Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Piet Friars in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 31; Fleming highlights how the friars were part of the procession that met Henry VI when he arrived at the town's boundary. P. Fleming, 'Procession Power: Performance, Politics and Place in Early Tudor Bristol', *Personalities and Perspectives in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. by A. Compton Reeve (2012), pp. 141-169.

that the friars in London were integrated into urban life, that the laity used and were present in friary churches, and that the friars played an important role in the religious lives of the city's laity, attracting people from all ranks of society with their mendicant spirituality.⁷⁵ Some bequests give an indication of a relationship with the friary beyond their mortuary assistance. Although the generic testamentary bequest to each order of friars was largely reflective of the friars role in the funeral and the testator's purgatorial need, Holder has shown that testamentary donations from wealthy townspeople made up a substantial part of some fraternal houses' incomes, suggesting that such bequests should not be dismissed as unimportant by the historian.⁷⁶ Through a qualitative re-examination, this section argues that there is some evidence that friars provided more than just a mortuary support to the parish and that the laity engaged with them in their lifetime piety.⁷⁷

Within the general corpus of Bristolian wills, 158 testators engaged with the friars to some extent.⁷⁸ The generic bequest to 'each order of friars mendicant in Bristol' was made by 117 testators.⁷⁹ These bequests can be interpreted in the way that Burgess has argued. Robert Swanson has also regarded bequests to friaries as indicative of social conformity and not of a personal attachment.⁸⁰ Broadly, Burgess does not consider there to be a conflict between the friaries and the parish.⁸¹ He contends that, as long as tithe was being paid by the friary to the parish, the parish clergy probably regarded the friars as contributing to the wider church.⁸² There is not enough evidence to know whether tithes were successfully paid to parish churches in Bristol, but we know from cases elsewhere that there were some anxieties about the impact the friaries would have on the incomes of other religious institutions in the town

⁷⁵ N. Holder, *The friaries of medieval London: from foundation to dissolution* (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 189-190; Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants', pp. 453-4, 476.

⁷⁶ Holder, *The friaries of medieval London*, p. 254.

⁷⁷ Burgess, 'Friars and the parish', p. 79.

⁷⁸ This is 40% of the sample which is lower than engagement in other urban centres, such as York where 75% of will makers left a bequest to the friars of between 2d. and 6s. 8d. J. Kermode, *Medieval Merchants: York, Beverly and Hull in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 122.

⁷⁹ It was not always worded as this example, but it took on variations of this general bequest to all four friaries in Bristol and specified their mendicancy.

⁸⁰ R. N. Swanson, *Catholic England: Faith, Religion and Observance before the Reformation* (Manchester, 1993), p. 25.

⁸¹ Lack of payment of tithes by friaries to parish churches has been highlighted as one possible area of conflict in A. G. Little, 'Personal Tithes', *The English Historical Review*, 60/236 (1945), p. 74.

⁸² Burgess, 'Friars and the parish', p. 75.

when they arrived in Bristol in the thirteenth century.⁸³ St James's Priory was worried that the Dominicans would decrease the priory's income, and petitioned the bishop not to allow the foundation of the friary.⁸⁴ It is clear that friaries got into neighbourly quarrels in other urban settings and this might have been the case for Bristol too.⁸⁵

The testamentary evidence suggests a particular engagement with the Carmelites.⁸⁶ The Carmelite friary in Bristol was founded in 1256 and was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. They were part of a fraternal order which had come from hermits on Mount Carmel in the late twelfth-century crusader states. At its suppression in July 1538, only four friars remained, as the prior and the sexton had both fled.⁸⁷ Their friary lay within the parish of St Augustine and was close to the River Frome. Beyond the foundation documents, the Act of Surrender, and a list of John Purvey's heresies which the Prior Richard of Lavenham wrote, there is no other written evidence from inside of the friary.⁸⁸ However, the friary did produce several theologians and preachers of note that had national and international reach.⁸⁹

Eight people wished to be buried in the Church of the Carmelite friars between 1405 and 1493. Six of these wills were made between 1406 and 1420. This might say something about general trends in popular piety, but it is more likely the result of evidence survival. These burial requests are also indicative of the wealth of the testators: Deirdre O'Sullivan argues that, although the 'burial community' within the friaries would have come from many walks of life, it 'would have probably been a bit more affluent than that of a local parish

⁸³ Little, 'Personal Tithes', pp. 67-88. In 1309 London people paid tithes to the friary rather than their parish church, and in 1424 Friar William Russell, guardian of the Grey Friars in London, stated that personal tithes do not need to be paid to the parish church but could be given to other pious uses of poverty (which presumably included the mendicants).

⁸⁴ J. Bettey, *The Medieval Friaries, Hospitals & Chapelries of Bristol* (Bristol, 2009), p. 4.

⁸⁵ J. Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants in the Late Middle Ages', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 3/47 (1996), pp. 453-4. This is from the Calendar of Letter Books of the City of London and the London Assize of Nuisance.

⁸⁶ This is different to other places: Röhrkasten has found that the Carmelites were the least popular house in London and that the Franciscans were the most patronised mendicant house in the corpus of London wills.

⁸⁷ *Medieval religious Houses: England and Wales*, eds. by D. Knowles & R. N. Hadcock (Essex, 2nd edition, 1971), pp. 232-234

⁸⁸ R. Lavenham, 'Haereses et Errores Domini Johannis Purvey Sacerdotis, extracti de libello suo Haeretico', in *Fasciculi Zizaniorum magistri Johannis Wyclif cum tritico. Ascribed to Thomas Netter of Walden*, ed. by W. Waddington Shirely (London, 1858), pp. 383-399.

⁸⁹ See Bettey, *The Medieval Friaries, Hospitals & Chapelries of Bristol*, p. 13.

church.⁹⁰ Some of these wills can be attributed to the parishes of St Nicholas, St Leonard and St Thomas the Martyr: all in different suburbs of the town. Three, however, do not indicate which parish they are from, or show their public duty to their parish church.⁹¹ These requests should be treated in the same way as parochial burial requests: they demonstrate the importance of the space to the testator and suggest that they had engaged with it before their death.⁹²

The case of Thomas Curetys demonstrates that some testators were only interested in friaries for religious provision as they made their wills. He asked for ‘*corpus meum ad sepeliendum apud fratres carmelitus Bristollia*’ (my body to be buried at the Carmelite friars Bristol) in 1406.⁹³ His will is brief. The only religious institution mentioned was the friary. The only other recipients were his wife and son, Joan and John. It was proved nine days after it was made, which suggests that it was made on his deathbed, and its brevity might have been the result of declining health.⁹⁴ This suggests that, given a time-pressured opportunity to commit his final wishes to writing (probably through a scribe), he clearly had two priorities: the Carmelites and his family. Unlike most bequests to the friars in Bristol which simply left money to the friars with the understanding that they would attend the testator’s funeral, Curety’s bequest demonstrates that he had a relationship with the Carmelites, that he thought he would be allowed to be buried there, and that he chose their church in which to be commemorated. The community of the Carmelite church appears to have been more important to him than that of the community of the parish church.

In some cases, a specific friary appears to have been as important, or perhaps more important, than the testator’s parish church. John Sutton also requested ‘*ad sepeliendum*

⁹⁰ D. O’Sullivan, *In the Company of the Preachers: The Archaeology of Medieval Friaries in England and Wales* (Leicester, 2013), p. 16.

⁹¹ As Middleton-Stewart has argued that wills do, J. Middleton-Stewart, *Inward Purity and Outward Splendour: Death and Remembrance in the Deanery of Dunwich, Suffolk, 1370-1547* (Woodbridge, 2001), p. 43.

⁹² Röhrkasten, ‘Londoners and London Mendicants’, p. 466.

⁹³ PROB 11/2A/211.

⁹⁴ While most wills were made on the deathbed, the prevalence of merchants in the sample of Bristol’s wills meant that this was not always the case. Merchants might make a will before going on a long journey in case of unforeseen death to ensure the salvation of their soul. This is evident in the period between the creation of the will and the date of probate. For example, James Baker made his will in 1472 which was proved in 1484. The main recipient of his will is Elizabeth Chester to whom he was betrothed. He left her £100 for either her singleness, if he died before they were married, or for her widowhood. PROB 11/7/115.

apud *fratres carmelitus Bristollia'* (to be buried at the Carmelite friary in Bristol) in 1415.⁹⁵ He left the sale of the reversions of all his property in Temple Street in the southern suburb to be used for his soul's health and to the brethren of the Carmelites. This was a generous gift, providing that the property did get reverted. Sutton was from the north of the town: he left 12d. to the mother church of Worcester which demonstrates he was of this diocese. He also had property in the parish of St Nicholas which he left to the Prioress of Knighton (perhaps a nunnery in the town of Knighton, Wales), and had property in the parishes of St James', St Werburgh's, and St Stephen's, as well as property north of the town in Redland. He left of all these properties to family and chaplains. He left 6s. 8d. to the church of St Stephen and 6s. 8d. to St James's Priory for tithes forgotten. The paying of tithes to two parish churches would suggest belonging and obligation to each of these parish communities. Instead, he chose to support the Carmelites with his wealth and chose their church to be the site of memory after death.

Margaret Gloucester requested burial in the Carmelite friary because her father was buried there. She made her will in 1420 and directed that she was to be buried in the church of the Carmelite friars beside her father's tomb.⁹⁶ Her father was Thomas Gloucester of St Nicholas's parish who was a burgess and died in 1407.⁹⁷ His will left bequests to Margaret, and she labelled herself as his '*filia et heres*' (daughter and heir) in the opening of her will. This familial connection shows that Margaret wanted to be buried in the house of the Carmelites to be close to her father. It suggests that there was a shared piety and devotional practice that involved the friars between father and daughter, and that she wanted to be close to him after death. From Thomas's will, the Carmelites emerged as his favoured fraternal house in Bristol. He left 40s. to the '*fabrice ecclesie Fratrem Carmelite predictum*' (the fabric of the aforesaid church of the Carmelite friars), whereas he only left 2s. 6d. to each of the other friaries in Bristol. This may have been to cover the cost of his burial, but also shows that he valued the Carmelite friars over the rest of Bristol's friars. He gave to the fabric of the church in the same way a parishioner might have given to their parish church, and so

⁹⁵ JOR/1/1, ff. 126r-127v.

⁹⁶ JOR/1/1, f. 140.

⁹⁷ JOR/1/1, ff. 106r-v.

this bequest might also show a similar relationship and obligation on Thomas Gloucester's part.

Margaret Gloucester may have left to the Carmelites because she had engaged with them in life, but it is more probable that her motivation was her father's tomb in their friary. This suggests that piety was often influenced by kinship links, and that several generations of the same family could be buried in the same space within a friary in the same way that burgesses were using chapels in parish churches and standalone chapels. While Burgess argues that people were not turning away from the parishes, even if individuals such as Thomas Gloucester did have all his funeral arrangements in the Carmelite friary, Röhrkasten argues that burials in friaries are of similar value to burials in parish churches.⁹⁸ Indeed, the cases of Thomas Curetys, John Sutton, and Margaret Gloucestre agree with Röhrkasten's argument as they do not identify a home parish church in their wills. Instead, their wills present the Carmelite church as being the central focus of their piety and their commemoration.

While the examples of the Carmelite friary provide a particularly good case study to demonstrate that the friars served a greater function than Burgess has previously suggested in the devotional lives of Bristolians, there are also examples of this phenomenon for other friaries. Three people requested burial in the house of the Friar Minors and one person requested burial in the Austin Friary between 1400 and 1500.⁹⁹ Two people requested to be buried in the chapel of St George in the Carmelite friary in Bordeaux. These were both male testators and were likely merchants.¹⁰⁰ Testators who requested burial in friaries only comprise of 3 per cent of the surviving wills, so burials in fraternal houses were not massively popular across the town. This provides a different picture to Joel Rosenthal's argument that burial in friaries was popular, yet this is unsurprising as the types of people under study here are of a different social standing to Rosenthal's aristocratic subjects.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants', p. 466.

⁹⁹ For the Friar Minors see PROB 11/2A/88; Bristol, Bristol Archives, P. AS. D./NA/33, PROB 11/11/75. For the Austin friars see PROB 11/2A/136.

¹⁰⁰ William Rowley JOr/1/1, ff. 209r-210v. Richard Spaldyng, JOr/1/1, ff. 119-120.

¹⁰¹ Rosenthal's study considers the English aristocracy. J. Rosenthal, *The purchase of paradise: gift giving and its aristocracy, 1307-1485* (London, 1972), p. 101.

Like other churches, there were saints' altars within friaries which attracted lay attention. One clear example of this is the chapel or altar of St George in the Carmelite friary in Bordeaux that Spalyng and Rowley requested burial in. Their commercial activities had given them a connection and relationship with Bordeaux and, as foreigners to the port, they appear to have sought pious provision in the Carmelite friary.¹⁰² In Bristol, the friaries also housed images and altars of saints and attracted the laity through the cult of saints. In 1403, William Godewyn of St Stephen's parish requested burial in front of the image of the Blessed Mary in the house of the Franciscan friary.¹⁰³ In 1446 John Castleman left 2s. 6d. to the altar of St Catherine in house of the Austin friars.¹⁰⁴ These examples demonstrate local lay knowledge of the inside of the friaries, and suggest that they entered these friaries during their lifetimes and engaged with the cults of saints present in the friaries. Indeed, contemporary parallels to this can be seen to a greater extent in other places in the country. Norman Tanner has shown that the friaries in Norwich housed religious fraternities which were dedicated to a specific saint, while Holder has commented that the laity went inside the friary churches for devotional purposes.¹⁰⁵ So, it is almost certain that the laity were entering friaries for devotional purposes in Bristol and this further demonstrates the potential for devotional activities in life to be reflected in the last will and testament.

Friars lived in mendicant poverty and relied on the laity to fund their activities and sustain them. The lack of evidence makes it difficult to gauge the laity's support of the friars in daily life. However, some wills demonstrate that testators recognised the mendicant poverty of the friars and left legacies, beyond general and formulaic bequests, to aid poor and elderly friars. William Burdene referred to Elias Spelly's shops in 1420. He mentioned that these shops housed poor or old mendicants and were located on Berelane.¹⁰⁶ Burdene left 6s. 8d.

¹⁰² It is well documented that friaries were places for foreigners. Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants', pp. 460-461. It is also possible that there was a strong relationship between the Carmelite houses in Bristol and Bordeaux, as Emery argues that the French mendicant houses were founded from Marseille and Bordeaux, and that the Bordeaux Carmelites were probably founded from England. Given the existing trade links between the two ports, it is possible that the Carmelites reached France through these existing networks. R. W. Emery, *The Friaries in Medieval France: A Catalogue of French Mendicant Convents, 1200-1500*. (New York, 1962), p. 9.

¹⁰³ PROB 11/2A/88.

¹⁰⁴ London, Lambeth Palace Library, V/A/11 f. 147v.

¹⁰⁵ Tanner, *The Church in late Medieval Norwich, 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984), Appendix 8; Holder, *The friaries of medieval London*, p. 189.

¹⁰⁶ In the parish of Temple.

to them.¹⁰⁷ Elias Spelly was a burgess of Bristol who made his will in 1390.¹⁰⁸ His will details properties on Berelane, but they are not described as almshouses. His wife's will also does not mention them.¹⁰⁹ This suggests that the conversion of these shops to almshouses was either arranged prior to Spelly's death, or that it was done by his executors for the salvation of Spelly's soul. William Inhyn referred to the 'begging friars' in Bristol, to whom he left 11d.. This is a clear indication of his perception of their mendicant role which may be a continuation of his support of them in life.¹¹⁰ Testators from Bristol also left legacies to friaries outside of the town: in 1457 Robert Sturmy left 20s. to the 'poor friars of ye Woodehous by ye Clee in Shroppeshire', as well as leaving 10s. to each order of friars in Bristol.¹¹¹

Another interaction between the laity and friars was through their role as confessors, and this may also have been reflected in the will through the naming of specific friars. Between 1400 and 1500, only eight friars are named, and most of these mentions fall between 1404 and 1419. In 1404, John Bount left 40s. to the friar John Bernford to pray for his soul, the souls of his parents and his benefactors in masses and other prayers.¹¹² In 1406, Joan Brompton left a Franciscan friar, Richard Kockusdene, 20s. and a mazer.¹¹³ Walter Seymour and Felicia Holewey left legacies to John Cambyle of the Carmelite friars in 1410 and 1417 respectively.¹¹⁴ Burgess argues that the mention of the friars such as John Cambyle demonstrates the laity's respect for the friars, but that nothing more can be said beyond that.¹¹⁵ However, the naming of individual friars might be indicative of their role as confessors in the town, and this is a possibility worth considering here. Indeed, in London Holder and Maureen Jurkowski argue that there is evidence to suggest that the laity paid the friars to hear their confession. Both have suggested that this was only paid by wealthier lay people to 'senior mendicant

¹⁰⁷ PROB 11/2B/341; Edmund Bierden also left a legacy to the poor friars in Spelly's shops in 1435. JOR/1/1, ff. 165r-166v. He may have been the son of the aforesaid William who was mentioned in his will.

¹⁰⁸ *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills in the volume entitled the Great Orphan Book*, pp. 26-28.

¹⁰⁹ PROB 11/2A/126.

¹¹⁰ *The Great Red Book of Bristol Text (Part II)*, ed. by E. W. W. Veale (Bristol, 1938), pp. 205-206.

¹¹¹ PROB 11/4/292.

¹¹² PROB 11/2A/139.

¹¹³ P. AS. D/NA/ 33. A mazer is a wooden drinking vessel.

¹¹⁴ JOR/1/1, ff. 112r-113r, 136.

¹¹⁵ Burgess, 'Friars and the Parish', p. 74.

confessors'.¹¹⁶ The friars mentioned by name in the Bristol wills, then, might be part of the 'elite corps' of friars who heard confession within the mendicant houses.¹¹⁷ All of this suggests that laity engaged with the friaries as part of their devotional activities to a greater extent in life than has previously been suggested for Bristol.

3.5: Hospitals

When considered alongside parish churches, chapels and friaries, hospitals do not appear to be quantitatively significant in testators' networks of piety in the fifteenth-century town (Appendix 2). However, some case studies shed light on the scope of pious provision for the laity provided by hospitals and the importance of hospitals from the perspective of some testators.

Hospitals cared for the sick, but they also looked after the old, poor and travelling.¹¹⁸ Shelia Sweetinburgh has highlighted that the label 'hospital' was used to describe a variety of charitable institutions which included chapels, alms houses, leper houses, and hospitals attached to religious institutions.¹¹⁹ Testators in Bristol appear to have used hospitals in two ways. 'Hospitals' that existed to house the poor (mainly alms houses or hospitals such as St Bartholomew's) were patronised by the testator in order to secure the prayers of the poor for their soul in purgatory.¹²⁰ Conversely, the hospitals of St John the Baptist's in Redcliffe Pit and St Mark's Hospital on St Augustine's Green had interactions with testators during their lifetimes as well as providing commemorative services for them after death. This study focuses on institutions that are labelled hospitals, excluding alms or leper houses because these types of foundation tended to only have been used by testators as a purgatorial device, and so testamentary bequests cannot be taken as evidence of a relationship with such a foundation during the testator's lifetime.

¹¹⁶ Holder, *The friars of Medieval London*, p. 253; M. Jurkowski, 'Were Friars Paid Salaries? Evidence from Clerical Taxation Records', *The Fifteenth Century*, 13 (2014), pp. 131-151.

¹¹⁷ Jurkowski, 'Were Friars Paid Salaries?', p. 138.

¹¹⁸ Orme & Webster, *The English Hospital*, pp. pp. 107-117.

¹¹⁹ S. Sweetinburgh, *The Role of the Hospital in Medieval England: Gift Giving and the Spiritual Economy* (Dublin, 2004), pp. 21-22.

¹²⁰ R. Price, *Excavations at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bristol* (Bristol, 1979), p. 17.

3.5.1: St John the Baptist's Hospital, Redcliffe

The hospital of St John the Baptist was situated in Redcliffe Pit (the area at the bottom of Redcliffe Hill), next to the parish church of St Mary Redcliffe. It was the only hospital in the southern suburb of the town and it followed an Augustinian rule.¹²¹ General bequests to the hospital give an idea of the type of residents that lived in the hospital. Joan Brompton bequeathed 3s. 4d. to the 'viris [unreadable] infirmis' (ill men) who were in the hospital in Redcliffe Pit in 1406. In contrast, she left 3s. 4d. to the 'pauperibus et egenis' (poor and destitute) in the Long Row Almshouse and 3s. 4d. to the poor and destitute in St Bartholomew's hospital.¹²² The differences in wording suggest that she was aware of the different groups present in different hospitals. In 1407, Alice Wodeford of St Nicholas's parish left 20d. to the poor women of the hospital of St John the Baptist in Redcliffe and 13s. 4d. to the sick, presumably of that same hospital.¹²³ These two bequests give the impression that the laity recognised different groups within the same hospital and did not regard the residents inside as simply 'poor'. Instead, testators understood the different functions of various hospitals, and different groups of people in hospitals, as has been found by historians in hospitals across late medieval England.¹²⁴ Similarly, in 1435 Edmund Bierden left a legacy to the poor inmates of the hospital, implying that some people were long-term residents. However, these people clearly lived in the same premises as the retired knight Nicholas Appurely.¹²⁵ He was clearly in the hospital in his old age and preparing for death. I wonder to what extent he might have mixed with these poor women, poor inmates and sick people that also lived there, and whether he considered engagement with these types of people (who were typically used as a purgatorial aid in the context of writing a will) as part of the preparation of his soul for death in the final part of his life. Evidence such as this raises questions as to the status of the 'poor' in these types of institutions.

¹²¹ Although there was a hospital dedicated to St Katherine just outside the town in Bedminster. W. Barrett, *History and Antiquities of Bristol (Bristol, 1789)*, p. 594.

¹²² P. AS D/NA/33. Brompton was from St Stephen's parish.

¹²³ PROB 11/2A/238.

¹²⁴ To the extent that historians can talk about these groups generally. For example, Orme & Webster, *The English Hospital*, pp. 107-117.

¹²⁵ PROB 11/2A/136.

Nicholas Appurley's will clearly demonstrates that the hospital also served rich and retired knights and Bristol's burgesses in addition to caring for the sick and poor.¹²⁶ Nicholas Appurley esquire died in 1404 and left his will to be proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.¹²⁷ He called the hospital 'ecclesie mee *parochia*' (my parish church) and left it 6s. 8d..¹²⁸ He also left 6s. 8d. to the actual parish church of St Mary Redcliffe that was situated next to the hospital. From the perspective of Appurley's will, this church was not identified as a parish church, let alone his parish church.¹²⁹ He requested burial in the house of the Austin Friars, in the same suburb as the hospital but in a different parish. It is interesting that Appurley conceived of the hospital as his parish church. Through labelling it as such he demonstrates that it served this function for him and was, at least in his mind, a parish church. His labelling may have reflected where he had been receiving the Eucharist in the time preceding the making of his will. Tithes were paid to the parish church in which the lay person received the sacrament, and, in my analysis of the wider source base, this has been a good indicator of which parish church a testator came from.¹³⁰ Hospitals often had a celebrant priest and liturgical equipment to perform divine service. It was only when the hospital did not have a chapel in which to perform services that they had to rely on the local parish church or a nearby religious house.¹³¹ In this case, it appears that St John the Baptist did have its own chapel.¹³² It perhaps demonstrates the centrality of the Eucharist in the testator's

¹²⁶ Hospitals were places where the wealthy could retire and be looked after in their old age. This appears to have been the case in many of the examples discussed in this chapter, and this happened elsewhere too. See M. Erle, 'Widows in Retirement: Region, Patronage, Spirituality, reading at the Gaunts, Bristol', *Religion & Literature*, 37/2 (2005), p. 52; G. Rosser, *Medieval Westminster: 1200-1540* (Oxford, 1989), p. 310. St James's hospital in Westminster transformed from a hospital for the poor into a retirement home for the wealthy elderly.

¹²⁷ PROB 11/2A/136.

¹²⁸ This could either be translated as 'my parish church within the house of St John the Baptist' or 'my parish church below the house of St John the Baptist' depending on the translation of the word 'infra'. I think that the first translation, 'within', is probably more likely. St John the Baptist's hospital sat at the bottom of Redcliffe Hill in Redcliffe Pit, below the parish church of St Mary Redcliffe. Therefore, based on our knowledge of the topography of Bristol, the latter does not make geographical sense: the parish church was not below the hospital. Indeed, the next clause of the will left 6s. 8d. to the St Mary Redcliffe, suggesting that this was not the church that he was bequeathing to in the first clause.

¹²⁹ The identification of the parish church as 'my' is rather unusual in the corpus wills: most wills say 'the' parish church. This might suggest that, being a resident, Appurley had a closer bond with the hospital of St John the Baptist and felt that he belonged to the community within the hospital.

¹³⁰ As discussed in the previous chapter.

¹³¹ N. Ramsay & J. M. W. Willoughby, *Hospitals, towns and the professions* (London, 2009), p. xxxiv.

¹³² Jamys Terumber was buried in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the hospital and house of St John the Baptist in 1488. Gloucester, Gloucestershire Archives, D3439/1/443.

engagement with this hospital. In London, Euan Roger and Caroline Barron have both shown that testators from the precinct of St Bartholomew's Hospital regarded the chapel therein as their parish church and have both argued that the hospital was a 'virtual parish'.¹³³ The example of Nicholas Appurley demonstrates that this was the case for St John's Hospital too, but to a lesser extent than in London.

Appurley's labelling of the hospital as a parish church is unusual in the Bristol context, but his will is unusual in other ways too. As discussed in this chapter's introduction, the preamble of his will differed from the typical formula used in Bristol's testamentary practice. However, Appurley was not the only testator to demonstrate a strong engagement with the hospital, even if other testators did not go as far as to call it a parish church. In his 1474 will, William Canynges the younger left a pair of vestments made of red damask for the use of the hospital of St John the Baptist in Redcliffe Pitt.¹³⁴ Canynges was a major benefactor of the parish church of St Mary Redcliffe and so his testamentary gift to the hospital likely reflected his position as a high-status individual in the town and upheld his public persona as a pious man. Egidea George left objects to the master of the house of St John the Baptist, Richard Colyns, in 1495.¹³⁵ Unlike Canynges, who gave items for liturgical use that were likely made new for the hospital on the instruction of his executors, she left more personal items that were probably already in her possession at the time of writing her will.¹³⁶ She gave Colyns a picture (possibly a painting) that is described as being 'de opere flandr [sic]' (of Flanders work), her best silver and gilded cup called 'a Nutte,' and a pair of linen sheets. She was from the parish of St John the Baptist in the north of the town. The direction of her bequests to the master of the house suggests that she had a basic knowledge of the personnel of the hospital

¹³³ E. C. Roger, 'Blakberd's Treasure: A Study of Fifteenth Century Administration at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London', in *The Fifteenth Century XIII: Exploring the Evidence: Commemoration, Administration and the Economy*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 81-107; C. Barron, 'The People of the Parish: the close of St Bartholomew's Hospital in Fifteenth-Century London', in *The Urban Church in late Medieval England. Essays from the 2017 Harlaxton Symposium Held in Honour of Clive Burgess*, eds. by D. Harry & C. Steer (Donington, 2019), pp. 353-379.

¹³⁴ JOR/1/1 ff. 199v-201v. Damask was a silken fabric which could have patterns woven into it. 'Damask', *The Lexis of Cloth and Clothing Project*: <http://lexisearch.arts.manchester.ac.uk/entry.aspx?id=1453> Accessed 24/11/2019.

¹³⁵ PROB 11/10/399.

¹³⁶ Katherine French has explored this gendered dimension of giving in K. French, *The Good Women of the Parish*, ch 1.

and knew who the master was. French argues that women often left the cloth in their possession to their parish churches so that it might be used for, or made into, vestments. This would mean that their personal object would have been used in the celebration of the Eucharist and would have come close to the body of Christ. However, it is unlikely that a linen cloth would have been of good enough quality to be used as a vestments or coverings for the hospital's altar. It is possible that it may have had another use which would have aided Egidea's soul and demonstrated her piety. Linen was a cheaper cloth and was typically used for bed clothes, dressing children, absorbing blood or wrapping a body in for burial.¹³⁷ Other testators explicitly left linen to the poor and needy.¹³⁸ Therefore, it is plausible that it could have been used in tending to the sick who resided within the hospital. As well as helping the poor, and therefore potentially winning their prayers for her soul in purgatory, the linen would have been used to tend to the sick, mirroring Egidea's own domestic and maternal role during her lifetime. This donation, then, could be regarded as a reflection on and an expression of her piety during her lifetime.¹³⁹

Despite considering the hospital his home parish church, Appurley chose not to be buried within the hospital. Instead, he chose the Austin friars as his final resting place. Yet, burial was possible within the hospital. James Terumber requested burial in the chapel of Our Lady within the hospital and house of St John the Baptist at Redcliffe Hill in Bristol.¹⁴⁰ He was of the parish of St Mary Redcliffe and left a legacy of 6s. 8d. to Nicholas Pyttes, vicar of Redcliffe, 6s. 8d. to contribute to the repair of the conduit of Redcliffe, and 6s. 8d. to the use of the church of St Mary Redcliffe.¹⁴¹ He also left 6s. 8d. to Sir Bennett of St John's house, presumably the priest, and 4d. to every child in the hospital. It is striking that he wanted to

¹³⁷ S. E. James, *Women's voices in Tudor wills, 1485-1603* (London, 2015), p. 275.

¹³⁸ For example John Leycestre d. 1436, JOR/1/1, ff. 169r-170r.

¹³⁹ French argues that there was a strong relationship between housekeeping and church-keeping, and through their role maintaining the church, medieval women found purpose in their housework. I think that this argument could also be extended to their donations to some of the caring duties appropriated by hospitals in the later Middle Ages.

¹⁴⁰ As Sweetinburgh has argued, the same institution could be identified by testators by a range of labels; Sweetinburgh, *The Role of the Hospital*. Here, the 'house' probably refers to the community of clergy that resided within the hospital of St John the Baptist, and can be considered as part of the same institution.

¹⁴¹ These legacies can be taken as tithe and fabric legacies. It was usual in Bristol for the parish church to be responsible for the maintenance of the conduit, as Burgess has demonstrated in All Saints' parish. See Burgess, *The Right Ordering of Souls*, pp. 74-80.

be buried and commemorated in the hospital of St John rather than in his parish church, which he demonstrated a strong connection to. Perhaps he wished to be remembered more by the poor inmates of the hospital than by his equals who attended St Mary Redcliffe's. His will also suggests that he might have not originated from Bristol, leaving 8d. to every poor person in the almshouse in Trowbridge, a market town in Wiltshire. He does not mention any family; perhaps the hospital served his commemorative needs in the absence of family. The bequests he left were all concerned with dying and prayers for his soul. While a part of Terumber's life prior to making the will, the hospital was not as central to his piety as it appears to have been to Nicholas Appurley's.

3.5.2: St Mark's Hospital, St Augustine's Green

The other hospital of significance was St Mark's Hospital in the parish of St Augustine that sat across the Green from St Augustine's Abbey. The hospital was founded in the early thirteenth century by Maurice de Gaunt (and is sometimes referred to as the Gaunt's hospital) who was a cousin of Thomas, Lord Berkeley.¹⁴² It was subject to the Augustinian rule.¹⁴³ The hospital appears to have housed long-term residents of burgess, gentry and aristocratic status rather than the poor, and the hospital had burial rights.¹⁴⁴ It does not appear in collections of wills in the same way as hospitals that housed the poor were: there are no general bequests to the hospital of St Mark.¹⁴⁵ Instead, wills from the residents of St Mark's survive from the 1470s onwards. There are five that survive from 1470 to 1502 in the registers of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

All these testators made detailed burial requests which often focused on a saint, a side chapel, or the mass. Through this specification, they ensured that they were buried within exclusive spaces in the church. None of them left legacies for tithes forgotten to St Mark's Hospital or to any other parish churches.¹⁴⁶ Instead, they left legacies that supported the church's fabric. This implies that they considered themselves to be the parishioners of this

¹⁴² C. D. Ross, 'Introduction', *Cartulary of St Mark's Hospital* (Bristol, 1959), p. xii.

¹⁴³ Ross, 'Introduction', p. xv.

¹⁴⁴ This is exemplified in the William Chew case, to be discussed below.

¹⁴⁵ But this might be survival bias.

¹⁴⁶ Legacies for tithes forgotten appear in other wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. The lack of tithe legacies is an anomaly of this group of St Mark's testators.

church who were responsible for the fabric of the nave. Neither do they refer to the chapel in which these services take place as a hospital but talk about it as a church, which emphasises its liturgical and devotional focus. There is no mention of poor tenants of the house of St Mark, unlike other hospitals in Bristol. It appears, then, that this was an elite space and a place where the wealthy would stay, worship and die. Although Bettey states that there were at least a hundred poor inmates at the hospital after it was founded in the thirteenth century, it appears that the hospital transformed by the fifteenth century into a place for retired gentry and wealthy middling sorts, like other hospitals in England.¹⁴⁷ As one example, in 1495 Thomas Sywande requested burial in St Mark's. He identified himself as 'nuper Rectori ecclesie *parochia* Sancta Andreon ville Bristolle' (lately the rector of the parish church of St Ewen in the town of Bristol) He left £11 to purchase a pair of silver candlesticks, his great goblet to the use of the infirmary, and the ornaments and utensils in his chamber to serve the brethren of the hospital.¹⁴⁸ His description of his chamber as 'in qua iacio' (in which I lie) suggests that he too may have been a resident at the hospital in his old age after retiring from his post as the rector of St Ewen's.¹⁴⁹ His will demonstrated that it functioned as a hospital, mentioning the infirmary, but it took the place of the parish in his will. In the general absence of gifts to other parish churches in their wills, it appears that the hospital's church took on the role of the parish church for this set of testators. Indeed, when William Worcestre visited Bristol in 1480, he described the hospital as a parish church in the precinct of St Augustine's.¹⁵⁰ It is interesting that it was perceived as such by a relative outsider such as Worcestre even though it was not a parish church. Mary Erle suggests that this is reflective of the wider acceptance of the changing function of hospitals by the late fifteenth century.¹⁵¹

The church of St Mark's Hospital became the primary pious institutions for some people who had come to Bristol from elsewhere. This is evident in the earliest two wills from

¹⁴⁷ Rosser, *Medieval Westminster*, p. 310.

¹⁴⁸ PROB 11/11/75.

¹⁴⁹ 'Item lego usim firmaris dictum hospitalis sancti amrci tota ornamenta mea totus carneit mee in qua iacio sine utensilia in eadem existent'.

¹⁵⁰ 'Ecclesia parochialis in sanctuario sancti Augustini ex parte boriali ville Bristollie. vocata. le Gauntes vbi Ecclesia Religiosa in honore sancti Marci dedica ta', *William Worcestre*, p. 198-199; Erle, 'Widows in Retirement', pp. 52-3; Orme & Webster, *The English Hospital*, p. 3.

¹⁵¹ Erle, 'Widows in Retirement', pp. 52-3.

St Mark's, that were made by Thomas Mathewe and Reyborne Mathewe in 1470.¹⁵² Both requested burial in the chapel of St Mary within the church of St Mark, and Thomas Mathewe also specified that he was to be buried before the image of St Andrew. Both left a legacy of 12d. to the church, which can be assumed to be a fabric legacy. They also left legacies to the cathedral church of Llandaff in south Wales: Thomas Mathewe left 12d. to Llandaff while Reyborne left 6s. 8d. to the cathedral, 6s. 8d. to the fabric of the bridge at Llandaff, and provision for a chantry to be set up for the soul of David Mathewe, his father, in Llandaff cathedral. These men were brothers, as Reyborne's will mentions the division of his lands in the Welsh Marches, to be divided between the male heirs of his brother Thomas.¹⁵³ It is likely that they had migrated from South Wales to Bristol.¹⁵⁴ The hospital was presented in the same way that a parish church would have been in the will. Other foreigners to Bristol adopted a parish church when in the town, and it appears that St Mark's was also used in this way by outsiders to the town.¹⁵⁵

Some of the inhabitants of St Mark's Hospital were exceedingly wealthy and came from the gentry. This is evident in the will of Elizabeth Cornewell, which was made in 1489 while she was living at the hospital.¹⁵⁶ She requested burial in the chapel of St Nicholas within the church of St Mark. She left 40s. for the building of the east end of the church of St Mark which was the chancel which housed the mass. She also left objects made of silver to the house and 40s. to the making of a widow in the chapel in which she had requested burial. Her will presents an image of wealth, leaving extensive cash and material legacies to her daughter and son-in-law, their family, her servants and her extended kinship group including her godchildren. Unlike every other testator from Bristol, she left a legacy to a shrine and was in

¹⁵² PROB 11/5/467; PROB 11/6/17.

¹⁵³ 'Glynogor' might be a form of 'Guinta' (Gwent) which was a province in South Wales between Usk and Wye. C. Trice Martin, *The Record Interpreter: A Collection of Abbreviations, Latin words and names used in English historical manuscripts and records* (London, 2nd edition, 1910), p. 281.

¹⁵⁴ This is likely because of their association with Llandaff, their father and Thomas Mathewe's son having the name David, their property in Wales and Thomas Mathewe specifying that his land would go to his son by English custom. The mention of English custom implies that this had to be stated because the land was not in England.

¹⁵⁵ A good example of someone from outside of Bristol adopting a parish church when they were in the town is the case of David Kyllingworth from Westhaven in west Wales who made his will in 1461. He requested burial in All Saints' Church, Bristol, and left his son under the guardianship of William Jooce of Bristol. Kyllingworth was a merchant and identified himself as being from Westhaven, but it is clear from his will that he had become part of the parish of All Saints' through his mercantile activity in the town. PROB 11/4/379.

¹⁵⁶ PROB 11/8/337.

the possession of relics: 'To the shrine of St Thomas of Harford, my chayne of golde with my tabule of reliquis and other things hangyng there by.' Like Nicholas Appurley, she was a wealthy person living in the hospital in her old age. Mary Erle has explored her position in the hospital, finding that she was the widow of landholders in Herefordshire and Shropshire whose lineage traced back to Richard Earl of Cornwall, the illegitimate brother of Henry III. She came to the hospital in her old age and, like her father, was a patron of the hospital's fabric.¹⁵⁷ She was not related to any common officer holders in Bristol, and her will demonstrates how the hospital attracted people of higher status than the burgesses who ran the town's government.

The hospital clearly ran a sophisticated liturgy, evident in the will of John Hemmyng from 1498.¹⁵⁸ He requested burial in the chapel of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ within the church of St Mark. He also left a legacy to the parish church of St Michael, had property on Small Street, and owned a tenement on St Augustine's Green in which he lived. He requested that, with the reversion of the tenement on St Augustine's Green, the clergy of St Mark's say a mass to '*...Omnipotens & misericors deus, ob amorem Nativitatis, Passionis & Resurrectionis filie tui Jhesu miserere anime famuli tui & cum missa de transfiguratione domini nostri Ihesu xpsti qualiter die Jovis*' (...to the all-powerful and merciful God, on account of the affection of the nativity, the passion and the resurrection of your son Jesus and the soul of your servant and with the mass of the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ as they do on a Thursday). This shows his devotional sensibilities and, along with his burial request, his fixation on the transfiguration of the Christ. Yet the bequest also suggests that Hemmyng had a detailed knowledge of the liturgy and liturgical practice in the hospital of St Mark, knowing the weekly devotional programme of the church.

As well as demonstrating an intimate knowledge of the Church's liturgical calendar, Hemmyng also shows that the hospital acted as a parish church for those living outside of the hospital, not just those living in it. The property on St Augustine's Green detailed in the will and his knowledge of the liturgy suggests that he either lived close to the hospital and used it as his primary place of worship, like a parish church, or that he retired to live in the hospital.

¹⁵⁷ Erle, 'Widows in Retirement', pp. 53-54.

¹⁵⁸ D3439/1/441.

Both are likely possibilities and the two do not have to be mutually exclusive, but his will clearly shows that he had a living wife, children and grandchildren which suggests that he was not a resident of the hospital but still viewed it as his parish church.¹⁵⁹ Likewise, Walter Wraltesley esquire does not appear to have been a resident of the hospital. He requested burial in the chancel of the church next to his wife's grave there but demonstrates that he had tenements in Somerset and Wilshire.¹⁶⁰ Hemmyng and Wraltesley appear to have had different levels of interaction with the hospital, with Hemmyng living close by and being aware of the liturgical practice of the hospital, while Wraltesley was from Worcester and seems to have been part of the gentry rather than of burgess status like many other Bristol testators.¹⁶¹ Both, however, are examples of people who engaged with the hospital in life from outside of the precinct as their primary pious institution.

St Mark's Hospital possessed many rites which were akin to the functions of parish churches. It sat within the parish of St Augustine, close to the parish church of St Augustine the Less and, on occasion, the rites of the hospital brought it into conflict with the parish. In 1426, the vicar of St Augustine the Less, William Chew, was tried in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Worcester. He was accused of digging up the bodies of William Leche, Christina, mother of John Hore, and Andrew Hutchins from the cemetery of the hospital on Palm Sunday in 1420. All had been residents of the hospital and had died there. He took their bodies to his own parish church and reburied them there and took the dues of 100s. paid by their families for the saying of prayers for their souls. He had also taken Sybil Hutchings, another resident of the hospital, away to his church for her purification. He kept the wax tapers and the gown for her purification. He confessed to these charges in 1426 and was excommunicated for them. The three stolen bodies were returned to the hospital and he was ordered to return the wax, garment and 100s. to the hospital also. After this, his excommunication was lifted.¹⁶² This case primarily deals with Chew's criminal and abusive actions, but it also highlights the tension that the hospital caused within the parish. The rites possessed by the hospital took

¹⁵⁹ PROB 11/11/599.

¹⁶⁰ PROB 11/13/389.

¹⁶¹ Indeed, Doyle argues that the wealth of the hospital's manuscript culture attracted the wealthy and members of the gentry to the institutions. A. I. Doyle, 'Books with Marginalia from St Mark's Hospital, Bristol', in *New Direction in Medieval Manuscript Studies and Reading Practices: Essays in Honor of Derek Pearsall*, eds. by K. Kerby-Fulton, J. J. Thompson & S. Baechle (Indiana, 2014), p. 178.

¹⁶² *Cartulary of St. Mark's Hospital, Bristol*, pp. 46-50.

potential income away from the parish church and for some, such as Chew, this was problematic. Chew's actions appear to have been motivated by a wish to regain lost income, monetary and material, that his parish church had lost to the hospital.

In other places in the town, testators were careful to leave legacies to their parish churches to compensate for any loss of income. A clear example of this that has already been discussed was Isabel Barstaple, who requested burial in the chapel of the Holy Trinity at Lafford's Gate but also left £3 to the rector of her parish church of St Werburgh's, on the condition that he would not prohibit the translation of her body to the chapel at Lafford's Gate for burial. Although she did not explicitly state that there would be a problem with her being buried outside of the parish, her stipulation and arrangement shows that she was pre-empting a potential conflict concerning her burial. Conflict would have arisen if the parish church suffered financially from her extra-parochial piety. She furthered her agenda of extra-parochial piety by compensating the clergy to ensure her wishes, showing that she was willing to put significant financial arrangements in place to facilitate the cost of transporting her corpse, and preventing conflict arising from this action.¹⁶³ The dispute between Chew and St Mark's does not represent hostility towards this specific hospital but is more representative of disputes between parish churches and extra-parochial institutions on a broader scale. However, the proximity of three institutions in the single parish of St Augustine's (the parish church, the Hospital and the Abbey) did appear to have been a continuing cause of dispute between the three institutions over income derived from the laity.¹⁶⁴

St Mark's position on the edge of the town appears to have placed it in a liminal position between the townspeople and the people from the neighbouring counties. As we have seen above, some of those whose wills patronise and focus on St Mark's were from members of the gentry from Bristol's surrounding counties. However, Erle has also shown

¹⁶³ In Hereford, the transportation of bodies from home parishes to the cathedral cemetery incurred considerable cost and effort. I. Forrest, 'The Politics of Burial in Late Medieval Hereford', *English Historical Review*, 125/516 (2010), p. 1111.

¹⁶⁴ In the early thirteenth century the Abbey of St Augustine, which was situated across the Green from the hospital of St Mark's, were unhappy and protested the hospital's use of land and entitlement to the goods bequeathed to it by its founder, Maurice de Gaunt. Barrett, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol*, pp. 345-346.

that the hospital engaged with the town's commonality and that this is highlighted in the case of John Hemmyng, who appeared to be a neighbour of the hospital during his lifetime.¹⁶⁵

It appears that the majority of testators who engaged with hospitals in their wills were happy to use the church or chapel associated with a hospital, provided that it could fulfil the commemorative duties that the testator required from it after their death, and could provide them with devotional provision and the sacrament in life. This is also seen to be the case in Belinus Nansmeon's will in which he left books in exchange for commemoration to the church of St Mary Redcliffe. If that church did not fulfil the duties he required of it, the books were to go to the church of St Thomas the Martyr, then to the church of the Holy Cross of Temple, and finally to be given to the hospital of St Katherine in Bedminster (just south of Bristol) if all three parish churches in the southern suburb had failed to fulfil his request for commemoration. It is unclear why he overlooked the hospital of St John the Baptist in Redcliffe for this purpose, but it is evident that he saw the hospital of St Katherine as being capable of meeting his commemorative needs.¹⁶⁶ Perhaps there was an overlap or relationship between the clergy of St Mary Redcliffe's and St John's Hospital meaning that the failure of St Mary Redcliffe's could not be rectified by the hospital, but this is only conjecture. Alternatively, he might have been trying to access the prayers of different groups of lay people who may have witnessed the services and so the hospital of St Katherine in Bedminster offered a more distinct alternative. It is perhaps significant that he did not choose to leave the books to the parish church of St John the Baptist in Bedminster. This, however, may be because he was not a local in Bedminster, whereas the proximity of the parishes in the southern suburb meant that he could have been known by all parish churches in the neighbourhood.

3.6: Conclusion

The discussion of testators' use of religious institutions outside of their parish churches attests to the intensity of religious provision that was found in such an urban space. Some of these extra-parochial institutions were able to provide for the laity in a similar way to the parish churches. Friaries, hospitals and standalone chapels were certainly able to provide for

¹⁶⁵ Erle, pp. 55-62; D3439/1/441.

¹⁶⁶ JOR/1/1, f. 127.

testators as they prepared to die and in their arrangements for commemoration. But, cases involving all types of institutions demonstrate that these establishments also provided devotional services for some testators during their lifetimes. The discussion in this chapter does not prove that the parish was unimportant, but that these institutions took on a different yet important role in the devotional life of the testator. On this basis, it is perhaps wise to move away from claims that the parish and the parish church governed, and was primary to, the piety of the late medieval lay person as some have suggested, but instead to consider the parish as an important institution alongside other types of institutions in the urban context. This fits into what other historians argue about these types of institutions in urban centres elsewhere in England during this period.¹⁶⁷ It also argues for the complexity of devotional activity and the loyalties that such activities fostered, and calls into question the centrality of the parish to the laity's devotional lives as some have argued for late medieval England and for Bristol.¹⁶⁸

The case of William Chew and St Mark's hospital demonstrates that parish churches were not always happy with their parishioners finding spiritual services elsewhere, but individual case studies derived from wills show that testators could and did go to different types of institutions that could best serve them, and that, in the case of Isabel Barstaple, could navigate these types of issues. These conflicts were not unique to Bristol and appear to be a product of a diversity of religious provision. They are similar to those explored in Andrew Brown's work that shows that there was conflict between the church that housed a guild and the testators' home parish church in the Diocese of Salisbury.¹⁶⁹

The difference in in-degree centrality of the parish churches to extra-parochial institution shows that most people left bequests to their parish churches, but also that testators gave to extra-parochial institutions in meaningful ways. This has been explored through qualitative analysis of these individual cases which demonstrates how important these spaces could be to the laity. The patterns of devotional behaviour described above were only accessible to the richest of the town. Being able to afford monuments in a parochial

¹⁶⁷ Barron, 'The People of the Parish'; Rogers, 'Blakberd's Treasure'; Röhrkasten, 'Londoners and London Mendicants'; Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 153.

¹⁶⁸ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 67.

¹⁶⁹ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 155.

chapel or standalone chapel demonstrated their privilege and wealth. Isabel Barstaple, for example, was only able to pursue her extra-parochial piety because of her wealth. These examples do not give a general model of piety for the time, however they do demonstrate some features of it. Likewise, the individuals who were buried in friaries or hospitals could do so because of their wealth and were not typical of the majority of residents in these types of institutions: the poor. Yet, although wealth might appear to be the important factor here, it was the intensity of religious provision in the urban context that made these pious associations possible and it is plausible that other levels of Bristol's society might have exploited the different types of institution in Bristol for their piety as well.

However, even though representation is limited to the wealthy, it is nonetheless noteworthy that this investigation has produced a different outcome to the work of Burgess on All Saint's parish which also focuses on the better-off and powerful of the town. This study has found that some did not think of themselves as belonging to one single parish and that extra-parochial institutions were as important as the parish, if not more important in some cases. In his work on mercantile piety in later medieval England, Burgess argues that merchants used and became familiar with an array of institutions other than the parish as a result of their travel.¹⁷⁰ His argument suggests engagement with extra-parochial institutions when they were away from home but a continued reliance on the parish when in Bristol. This chapter, however, demonstrates that merchants also used these other spaces and institutions when in Bristol, and that appreciation and use of other types of institution was not limited by vocation to merchants but was accessible to testators from other vocational groups such as tuckers, drapers' widows, and masons.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Burgess, 'Making Mammon Serve God', p. 188.

¹⁷¹ Examples of testators from non-mercantile vocations that have been used in this chapter are John Palmer, tucker, Juliana Richard's, the widow of a draper, and Nicholas Waleys, a mason. JOr/1/1, f. 85; JOr/1/1, ff. 122v-123r; JOr/1/1, f. 83.

4: Heretics and lollards in the late medieval town

4.1: Introduction

So far, this thesis has considered devotional practice that could largely be described as 'orthodox', but Bristol also had a reputation in the fifteenth century and in contemporary historiography as being a centre of heretical activity and a home to lollards. This said, to talk about 'the Bristol lollards' is to project a false sense of uniformity upon those individuals who were tried for the crime of heresy in Bristol across the fifteenth century. The evidence for this, which largely comes from the notes of purgation or abjuration in the bishop's registers, demonstrates that dissent and unorthodoxy took on different groupings and theological focuses across the century. Indeed, the idea of a 'lollard threat' is one constructed by the process of prosecution by the bishops, and has been all too readily accepted by historians.¹ Instead, this chapter will argue that individuals and groups were present in Bristol who probably saw themselves as true Christians and who were attempting to bring positive reform to their faith in order to find the true will of God. Some of these were more aligned with the ideas of Wycliffism than others. Crucially, although found to be unorthodox and heretical by the bishop, the views expressed by some deponents suggest that they did not see themselves as heretical. Furthermore, these individuals could, and did, exist in mainstream society alongside their neighbours.² This chapter will consider their interaction with the institutions of the church in their immediate locality, but also what the beliefs recorded in their heresy trials might tell us about the issue of a 'lollard group' and their intentions as individual agents for change.

The notion that Bristol was a centre for heretical activity has become controversial in recent years. For a long time, there was agreement that Bristol was a place where heretics

¹ A broader discussion of this can be found in J. P. Hornbeck, M. Bose & F. Somerset, *A Companion to Lollardy* (Leiden, 2016), pp. 107-111. Also see K. Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion: Censorship and Tolerance of Revelatory Writing in Late Medieval England* (Notre Dame, 2006) for a broader discussion of the religious context under suspicion in which to contextualise lollardy. See also J. H. Arnold, *Inquisition and power: Catharism and the confessing subject in medieval Languedoc* (Philadelphia, 2001) for a Foucauldian exploration of the impact of the power in the process of inquisition.

² A positive approach to lollard spirituality has been taken by Fiona Somerset in F. Somerset, *Feeling like Saints*. See also Hornbeck, *A Companion to Lollardy* (London, 2014), p. 12 fn. 27.

lived, met and evangelised. This argument started with K. B. McFarlane in 1952 whose work cast Bristol as an important centre in the popular movement from the late fourteenth century to Oldcastle's revolt in 1414. He was clear that the lollards from Bristol were weavers and that their heresy was facilitated by the cloth trade.³ In 1965, John A. F. Thomson's monograph on lollardy after 1414 identified Bristol as a significant centre for heretical activity within the West Country. He argues that, after Oldcastle's revolt, Bristol continued to be a source of dissenting activity but was clear that there was no national organisation to lollardy after 1414.⁴ Kightly's 1975 doctoral thesis dedicated a whole chapter to lollardy in Bristol in the early fifteenth century and states that the town was 'one of the most important centres of the lollard heresy.' He regarded Bristol as a place that sheltered 'active heretics' who spread dissenting ideas both within the town and in the regions around Bristol that used its market to trade cloth. He saw Oldcastle's revolt as confirmation of the town's heretical status and argued that a 'heretical congregation' continued to exist in Bristol after 1414.⁵ More recently, Katherine French states that Bristol was a 'hotbed of heresy' within her wider work on the diocese of Bath and Wells in which the south of Bristol lay.⁶ As a consequence of this earlier consensus, some historians such as Peter Fleming continue to write about Bristol as a centre for dissenting activity to contextualise other research focuses.⁷

However, since 2003 this notion has been challenged by Clive Burgess, who argues that the extent of heresy in the town has been wildly exaggerated. Instead of a 'hotbed of heresy', Burgess regards those who were tried for lollardy in the town to represent a 'network of disaffected individuals'. He argues that the Bristol elite used the threat of lollardy to bolster the power of their orthodox piety in Bristol.⁸ This has prompted a shift in opinion among some

³ K. B. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity* (London, 1952), pp. 127, 154, 171, 175-178, 184, 187. He considers Purvey at the end of the fourteenth century, Bristol's influence on John Badby, and the large contingent of Bristolians who followed Blake to the Oldcastle revolt, including the largest number of chaplains from one place.

⁴ J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (London, 1965), pp. 20-52.

⁵ C. Kightly, 'The Early Lollards: A Survey of Popular Activity in England 1382-1428' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 1975), p. 217.

⁶ K. French, *The People of the Parish: community life in a late medieval English diocese* (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 8.

⁷ P. Fleming, 'Women in Bristol', 1373-1660', in *Women and the City: Bristol 1373-2000*, ed. by M. Dresser (Bristol, 2016), pp. 15-44.

⁸ C. Burgess, 'A Hotbed of Heresy? Fifteenth-Century Bristol and the Lollards in Perspective' in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 43-62; C. Burgess, 'A Repertory of

historians. Patrick Hornbeck's *A Companion to Lollardy*, for example, excludes Bristol from a list of centres of lollardy with an explanatory footnote that Bristol was traditionally in this list until Burgess's 2003 chapter demonstrated that this was not the case.⁹ Indeed, Hornbeck also does not consider the Bristolian evidence within his own monograph *What is a Lollard?*¹⁰ The same is true of Shannon McSheffrey's study of gender and heresy.¹¹

Burgess's objection to widespread heresy in Bristol is based on the correct claim that there are few sources. For a town that is painted as a centre for heretical thought and practice, one might expect many records of heresy trials spread across the century. As is clear in Table 12, the largest number of people suspected of heresy appear as a result of Oldcastle's revolt.¹² In the middle part of the century it appears that deponents were tried on an individual basis which might suggest that there was no large group in Bristol during this time, or, at least, no group that the bishops could uncover. The only exception to this comes from William Fuer of Gloucester's 1448 trial in which he describes a network of people who were mostly from the south of the town.¹³ By the end of the fifteenth century there also appears to have been another group.

Reinforcement: Configuring Civic Catholicism in Fifteenth-Century Bristol', in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 85-108.

⁹ Hornbeck et al, *A Companion to Lollardy*, p. 53 fn. 114.

¹⁰ J. P. Hornbeck, *What is a Lollard?: Dissent and Belief in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2010).

¹¹ S. McSheffrey, *Gender and Heresy: Women and Men in Lollard Communities, 1420-1530* (Philadelphia, 1995).

¹² Catto has argued that Oldcastle's revolt cannot be taken as an accurate map of lollardy in 1414. This is because it was also very heavily associated with treason. J. Catto, 'Dissidents in an Age of Faith? Wycliffe and the Lollards', *History Today*, 37/11 (1987), p. 51. See also P. Strohm, *England's empty throne: usurpation and the language of legitimation, 1399-1422* (London, 1998), p. 73. Not everyone who was caught in the Oldcastle Revolt was tried for heresy. The connection between treason and lollardy has been explored in M. Aston, 'Lollardy and Sedition, 1381-1431', *Past and Present*, 17/1 (1960), p. 1-44.

¹³ Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 34; Worcester, Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service, 716.093/6/ii i f. 85v.

	Tried in Bristol	Dissenters in Bristol mentioned in other trials ¹⁴	Had been in/related to Bristol	Total people
1410-19	47 ¹⁵	0	1 ¹⁶	48
1420-29	3	0	1	4
1430-39	0	0	0	0
1440-49	2	5	2	9
1450-59	1	0	0	1
1460-69	1	0	0	1
1470-79	3	0	0	3
1480-89	0	0	0	0
1490-99	8	14 ¹⁷	1	23
1500-09	0	1	0	1
Totals	65	21	5	91

Table 12: Cases of dissent relating to Bristol between 1410 and 1509 found in bishops' registers and the King's Bench.¹⁸

McFarlane, Kightly and Anne Hudson all argue that the low number of trial records was a result of Bristol's position between two dioceses. This meant that heretics were able to

¹⁴ In cases where there is a trial record and a mention of an individual's dissent, the individual has been counted once under 'Tried in Bristol' to ensure the numbers are not inflated.

¹⁵ This includes those indicted under the King's Bench in 1414 after Oldcastle's revolt who were accused of lollardy and attempted regicide.

¹⁶ William Taillour has been counted in 1410-1419 and 1420-1429 as he was tried in 1417, 1420-21, and 1423.

¹⁷ This evidence comes from trials in Coventry in 1511. It has been put in the 1490-1499 timeframe as it relates to the group who were tried in Bristol in 1499. The Bristolian mentioned in these accounts who has been put in the 1500-1509 category is Thomas Clerc, whose activities can be dated to 1504.

¹⁸ This does not include John Badby who was burnt at the stake in 1401.

escape from the jurisdiction of one bishop by crossing into the neighbouring diocese.¹⁹ This brings into question how effectively the bishops worked together. Hudson says that there was occasional communication, detailed in bishops' registers, when they investigated heresy.²⁰ She demonstrates that the Bishops of Bath and Wells and the Bishops of Worcester appear to have communicated, and even collaborated, in their fight against heresy. She highlights that a list of questions for interrogating a suspected heretic appears in the Bishop of Worcester's register and later in the Bishop of Bath and Wells's register.²¹ From this, it may be inferred that there was some communication between the sees. There are other instances in England where heretics were sent from one bishop to another, and repeat offenders were often sent from the diocese in which they were arrested to the Archbishop for interrogation.²² Although the ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the town was split, the civil jurisdiction of the whole town rested under the Mayor and commonality. This was the body which formed juries that indicted the Oldcastle rebels before the King's Bench in 1414, and it was the Mayor and Sheriff who arrested and delivered Thomas Drayton and William Taillour to the Bishop of Worcester in 1420. Martha Skeeters argues that officials of both bishops were present in the town regularly, evident in probate clauses, and that the commissioner of the Bishop of Worcester lived in the north of the town in 1530. Episcopal presence was not lacking in the town.²³ Therefore, although there was a split in jurisdiction across the town, it did not appear to have impinged on the effectiveness of detection by the secular and ecclesiastical authorities.

There are some indications that there were likely more heresy trials than the evidence which survives. In his 1457 trial, Walter Combe referenced a man called William Smyth who was burnt in Bristol for heresy.²⁴ Smyth was also mentioned by William Fuer of Gloucester who claimed to have been given English books by Smyth prior to 1448 and in the trial of John

¹⁹ McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the beginnings of English nonconformity*, p. 127; Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 217; A. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite texts and Lollard history* (Oxford, 1988), p. 122-123.

²⁰ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, pp. 124-125. The same people are named in trials in different dioceses but no link is made between them by the bishops.

²¹ A. Hudson, 'The Examination of Lollards', *Historical Research*, 46 (1973), pp. 146-147.

²² This happened to John Badby and others who were eventually burnt at the stake.

²³ M. C. Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation c. 1530-c. 1570* (Oxford, 2003), p. 14.

²⁴ SHC, D/D/breg/6, ff. 212v-213r.

Willis, a weaver from Bristol tried by the Bishop of Lincoln.²⁵ Yet, there is no record of a trial for William's Smyth, or an excommunication and execution order.²⁶ There are mentions of people from Bristol in heresy trials elsewhere in the country, such as the fourteen individuals who were named by deponents tried in Coventry between 1511 and 1512. John Badby, the first lay man to be burned on charges of heresy, also strongly indicated that there was heretical activity in Bristol before 1410.²⁷ People who had originated from Bristol were also tried by bishops in other dioceses: Willis was tried for heresy by Bishop Chedworth of Lincoln in 1462.²⁸

A second point to consider in relation to the historiographical debate is the language being used by the historians. Burgess's main complaint with French's argument seems to be the extreme nature of French's labelling of Bristol as a 'hotbed'. I would agree with him here, but for different reasons. Hotbed is often used to talk about acts that are seen negatively by authorities (a hotbed of criminals, or a hotbed of prostitutes, for example). Andrew Larsen has highlighted that most historians have studied heresy as a crime and that this approach carries a set of assumptions with it: 'that individuals consciously set out to commit heresy the way one might set out to commit murder or arson'.²⁹ This appears to be how heresy in Bristol has been viewed here too: as negative and malicious. Yet this approach represents the view of the Church authorities, against whom unorthodox belief and activities was regarded as offensive. Certainly, those who participated in Oldcastle's revolt had malicious intentions towards the Crown and Church. But others who were found to be involved in dissenting activity appear to have been seeking reform in a way that they regarded as positive.

²⁵ Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives, DIOC/REG/20, f. 57v-58v, 60v, 62v.; Worcester, Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service, 716.093/BA2648/6/ii, 85v.

²⁶ Taunton, Somerset Heritage Centre, D/D/breg/6, f.212d-213; Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 34.

²⁷ He claimed that John Rakyer of Bristol had claimed that he had the same power as a priest to make the body of Christ. P. McNiven, *Heresy and Politics in the Reign of Henry IV: The Burning of John Badby* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 1, 199-202. Margaret Aston comments that the figure of Rakyer is representative of a broader sense in the later 1400s and early 1410s that heresy was a concern in Bristol. M. Aston, 'Reviewed Work: *Heresy and Politics in the Reigns of Henry IV: The Burning of John Badby* by Peter McNiven', *English Historical Review*, 105/415 (1990), pp. 451-452.

²⁸ *Lollards of Coventry, 1486-1522*, eds. by S. McSheffrey & N. Tanner (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 102-104, 124-127, 146-15-, 155-161, 223-227; DIOC/REG/20.

²⁹ A. E. Larsen, 'Are All Lollards Lollards?', in *Lollards and their influence in late Medieval England*, eds. by Somerset, F., Havens, J. C., & Pitard, D. G. (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 67.

Outside of the debate about heresy in the localised context of Bristol, the gap in general secondary literature between heterodoxy and orthodoxy as opposites has narrowed. Literary scholars have noted the similarities between heterodox or Wycliffite texts and orthodox or mainstream texts.³⁰ Somerset labels the orthodox as 'mainstream'. This label is more inclusive of a range of devotional activities that were not a universal experience, and allows for choice, fashion, and the impact of the social position on religious attitudes and devotional practice.³¹ Other studies consider lollards' relationships with the communities around them, and have shown how lollards continued to be part of the broader society despite their difference in religious views.³² The lollards' wider context has sometimes been reconstructed through the examination of wills.³³ Some lollards clearly still attended the mass which allowed them to continue to be part of the wider community within their parish.³⁴ There is a distinct overlap between the activities of those who might traditionally have been described as 'heterodox' and those that were 'orthodox'.

The study of dissent in Bristol would benefit from this approach in order to get beyond binary conclusions regarding dissent in the town. We are reminded by broader studies of late medieval England that unorthodoxy, dissent, and heresy was not restricted to Wyclif and the lollards who came after him. Instead, there are instances of friars being tried for heresy, a Cathar being burnt in London, concern about Joan of Arc and mystics such as Margery Kempe.³⁵ These examples remind us that lollardy was part of a wider discussion about faith and that some who were tried for heresy after the rise of lollardy may have, wrongly, been put into this category by the church authorities and by the historian, as a result of this varied

³⁰ A. Hudson, 'Some Problems of Identity and Identifications in Wycliffite Writings', in *Middle English Prose: Essays in Bibliographical Problems*, eds. by A. S. G. Edwards & D. Pearsall (New York, 1981), p. 81; J. C. Havens, 'Shading the Grey Area: Determining Heresy in Middle English Texts', in *Texts and Controversy from Wyclif to Bale*, eds. by H. Barr & A. M. Hutchinson (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 351-352; Somerset, *Feeling Like Saints*, p. 7.

³¹ Somerset, *Feeling Like Saints*, p. 7.

³² R. Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England: reconstructing piety* (Woodbridge, 2006), ch 5; A. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury 1250-1500* (Oxford, 1995), p. 218; M. Jurkowski, 'Lollardy and Social Status in East Anglia', *Speculum* (2007), pp. 120-152.

³³ For examples, see Luxton's work on Coventry. I. Luxton, 'The Litchfield Courtbook: A Postscript', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 33 (1971), pp. 120-125.

³⁴ Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion*, p. 169; Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 451.

³⁵ Kerby Fulton has detailed instances of non-Wycliffite cases of heresy in late medieval England in her Book, Kerby-Fulton, *Books under suspicion*, pp. xix-lii. See also Larsen, 'Are all lollards lollards?'.

discussion.³⁶ Beliefs that are extracted from heresy trials are largely the product of the questions asked. Caution also needs to be taken when assuming that we are reading the speech of the deponents in the surviving record: the text we read has been 'respoken for the benefit of the bishop's scribe'.³⁷ Inquisitions by bishops looked for lollard heresy. This prompted them to ask certain questions which created a certain set of answers.³⁸

The questions raised by this wider historiography are explored in this chapter. It considers the nature of dissenting activity in late medieval Bristol and the change and continuity of heresy across the century. It also questions whether those who were tried for heresy in Bristol were 'Lollards' and whether they can be considered to be part of an organised lollard movement.³⁹ Leading on from recent work on the relationship between the heterodox and orthodox, this chapter investigates the relationship between dissenters and the 'orthodox' laity in Bristol and considers the extent to which 'lollards' were integrated into the neighbourhoods and wider town around them. As part of this consideration, it questions lollards' relationship with the institutions of the Church within the town.

4.1.1: The process of heresy trials and the creation of documentary sources

Most of the information that we have about people who held heretical views comes from the documentation produced by the process of inquisition of the ecclesiastical authorities. Consequently, the actions and beliefs of the deponent are presented to us having been transmitted through many filters.⁴⁰ Suspected heretics could have been identified by some public act or as a result of being reported by another person.⁴¹ The bishop would investigate the claims made about an individual, gather evidence and then proceed to a trial. These trials would have included questioning the deponent as well as denunciations by witnesses.

³⁶ R. Swanson, *Church and Society in late medieval England* (Oxford, 1989), p. 335.

³⁷ J. H. Arnold, 'Voicing Dissent: Heresy Trials in Later Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 245/1 (2019), pp. 31, 37.

³⁸ Hornbeck, *A Companion to Lollardy*, pp. 107-111. 'More about the preoccupation of the searcher than about lollardy itself', p. 109. Swanson, *Church and Society*, p. 335.

³⁹ When lollard is written with a capital 'L' it is a proper noun and is therefore indicative of an organised and self-defined movement.

⁴⁰ Arnold, 'Inquisition and power', ch 3; Arnold, 'Voicing Dissent', p. 37.

⁴¹ I. Forrest, *The detection of heresy in late medieval England* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 207-213.

There were three outcomes of a heresy trial: abjuration, compurgation, or dismissal. The latter simply meant that no evidence could be found and the case could be dismissed. Abjuration meant that a deponent was found guilty of the crime of heresy and had to swear before the bishop that they would not continue with the criminal activity. This was sometimes accompanied by a penance. It was a crime to break the terms of the abjuration. The other outcome, compurgation, was where the bishop could not find the deponent guilty of the crime. This did not necessarily prove their innocence.⁴² The deponent had to find people of a similar status to themselves to be their compurgators and vouch for their good character. Through this, they would be restored to their previous reputation. Both abjuration and compurgation resulted in a certificate being written up that summarised the whole case and the outcome.⁴³ These were recorded into bishop's registers, and it is from these documents that we get evidence of lay people engaging with heresy. There are, of course, exceptions to this: indictments from the King's Bench after Oldcastle's revolt and some evidence from court books, such as the Litchfield Court Books. However, these are rare and most evidence comes from certificates.

4.2: Areas of dissent in Bristol

Figures 17, 18, 19 and 20 show the home parishes of dissenters who were tried by the ecclesiastical authorities in Bristol in red, and information about dissent in Bristol from other trial records in yellow. In the early fifteenth century (Figure 17), unorthodoxy and dissent appear to have been contained within the southern suburb of Bristol. Figure 17 represents the trials of Richard Devenyssh from Temple parish in 1413 and the trials that followed Oldcastle's revolt. It appears that most of those who followed William Blake, a household chaplain from the parish of St Thomas the Martyr, had come from the southern suburb of Bristol or just south of Bristol.⁴⁴ Although previous historians have argued that the split in jurisdiction may influence the way that we see heresy in the town, the trials that occurred after 1414 were the product of indictments made by the secular authorities. They had

⁴² R. H. Helmholz, 'Crime, Compurgation and the Courts of the medieval church', *Law and History Review*, 1 (1983), pp. 20, 23.

⁴³ Forrest, *The detection of heresy*, p. 7.

⁴⁴ Thomas Pontsrety was indicted by the Mayor of Bristol and jury before the King's Bench. He was from Keynsham which was less than six miles outside of the town. London, The National Archives, KB9/201/1/82.

jurisdiction over the whole town, not just the part of the town that lay in the diocese of Bath and Wells. Therefore, we can be confident that the rebels who went to St Giles's Field and were indicted by the King's Bench were from the southern suburb, and those who were tried before Bishop Bubwith for their support of the Oldcastle rebels, were from also the southern suburb of the town.⁴⁵

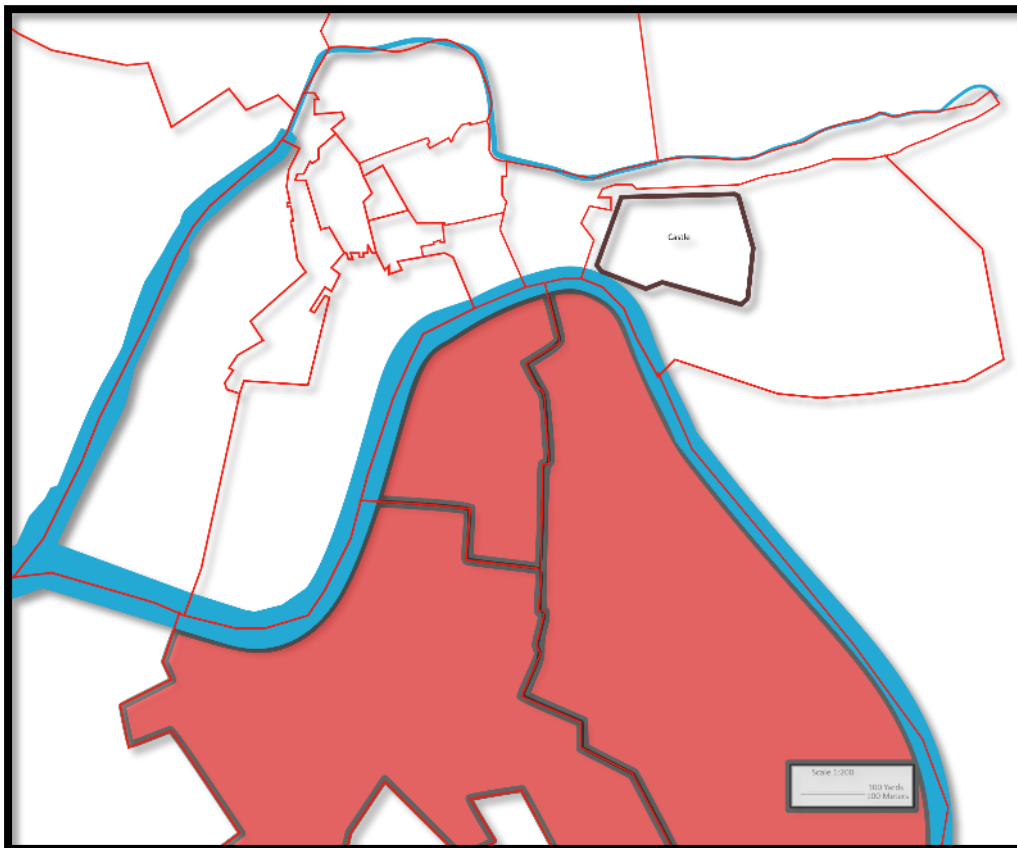


Figure 17: Parishes (St Mary Redcliffe, St Thomas the Martyr and Holy Cross of Temple) which suspected heretics came from, 1413-1414.

⁴⁵ Not all of those who were indicted for helping the Oldcastle rebels were tried by Bubwith. For one example, see Julia Kenfeke, who had no further case made against her.

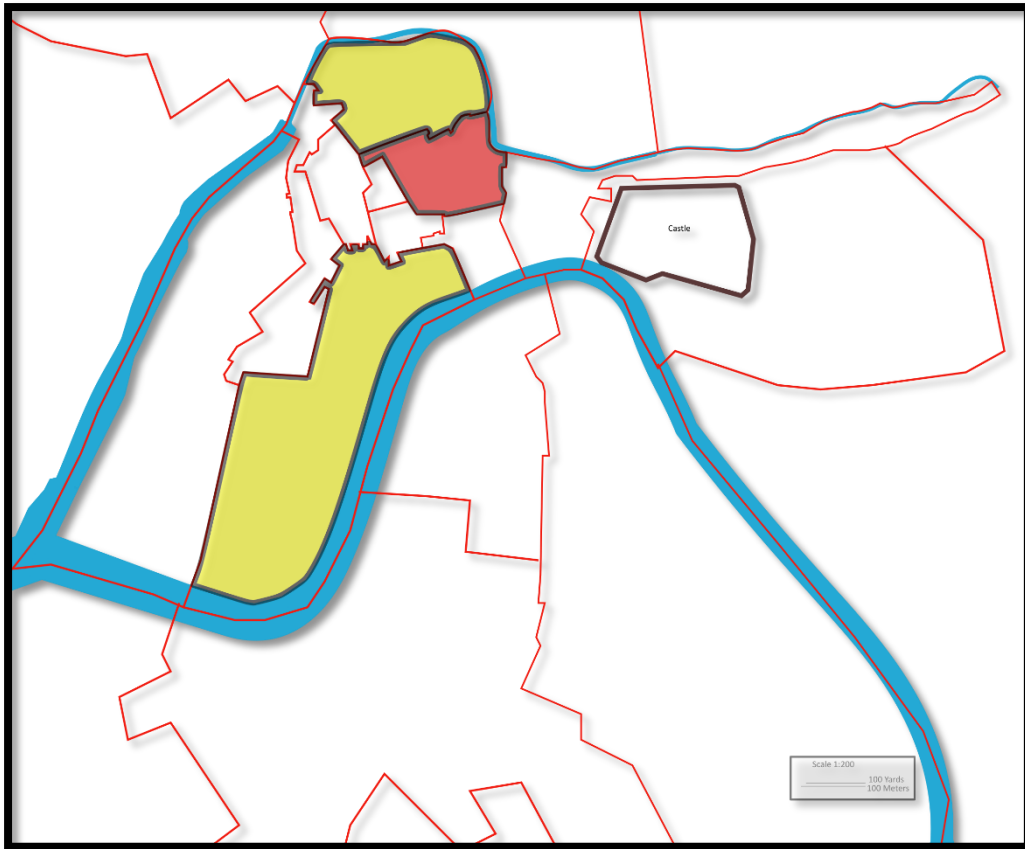


Figure 18: Parishes (St Nicholas, Holy Trinity and St John the Baptist) which suspected heretics came from 1420-1423.

By 1420, a different network of dissenters appears to have manifested itself in the centre of the town (Figure 18). In 1420, the rector of the parish church of Holy Trinity, Thomas Drayton, and a chaplain, William Taillour, were arrested by the Sheriff and Mayor of Bristol and sent to the Bishop of Worcester. Both were accused of holding certain unorthodox beliefs. Drayton was accused of preaching a heretical sermon on St Augustine's Green (opposite the Augustinian Abbey in the northern suburb of the town) and for allowing William Taillour to preach in his church despite knowing that he was a heretic.⁴⁶ Taillour, having previously abjured heresy, was sent to the Convocation of Bishops that met the following year, but Drayton submitted to the bishop to purge himself. He had twelve compurgators who were named in the certificate. Half of them were from Bristol and included John Mybbe, a beneficed chaplain of the neighbouring parish church of St John the Baptist. Mybbe had been

⁴⁶ 716.093/5/iii, ff. 16r-18v.

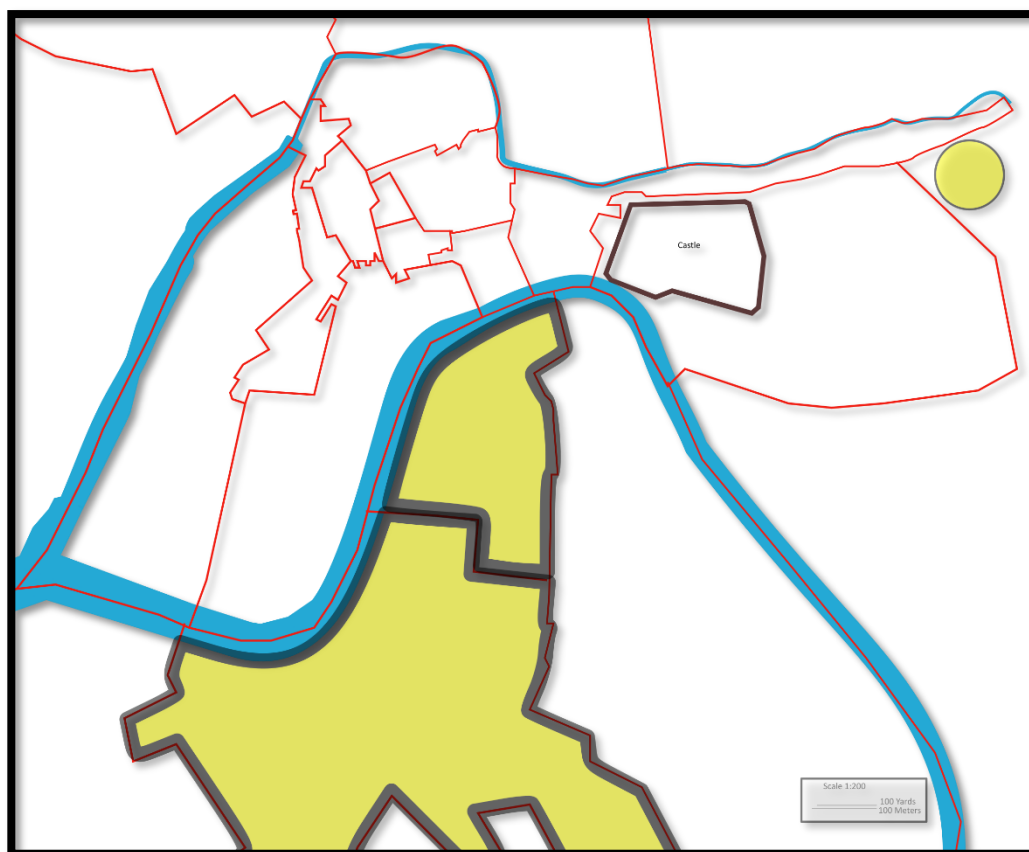


Figure 19: The parishes (St Mary Redcliffe and St Thomas the Martyr) from which individuals named as heretics by William Fuer of Gloucester in 1448 came and the area that William Smyth probably resided.

involved in Oldcastle's revolt six years previously, and so it is possible that one of Drayton's compurgators may have held sympathies at some point with his heretical views.⁴⁷ Another of his compurgators was John Wylle, a chaplain at the church of St Lawrence in the centre of Bristol, but there is no known link between Wylle and dissent.

Taillour purged himself of the accusations made against him during the southern Convocation of Bishops in 1421 at St Paul's Cathedral and had to pay a fine of £100. However, he was recaptured in 1423 and had two trials in this year, resulting in his excommunication. He was handed to the secular arm and burnt at the stake.⁴⁸ His re-arrest was prompted by the interception of letters that he had sent to a chaplain in Bristol called Thomas Smyth.

⁴⁷ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 251.

⁴⁸ *The register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443, volume 3*, ed. by E. F. Jacob (Oxford, 1945), pp. 157-173.

Kightly suggested that this might be the Thomas Smyth who was the chaplain to the Spyser family in St Nicholas's church.⁴⁹ Dissent c.1420 was based in the centre of the town within the parishes of Holy Trinity, St John the Baptist and St Nicholas and, possibly, St Lawrence. This group or network appears to be distinct from those who had previously been detected in the south of the town c.1414. Indeed, it also appears to have been made up exclusively of clergy who were outsiders to the town, as opposed to burgesses, merchants, and artisans, who were settled in the southern suburb.

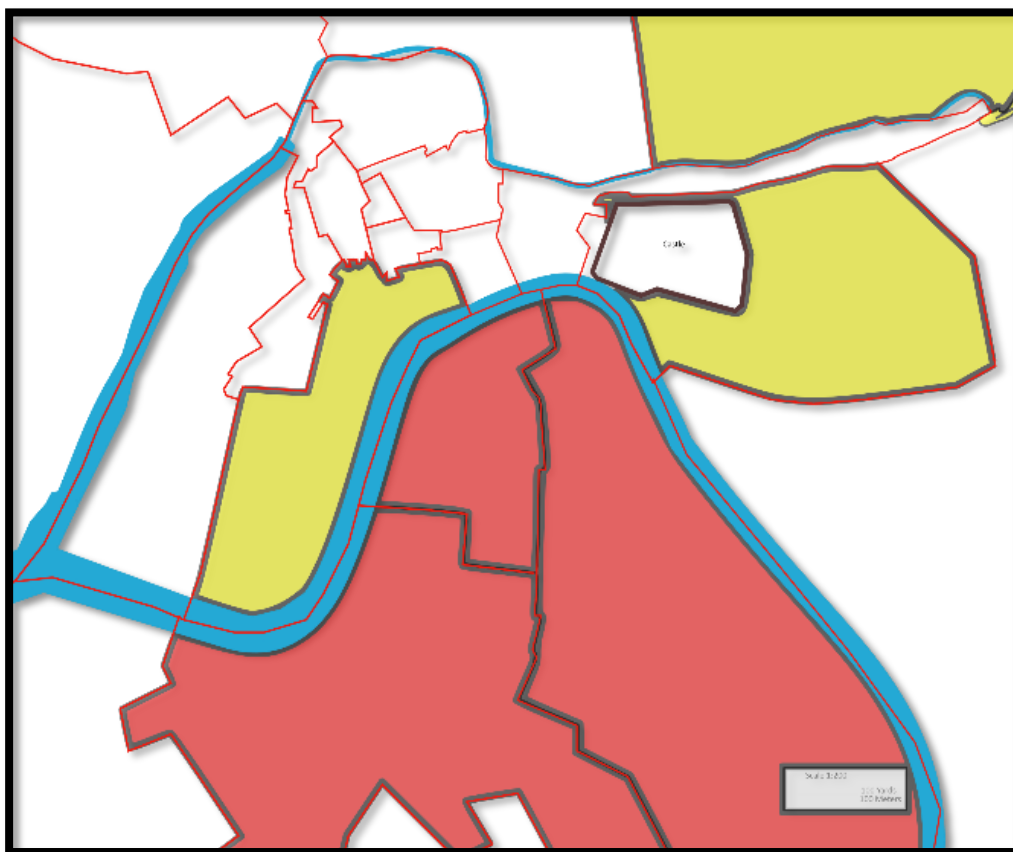


Figure 20: Parishes which suspected heretics came from in the late fifteenth century.

In 1448, William Fuer of Gloucester was tried by Bishop Carpenter of Worcester for heresy.⁵⁰ His abjuration revealed that there was another group of dissenters in Bristol before 1448 (Figure 19). He said that he learnt his heresy from a weaver called John Lesman who lived in Redcliffe Street. Fuer had stayed with Lesman for two years. He may have been a weaver or an apprentice of Lesman. He revealed that Lesman's servant, John William, had

⁴⁹ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 258.

⁵⁰ WAAS, 716.093/6/ii, f. 85v; Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 34.

also taught him heresies. He also mentioned others: a weaver from St Thomas Street, Nicholas Pascoo, a man called New of Redcliffe Street, and a smith called William Smyth who lived outside of Lafford's gate in the Barton Hundred (represented by the yellow circle in Figure 19). Fuer said that Smith gave him English books of 'reproved reading'.⁵¹ His trial record suggests that dissent was still predominately prevalent in the southern suburb, as it had been in the 1410s, but that it now had some links to other places in the town. The smith, William Smyth, is also mentioned in later Bristol trials. Walter Combe confessed in his 1457 trial that William Smyth, who had been burnt near the town of Bristol, 'dyed a true Cristian man to my conceite, and that he so do to deth dyed a martir afore God.'⁵² The weaver John Willis also claimed to have learnt his heresy from Smyth.⁵³ It seems, then, that Smyth was an important figure in a dissenting network in the town prior to 1448. There is no surviving record of Smyth's trial and excommunication, but we can assume that it happened between 1448 and 1457.

Lollardy was no longer restricted to a suburb of Bristol by the end of the fifteenth century (Figure 20). In 1499, two purgations, a dismissal, and five abjurations appear in Bishop Oliver King's register (Bishop of Bath and Wells). Nicholas White of St Thomas the Martyr purged himself on 17th August 1499 in front of Master Thomas Gilbert, (an official of the bishop) having been accused of 'heretical pravity'. It is unclear whether he had any compurgators.⁵⁴ William Hall of Bristol, a 'botil maker' purged himself on 14th October of the same year 'cum viij manu' (with the hands of eight [compurgators]).⁵⁵ He had been tried on the rumour that he was a heretic and had denied all questions put to him by his inquisitors. The case against Robert Hoton alias Pynner was also absolved and dismissed by the bishop on 3rd October 1499. He had been accused of heresy on 18th July 1499 during the bishop's visitation to the church of St Mary Redcliffe. The case was dismissed on the grounds that nothing could be proved against him, but not before a request for information about previous

⁵¹ Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 34.

⁵² D/D/breg/6, ff. 212v-213r.

⁵³ Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 68.

⁵⁴ SHC, D/D/breg/9, f. 44.

⁵⁵ D/D/breg/9, f. 52.

abjurations during his time as the servant of Robert Hill of the city of London in the parish of All Hallows of Breadstreet was sent to the Bishop of London.⁵⁶

Five people were found guilty and abjured in front of the Bishop of Bath and Wells.⁵⁷ They came from all three parishes in the southern suburb of Bristol and included a father and son, John and John Bouway. From the recollections of Robert Silkby and John Johnson, who were tried as lollards in Coventry in 1511, it appears that the Bouways were central to dissenting activity in the Redcliffe area.⁵⁸ Johnson also mentioned Robert Qwyck, a bottlemaker called Thomas and his wife, and John Nayler dwelling on the Bristol Bridge, all of whom were from the parish of St Thomas the Martyr.⁵⁹ Johnson and Silkby's testimonies, which are recollections of their time in and contact with Bristol, also demonstrated that the lollard group extended into the north of the town and beyond the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Johnson mentioned a cutler called Henry Padwell from the parish of SS Philip and Jacob in the east of the town, a wire drawer called Henry Tuck and Laurence Capper from the Broadmead area in the north east of the town, and a merchant called Charles Viller from the parish of St Nicholas. He also claimed that Padwell and Capper's wives had been present at their meetings, like the wife of Thomas the bottlemaker. It is clear, then, that dissent had ceased to function on the basis of neighbourhood or suburb that had been created by the topography of the town. Instead, by the end of the fifteenth century lay people were making connections across the town to engage with unorthodox ideas. Johnson also admitted that their conversations did not only occur in their homes, but also in the fields as they walked to St Vincent's chapel. It might suggest that they were leaving the town in order

⁵⁶ D/D/breg/9, ff. 46, 48v. It is likely that Hutton and Hoton are the same name spelt differently by different scribes. Case also found in Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 46.

⁵⁷ John Bouway senior and John Bouway junior, weavers of Redcliffe parish, German Hay, of Temple parish, and John Walssh, 'towker' (fuller) abjured in August 1499, and William Lewis, weaver of St Thomas the Martyr, abjured in October 1499. D/D/breg/9, ff. 50r-51v.

⁵⁸ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 104, 111-112, 225-226. As well as being regularly mentioned in 1511, Robert Silky also said that Bouway was 'publicly deposing against the sacraments', pp. 102-104.

⁵⁹ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 225-226. The surname of Thomas the bottlemaker is left blank. They also mention a man whose name begun with 'W', probably from the southern suburb, whose full name is now unreadable in the manuscript. For here on he will be referred to as W[unreadable].

to find space to discuss their ideas and found privacy away from the busy environment of the port town, but equally, this could simply have been part of their daily business.

4.3: Beliefs

In his recent *Companion to Lollardy*, Hornbeck has stated that the construction of lollardy in trial records makes the study of lollard theology futile.⁶⁰ Indeed, the beliefs that are presented in records of compurgation or abjuration are the result of questions asked, not volunteered information. Nonetheless, the beliefs of those tried in Bristol or whose trials give an insight into the views held and which circulated in fifteenth-century Bristol, are set out in Table 13.⁶¹ The table details the beliefs of thirty-five individuals and gives an overview, however limited, of some of the beliefs that people were accused of holding.⁶²

The two issues that appear most are about the Eucharist and idolatry. Lollards took issue with the idea that the material bread and wine transformed into the body and blood of Christ. This was based on Wyclif's objections: he could not reconcile the idea that the material bread and wine were annihilated. However, he did not deny that Christ was present at the Eucharist.⁶³ Objections to transubstantiation do not come up in trial records from Bristol until the 1440s. Indeed, Kightly observed that William Taillour and Thomas Drayton, who were both tried in the 1420s, did not appear to object to the Eucharist and the doctrine of transubstantiation.⁶⁴ This does not mean, however, that transubstantiation and sacrament of

⁶⁰ Hornbeck, *A Companion to Lollardy*, p. 105.

⁶¹ I have not included the information about Bristol lollards that comes from the Litchfield Courtbook in this table because the trial record does not recount what they actually believed, but what a second person remembered. The beliefs recollected by Johnson and Qwyck were general and vague because they satisfied what the interrogators wanted to hear: they reported that the Bristol lollards talked against the sacrament, images, pilgrimages, and offerings. These fit into the stereotype of lollardy.

⁶² There is little evidence for the beliefs of those tried in the 1410s. Instead, there is evidence of their dissenting and subversive actions as part of a broader, organised lollard movement under John Oldcastle, which ended in 1414. As there are no beliefs recorded, these people are not included in Table 1.

⁶³ I. C. Levy, *John Wyclif: Scriptural logic, real presence, and the parameters of orthodoxy* (Milwaukee, 2003), pp. 60-61, 219, 276; Levy, *John Wyclif's theology of the eucharist in its medieval context* (Milwaukee, 2014), pp. 235, 242; Hornbeck, *A Companion to Lollardy*, pp. 121-122. In *De Eucharistia*, written by Wyclif in 1379, suggested that there was simultaneously the consecrated bread and wine as well as the material bread and wine too.

⁶⁴ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 260.

Agreement with Church		0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Other		0	3	0	8	0	1	0	0	1	13	
Spiritual & secular lordship		0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	
Tithes, alms and offerings		0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Holy days	Saints days	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	Sabbath	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	Lent and fasting	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Pro-Wyclif		0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Lollard martyrs		0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	
The Church	Religious Orders	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	6	
	Fraternal Orders	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	
	Church Institution	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	7	
	The Pope	0	2	0	5	0	0	0	0	2	9	
Preaching		0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Pray to God Directly		0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Anticlericalism		0	3	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	9	
Idolatry		1	10	0	7	0	1	0	0	17	36	
Excommunication		0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	
The sacraments	Confession	1	1	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	7	
	Marriage	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	Penance	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	Baptism/Confirmation	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	
	Eucharist	0	0	0	5	1	3	0	0	11	20	
Lollard Books/Literature		5	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	8	
No. of individuals		48	4	0	9	1	1	3	0	23	90	
		1410-19	1420-29	1430-39	1440-49	1450-59	1460-69	1470-79	1480-89	1490-99	1500-09	Totals

Table 13: Beliefs recorded in the heresy trials in Bristol and concerning Bristol 1410-1509.

the altar was not of concern or debated in Bristol before the 1440s. Instead, it might reflect the bishop's line of questioning.

From the 1440s, Bristol lollards appear to have also taken issue with the idea that the bread and wine were destroyed. Instead, they appear to have adopted the Wycliffite idea of the real presence of Christ at the Eucharist. In 1441, John Jurdan abjured that 'I have hoolden and preached þat in þe sacrament of þe awtre after þe wordes of consecration remayneth material breed as it was be for'.⁶⁵ Seven years later, a chaplain from Holy Cross of Temple, Sir John Younge, was asked by Bishop Bekynton whether the true body of Christ was on the altar after the consecration in the place of the material bread or wine. He replied, 'quod in altari est verum corpus xpisti et eciam panis materialis' (that there was both the true body of Christ at the altar as well as the material bread).⁶⁶ Both Jurdan and Younge agreed that the material remained after the consecration, but only Younge explicitly mentioned the real presence. If we assume the words recorded in the bishops' register to be reflective of the speech of Jurdan and Younge, then it seems that they held the same ideas but expressed them in different ways. It might demonstrate that they were part of different lollard groups who had slightly different manifestations of the same ideas.⁶⁷ The views expressed by Younge are more fully articulated.⁶⁸

In 1457, the Eucharist continued to be an issue of contention that arose in heresy trials. Walter Combe stated that a priest in deadly sin could not perform the sacrament of the altar, and 'Also that it is lawful to me and to every lay man that can seye the wordes of the consecration of the holy sacrament of the autier to seye theym and so to make that holy sacrament goostely as wel as a preste'.⁶⁹ Combe still believed in transubstantiation and the

⁶⁵ SHC, D/D/breg/5 f. 179r.

⁶⁶ D/D/breg/6 f. 94v.

⁶⁷ There is little information about the trial of John Jurdan. There is just a certificate of abjuration copied into the bishop's register. However, there is a lot of information about the process of questioning Sir John Younge was subjected to. He was taken to the Monastery of Mochelney (now Muchelney in Somerset) in 1448. He talked with the abbot and a year later was set before the bishop at his manor in Chew. A list of questions and responses was presented to the bishop from the conversations he had had with the abbot.

⁶⁸ Indeed, more widely there was variation in the way that Wyclif's ideas were adopted. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, pp. 282-285.

⁶⁹ D/D/breg/6, f. 212v-213r.

real presence of Christ.⁷⁰ His issue was with the sanctity of the priesthood. He only abjured three beliefs and none of these directly addressed transubstantiation.⁷¹

However, some Bristolians held more extreme positions that did not accept the real presence at the mass. In 1462, the Bristol weaver John Willis told the Bishop of Lincoln that, although he had received the Eucharist at Easter, he had taken it as material bread and believed that the Mass had no merit.⁷² He maintained that the true bread remained after the words of consecration. In 1499, John Gough alias Matthews stated 'that the sacrament of the aulter is but veray bredd and not the body of *our savyour cryste*.'⁷³ These examples come from people from Bristol who were tried elsewhere in the country: this raises the possibility that they were privy to other conversations outside of Bristol that influenced their more extreme views about the transubstantiation.

Objections to the doctrine of transubstantiation are also present in the abjuration certificates of John Bouway senior, John Bouway junior, German Hay, and William Lewis in 1499.⁷⁴ The abjuration certificates of John Bouway senior and junior say that they now both believed in the sacrament of the altar, with John Bouway the younger saying that he had previously believed that 'the blissed body of criste flesh and blode but is after the consecracon doon by the preste oonly material brede as it was be for the consecracon'.⁷⁵ German Hay had believed there was a transformation that meant that God was present, but that the bread remained too ('the very body of criste gode and man but that there remaynyth material brede after the consecracion doon by a preste').⁷⁶ William Lewis said that 'in the sacrament of the aulter is not conteyned the blissed body of criste flesh and blode but is after the consecracon done by the preste oonly material brede as it was be for the consecracon'.⁷⁷ The recollection of W[unreadable], Henry Padwell, Robert Qwyck, Henry Tuck, Laurence Capper, and Charles

⁷⁰ This is clear through his use of the word 'goostely' which means spirituality.

⁷¹ This is surprising seeing as the Eucharistic theology was a central element of bishop's enquiries. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 285.

⁷² Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 68

⁷³ Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, D1/2/13, f. 78r-v. Gough alias Matthews was described as being 'late of Byrstoll'.

⁷⁴ D/D/breg/9, ff. 50, 51v.

⁷⁵ D/D/breg/9 f. 50.

⁷⁶ D/D/breg 9 f. 50v.

⁷⁷ D/D/breg 9 f. 51v.

Viller in the 1511 confession of John Johnson stated that they held views 'against the sacrament of the altar'. He later added that they had said that, 'the sacrament of the alter is not the very body of our Lorde but materiall brede'.⁷⁸ Although the beliefs put forward by Lewis in 1499 and Johnson in 1511 were general, they shared the same emphasis. This may be because this was what the late fifteenth-century group believed, but it might also be the result of what the bishop was looking for or simply what was recorded.

There were thirty-six beliefs put forward throughout the fifteenth century that showed an objection to idolatry. This category is broad and includes twenty-four that rejected worship of and offerings made to images, worship of the cross and the swearing of oaths on books, and twelve that objected to pilgrimage. The trials of William Taillour in 1417, 1421 and 1423 were concerned with Taillour's objection to idolatry in various forms. In 1417 he stated that images should not be honoured.⁷⁹ When he appeared before the Convocation of Bishops in 1421 he said that 'quicumque suspenderit ad collum suum aliquod scriptum ipso facto tollit honorem soli deo debitum et prebet diabolo' (whoever hung text around their neck was taking away from honour owed to God and giving to the Devil instead').⁸⁰ When he was tried again in 1423, he said 'orare aliquam creaturam est committere ydolatriam' (that to pray to any creature was to commit idolatry).⁸¹ His concern seems to have been that individuals should have a direct relationship with God and not to use material things for prayer that distract from that relationship.

In addition to the views of William Taillour, the trials of Thomas Drayton (tried 1420), John Walcote (a shepherd from Gloucestershire who had links with Bristol and was tried in 1425) and William Emayn (tried in 1429) suggest that there was a concern about idolatry in dissenting discussions in 1420s Bristol. Thomas Drayton was accused of privately saying that there should not be image worship.⁸² John Walcote stated that the cross and images of saints should not be venerated and that people should not pray to saints, but to God directly.⁸³

⁷⁸ *Lollards of Coventry*, p. 223.

⁷⁹ WAAS, 716.093/5/iii, f. 13r

⁸⁰ Aston classes this as idolatry in M. Aston, *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (London, 1984), p. 113; *The register of Henry Chichele*, p. 160.

⁸¹ *The register of Henry Chichele*, p. 168.

⁸² 716.0093/5/iii, ff. 16v-18v; D/D/breg/5 f. 52v-53r.

⁸³ Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, pp. 27-28; 716.0093/5/iii, ff. 46v-48.

Emayn also said that people should not pray to saints but to God directly, and that it was not lawful to swear oaths by the Book (the Bible). Again, this was an objection to the use of material object for prayer.⁸⁴

Objections to acts of idolatry continued throughout the century. John Younge objected to the offering and burning of candles, genuflections, bowings, incense-burnings, kissings (of images), and sprinklings of holy water in church, saying that none of these acts were lawful.⁸⁵ Again, these included things that were likely to have been given to and used within the parish church. Thomas Bikenore said that any 'roide' (cross) made by goldsmiths and armourers should not be lawful.⁸⁶ Presumably he was objecting to the worship of expensive material objects that took the focus away from the spiritual. This objection was a common belief within lollardy and was included in the twelve lollard conclusions.⁸⁷

There were twelve beliefs about pilgrimages put forward which are also closely linked to idolatry. The two are linked in Thomas Bikenore's abjuration that 'noe pilgremage shulde be doene and that no maner of reverens shulde or ought to be doe unto eny ymage ne the'.⁸⁸ John Walcote, however, stated that it was better to give alms to the poor rather than to go on pilgrimages.⁸⁹ This statement may have been motivated by anti-idolatry sentiment, but it may also have been an argument about helping the poor by giving them money.⁹⁰

The views expressed by some deponents show that they perceived of themselves as coming from a line of dissenters or, as they saw it, a tradition of true Christians. In 1429, William Emayn was asked what he thought of John Wyclif and his doctrines. He responded 'quod fuit vir Justus et catholicus' (that he was a just and catholic man) and 'quod doctrina sua fuit satis bona eciam catholica quam scripsit de euvangelio' (that his doctrine was Catholic

⁸⁴ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 372.

⁸⁵ D/D/breg/6, ff. 94r-96r.

⁸⁶ D/1/2/10, ff. 53-54.

⁸⁷ 'The Twelve Conclusions of the Lollards':

<http://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/special/varia/loppard/loppconc.htm> Accessed 19/12/2019.

⁸⁸ D/1/2/10, ff. 53-54.

⁸⁹ Thomson, pp. 27-28; 716.0093/5/iii, 46v-48.

⁹⁰ Some thought that pilgrimage not to undertaken to holy sites but instead should be made to visit poor men. This suggests that the problem with pilgrimage was not the action but the profiteering of these holy sites. The lollards' concern was about who the received alms: the wealthy Church or poorer people who needed monetary support. Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, p. 308.

as was written in the gospel). He also said, ‘quod si prefatus Magister esset vivens ipse omnes sibi contrariantes in doctrina sua probaret hereticos et lollardos’ (that if Wyclif was still alive he would have proved all of those who opposed his teachings and doctrine to be heretics and lollards). Emayn also said that those who had been excommunicated and executed for heresy, such as Sir John Oldcastle and William Taillour, were martyrs.⁹¹ Like the Catholic Church, Emayn saw the labels of lollard and heretic as negative terms. In the mind of Emayn, Wyclif was orthodox and the Church had strayed from the wishes of Christ and become heretical. In 1457, Walter Combe stated ‘William Smyth, whiche was brent nye to the town of Bristow by the auctorite of Holy Cheche for his erroneus oppinions contrarious to the feith and determinacions of Holy Cheche, dyed a true Cristian man to my conceite, and that he so do to deth dyed a martir afore God.’⁹² In both men’s speeches there is a sense of their own history and the lineage of their beliefs. They were aware of who came before them, even if they themselves put emphasis on different beliefs. For Emayn, the emphasis was on Wyclif and the justification of his own views through Wyclif’s doctrines, whereas Combe remembered other people who he may have been in fellowship with and constructed a martyrology. Both men’s engagement with a lineage or past tradition suggests that they may have seen themselves as part of something greater. It is highly likely that they saw their beliefs as the right form of Christianity and were attempting to promote their spirituality to correct the errors of the Church.

There were thirteen instances where beliefs have been put in the category ‘other’ in Table 13 because they don’t neatly fit into the broader categories. Some of these, for example in the 1420s, are accusations based on the sermons of William Taillour.⁹³ Other beliefs, however, sit slightly outside of the broad set of beliefs that are typically regarded as ‘lollard’ by historians.⁹⁴ In 1462, John Willis denied the existence of purgatory.⁹⁵ Hudson states that the denial of purgatory was not part of Wyclif’s views or the early lollard writings. However, the denial of purgatory began to appear during the fifteenth century and she thinks this was

⁹¹ D/D/breg/5 f. 52v-53r.

⁹² D/D/breg/6, f. 213.

⁹³ Kightly, ‘The Early Lollards’, p. 252. Kightly calls these ‘garbled account of one of his sermons’.

⁹⁴ Hornbeck has discussed the broad areas that make up lollard theology such as the Eucharist, clerical celibacy and the papacy. See Hornbeck, *What is a Lollard?*

⁹⁵ DIOC/REG/20, f. 57v-58v, 60v, 62v.

a product of discussions about praying for the dead.⁹⁶ Unlike the shared views about the transubstantiation and idolatry, Willis showed that his beliefs departed from the Wycliffite canon. In 1499, the towker John Walssh believed that there were three gods. Again, this was not part of the Wycliffite canon and probably shows his own thoughts about the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.⁹⁷ John H. Arnold and Kathryn Kerby-Fulton have both demonstrated that lollardy was not the only type of dissent present in late medieval England, and Larsen has also shown how lollard views were diverse and sometimes extended beyond what historians might recognise as lollard.⁹⁸ Although most deponents in Bristol appear to have been engaged in lollard activity, the likes of John Walssh demonstrate that some broader dissent was also incorporated by the bishops into their view of lollardy.

4.4: Integration and neighbours⁹⁹

When a person or group began to hold unorthodox religious views, they remained surrounded by their friends, business associates and neighbours: they were still integrated into the social context around them as has been demonstrated for other localities.¹⁰⁰ In Bristol, some social connections of lollards have been explored. Broadly, McFarlane and Thomson stated that these lollards were weavers. The social connections and contacts of the Oldcastle rebels have been examined to an extent by Thomson and Kightly. The rebel Edward Greylake was the servant of a weaver called Robert Harryes, while the rebel James Mersshe was the servant of Christina More who was a widow of the late burgess and merchant, William More. Kightly also identified that Robert Bayon was the son in law of John Heytesbury, another burgess and weaver of the town who made his will in 1422.¹⁰¹ Others who were tried for their connections to the Oldcastle rebels were masters of craft guilds in the town: John

⁹⁶ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 309-310.

⁹⁷ D/D/breg/9 f. 51r.

⁹⁸ Arnold, 'Voicing Dissent'; Kerby-Fulton, *Books under suspicion*; Larsen, 'Are all lollards lollards?'.

⁹⁹ E. Lewis, 'Resistance, self-defence or sticking up for your friends?: a discussion of purgation in the prosecution of fifteenth-century lollards', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 64 (2019), pp. 169-190.

¹⁰⁰ For example, Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion*; Jurkowski, 'Lollardy and Social Status'; A. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury 1250-1500* (Oxford, 1995), p. 218. More broadly, Davies has argued that lollards tried to fit into local society. R. G. Davies, 'Lollardy and Locality', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1 (1991), p. 211. Plumb has also shown integration into the local community through probate material in D. Plumb, 'The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy: A Reappraisal', in *Voluntary Religion*, eds. by W. J. Sheils & D. Woods (Oxford, 1986), p. 116

¹⁰¹ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', pp. 249; Bristol, Bristol Archives, JOr/1/1, f. 144r.

Converser was at one time the master of the Cordwainers' guild, and Julian, the wife of another master of the same guild, was also indicted by the King's Bench.¹⁰² John Colchester was master of the Barbers' guild in 1408 and continued to be involved in the guild after the revolt.¹⁰³ The master of the Dyers' guild sheltered the Ludlow Dyer who was indicted by the King's Bench for his association with the Oldcastle rebels.¹⁰⁴ After 1414, Kightly has stated that lollardy no longer touched the higher ranks of Bristol's society. Yet, other works on lollardy have shown the lollards continued to come from the 'middling sorts' of society such as artisans and merchants, and the notion that lollards only came from the lower parts of society has been widely dismissed.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, Maureen Jurkowski states that McFarlane and Thomson 'created the impression, without furnishing direct evidence' that lollards came from the lower orders of society.¹⁰⁶ The next section will examine the social connections of those indicted for heresy in 1414 further, contest Kightly's assertion that lollards lost their contacts with the wealthier residents of the town after 1414, and explore a more diverse view of the occupational status and connections of the Bristol lollards than McFarlane and Thomson have.

4.4.1: Lollards and the burgesses of Bristol

The group that were tried by Bishop Bubwith in 1414 were detected and tried because of their connection to the Oldcastle group. As is apparent in Appendix 3, they were a select group of those who were indicted by the King's Bench for their connection to the Oldcastle Rebels. Hudson and Henry Kelly both suggest that the group was involved in lollardy but, by giving vague answers to the bishop's questions and through procedural fallibility, they managed to

¹⁰² Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 249. *The Little Red Book of Bristol, vol 1*, ed. by F. B. Bickley (Bristol, 1900), p. 102.

¹⁰³ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 249; *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, p. 69, 135.

¹⁰⁴ KB 9/209/1/84; *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, p. 87.

¹⁰⁵ R. Rex, *The Lollards* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 72, 101; L. R. Poos, *A rural society after the Black Death: Essex 1350-1525* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 269-272; J. Fines, 'Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Litchfield, 1511-12' *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 14/2 (1963), p. 162; Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, pp. 129-130; D. Plumb, 'The social and economic status of the later Lollards', in *The World of rural Dissenters, 1520-1725*, ed. by M. Spufford (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 111-129.

¹⁰⁶ Jurkowski, 'Lollardy and Social Status', p. 120.

purge themselves of the charges against them.¹⁰⁷ The eight were tried in three groups.¹⁰⁸ The first group consisted of Edmund Broun, Robert Harryes, Robert Wykeham, and James Mostarmaker. The second group consisted of John Colchester, John Jordan (also known as Jordan Corverser), and John Ruell. Christina More was tried separately. All were arrested by the Mayor of Bristol after Oldcastle's revolt. The first group was released on 28th June 1414 and was first tried in the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr by Bubwith's commissioners, and then in the parish church of Banwell, approximately thirteen miles south-west of Bristol, by the bishop himself on 5th July 1414. The compurgation happened in the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr, Bristol, and the compurgation certificate records that 'ac pluribus allis in multitudine copiosa' (and there was a large crowd present at the trial). The second group was released from the King's prison in Bristol more than a year after Oldcastle's revolt in February 1415. They also appeared before the bishop's commissioners in the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr. There is less detail about Christina More's trial. She made her compurgation in October 1414, but the certificate was not sent to the King's Bench until 1418. It is clear that she was also a parishioner of St Thomas from her husband's will.¹⁰⁹

The eight appear to have had a bad reputation. Members of the first group were accused of 'fuerunt lollardi usive fuerunt secta lollardorum' (they were lollards and they were a sect of lollardy), asked whether 'vel aliquod libros lollardorum quovi modo legerunt vel legi audierunt aut habuerunt' (they had read, heard read, or possessed books of lollardy), and 'fama, que laboravit in villa Bristollensi ac per viciniam, quod ipsi et eorum singuli forent lollardi erat vera vel falsa' (whether the reports that each one of them were lollards in the town of Bristol and the neighbourhood were true or false). The four men answered that these were all untrue. John Jordan/Jordan Corverser, was accused of the following:

'quodque prefatus Johannes [Jordan] Souter per nomen Jordani Corverser de Bristollo indictatus fuit coram commissariis predictis de eo quod ipse est communis lollardus

¹⁰⁷ Hudson, 'The Examination of the Lollards', pp. 147-148; H. A. Kelly, 'Lollard inquisitions: due and undue process' in *The devil, heresy and witchcraft in the middle ages: essays in honor of Jeffrey B. Russell*, ed. by A. Ferreiro (Leiden, 1998), p. 290.

¹⁰⁸ SHC, D/D/breg/4, ff. 133-135, 139r.

¹⁰⁹ JOr/1/1, f. 117.

in villa predicta existens ac receptor et manutentor lollardorum ibidem [...] cognitus ac lollardia et secta lollardia et secta lollardorum per longum tempus.¹¹⁰

(and the aforesaid John [Jordan] Souter by the name of Jordan Corveser of Bristol was indicted before the aforesaid commissioners on the grounds that he is in common with lollards living in the aforesaid town and is a receiver and maintainer of lollards in the same place [...] and known by lollards and the lollard sect and the sect of lollards for a long time.)

This accusation seems to be based on denunciations and reports made by lay people in Bristol to the bishop.¹¹¹ It demonstrates clearly that these things were known about him. It is interesting that he had this reputation but was not reported prior to Oldcastle's revolt. Indeed, it appears that only overt acts of heresy were tried before 1414: Richard Devenyssh abjured after being caught pinning a lollard pamphlet to the choir stalls in the parish church of Holy Cross of Temple in 1413.¹¹² It is likely that he was one person of a group of people who were discussing unorthodox ideas. To create the pamphlet, there must have been some network of which he was a part. The reports of bad *fama* against the 1414 group further suggests that they were in fact guilty of unorthodoxy and heresy despite being able to purge themselves. It was perhaps the events of 1414 that led neighbours to report on beliefs and behaviours that they may have previously tolerated.

All eight were questioned on the Ten Commandments, the Seven Sacraments of the Church, the Seven Works of Mercy, the Seven Cardinal Virtues, and the Fourteen Articles of the Faith. The only answer recorded was from Edmund Broun. When asked about the Seven Deadly Sins, he replied 'ea fore et debere incuntanter tam ad eo quam a quolibet christiano vitanda' (that they ought to be avoided by him and all Christians without hesitation).¹¹³ The others responded 'prout dicuts Edmundus fuit' (in the same manner as Broun).¹¹⁴ That only one answer was recorded suggests that nothing unorthodox or of note was said. It is likely

¹¹⁰ D/D/breg/4, f. 133v.

¹¹¹ Forrest, *The detection of heresy*, pp. 68-76.

¹¹² D/D/breg/4, f. 70v.

¹¹³ D/D/breg/4, f. 133v.

¹¹⁴ D/D/breg/4, f. 133v.

the scribe included one answer to demonstrate to the reader that the answers given were satisfactorily orthodox, justifying the compurgation outcome of the trial.

The questions that they were asked seem broad and appear to have allowed the accused to avoid incrimination easily. Indeed, Hudson and Kelly both argue that the questioning by the bishop and his commissioners was inadequate as it did not force the deponents to reveal their true beliefs.¹¹⁵ The royal commission that was sent to the Mayor of Bristol in the wake of Oldcastle's revolt did not include lines of interrogation to follow.¹¹⁶ The questions that Bubwith asked also did not bear any similarity to the questions that Archbishop Arundel put to Sir John Oldcastle, or to other deponents tried for lollardy later in the century.¹¹⁷ Indeed, it may have been the case that Broun followed the instructions of the lollard evangelist John Purvey (one of Wyclif's original followers who had been in Bristol in the late fourteenth century) on how to answer questioning about the Eucharist. Purvey's instructions allowed the deponent to hold true to the lollard theology, but to be vague enough to not incriminate themselves. In all the questions that an individual might be asked, Purvey said that they should remain true to the gospel and not go any further than this.¹¹⁸ In answering that the Seven Deadly Sins should be avoided by him and all other Christians, Broun may have been following Purvey's instructions by giving vague answers which were not untrue, but which did not expose the intricacy of his unorthodox belief.

The first group maintained that they were innocent throughout the whole trial process. They purged themselves in July 1414 in the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr. Each man had to produce fourteen compurgators to swear to their good nature (which means that there could have been between fourteen and fifty-six compurgators present at the compurgation of these four men). The second group admitted that they had a bad reputation.

¹¹⁵ Hudson, 'The Examination of Lollards', pp. 147-148; Kelly, 'Lollard Inquisitions', p. 290.

¹¹⁶ Powell suggests that the commissioners were likely given a summary of the revolt's events and a list of suspects to arrest. This list of names probably came from the rebels whom they had managed to arrest in London. E. Powell, *Kingship, law and society: criminal justice in the reign of Henry V* (Oxford, 1989), p. 154.

¹¹⁷ Kelly, 'Lollard Inquisitions', p. 289. Arundel questioned Oldcastle on specific lollard beliefs whereas Bubwith questioned the eight on broader points of Church doctrine. See also Hudson, 'The Examination of the Lollards', pp. 145-149; *Lollards of Coventry*, p.

¹¹⁸ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 159.

They purged themselves of the heresy and abjured their bad *fama*.¹¹⁹ They purged themselves in September 1415 and had to produce fifteen compurgators each (totalling between fifteen and thirty-five compurgators present). Christina More purged herself in October 1414, probably in the church of St Thomas the Martyr. The number of compurgators is not given.

Compurgation has been highlighted as an ineffective means of determining guilt. Richard Helmholz argues that compurgation represented the end of a 'quarrel' rather than proving someone innocent.¹²⁰ Fredrick Emmison and Ralph Houlbrooke corroborate Helmholz's wider argument by demonstrating that three-quarters of people put on trial were able to clear their name through purgation. This suggests that it was attainable for both the innocent and the guilty.¹²¹ More recently, Ian Forrest states that compurgation 'was an unsatisfactory and inferior means of testing for trust' because the process was enabled by the 'friends and supporters' of the deponent instead of impartial or trustworthy people.¹²² In her comprehensive study of lollardy, Hudson points out that bishops were often suspicious of compurgators, pointing to cases where 'suspects themselves appear among the compurgators of others on trial'.¹²³ It is possible, then, that the eight people tried by the Bishop of Bath and Wells for their connections to the Oldcastle Rebels managed to purge themselves despite their guilt.

Compared to other trials for heresy, the number of compurgators required for each individual appears to be high. In the Norwich trials of 1426 to 1430, Thomas White of Bedyngham had seven compurgators, all of whom were named in the trial record, while Thomas Herde of Shipmedwe had eight compurgators. However, John Mudleton, vicar of Halvergate, had sixteen named clergyman from the diocese of Norwich during his and twenty more people who were unnamed.¹²⁴ It is significant, I think, that the second group had to

¹¹⁹ This happened in cases elsewhere too. Thomas Hall of Rochester had to abjure as well as purge himself in 1425. The abjuration made him promise that he would not be in touch with any heretics or possess any heretical books. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 163.

¹²⁰ Helmholz, 'Crime, Compurgation and the Courts', pp. 20, 23; J. Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1971), p. 144; F. G. Emmison, *Elizabethan Life: Morals and the Church Courts, Mainly from Essex Archidiaconal Records* (Chelmsford, 1973), pp. 291–300; R. A. Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation, 1520-1570* (Oxford, 1979), p. 45.

¹²¹ Emmison, *Elizabethan Life*, p. 296; Houlbrooke, *Church Courts*, p. 45.

¹²² I. Forrest, *Trustworthy Men: How Inequality and Faith made the Medieval Church* (Oxford, 2018), p. 334.

¹²³ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, pp. 162-4.

¹²⁴ *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428-31*, ed. by N. Tanner (London, 1977), pp. 39-40, 192-93, 215-16.

produce more compurgators each than the first group. This could have been because they admitted the bad *fama* against them.

Helmholz outlines a generic profile for compurgators. They had to be people of good reputation who had not committed any public crime. They were often the neighbours of the accused, had to know the accused, and had to be of the same status.¹²⁵ As the compurgator was a neighbour of the accused, and the compurgation took place in the home parish church of the accused, it is likely that the process of compurgation took place in the parish and it is therefore likely that the compurgator was also of the same parish as the accused.¹²⁶ In Bristol, the bishop was aware that social networks stretched beyond the parish boundaries (as I have demonstrated in chapters 2 and 3), and so this is why the bishop put out a call to all three parishes in south Bristol within the bishop's jurisdiction for anyone who had information that would halt the compurgation in the parish of St Thomas to come forward.¹²⁷

I have suggested that a major part of the successful purgations between 1414 and 1415 may have been their social contacts with powerful men of the town. Through a social network analysis of the networks that are present in last wills and testaments from the parish of St Thomas the Martyr, it is possible to speculate about who their compurgators may have been and, therefore, about their social position in the town. The social networks laid out in Figures 21 and 22 are representative of the relationships between people and institutions in the parish of St Thomas the Martyr (the parish where all eight appear to have come from).¹²⁸ The networks are drawn from three types of evidence: last wills and testaments from the parish dating between 1400 and 1426, customs valuations of ships cargos from 1390 to 1391, and the compurgation certificate in Bubwith's register. The three types of sources allow a visualization of the network context into which to place the deponents tried by Bubwith. Each person or institution in the graph is represented by a node. The eight tried by Bubwith are highlighted in red. The programme attributes mass to each node based on the number of connections it has with other nodes in the graph. This means that a node with a greater

¹²⁵ Helmholz, 'Crime, Compurgation and the Courts', p. 17.

¹²⁶ Helmholz, 'Crime, Compurgation and the Courts', p. 18.

¹²⁷ D/D/breg/4, ff. 133v-134r.

¹²⁸ It was common to make your purgation in your home parish church. Helmholz, 'Crime, Compurgation and the Courts', p. 17.

number of connections within the network will appear closer to the centre of the graph, while a node with fewer connections will be on the edges of the graph.

The graph is an ego network of the parish church of St Thomas the Martyr, as the wills that have been used for this analysis are from this parish.¹²⁹ However, the network extended beyond the parish in a way that we might expect (as discussed in chapter 2). The parish churches of St Mary Redcliffe and Holy Cross of Temple, which lay in the southern suburb of

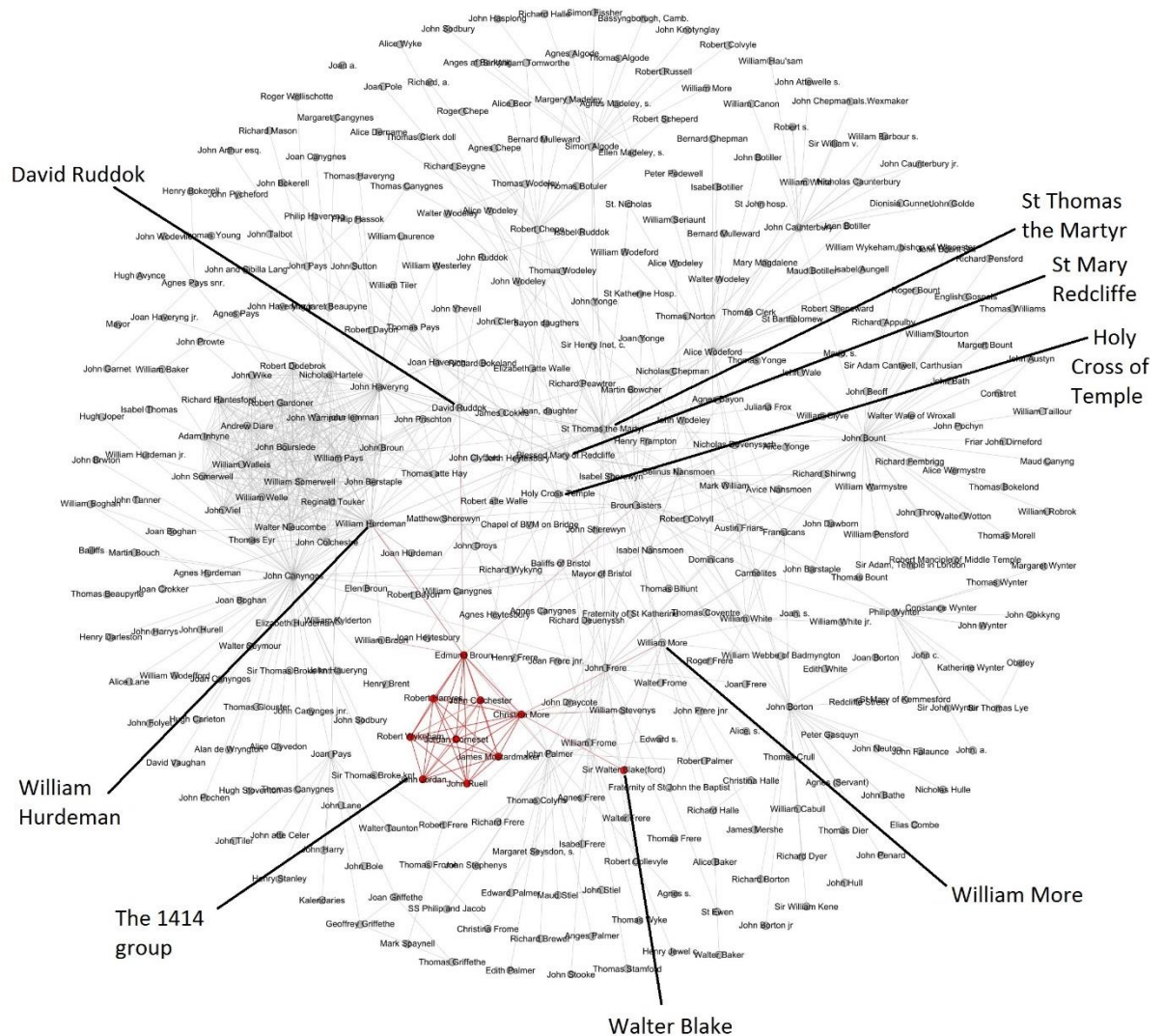


Figure 21: A network graph of the parish of St Thomas the Martyr with edges maintained between the deponents tried by Bishop Bubwith in 1414.

¹²⁹ An ego network shows the network of a particular node known as the ego. The network shows other nodes that are directly connected to the ego (central node) and the ties of the other nodes. This can show degrees of separation between the central node (ego) and a node on the edge of the network.

Bristol along with St Thomas's, also sit close to the centre of the graph. The friaries are also apparent in the graph, representative of their mortuary and commemorative functions discussed in chapter 3. In Figure 21, there are two clusters (dense collections of nodes with lots of connections between them). One of these clusters is the group tried by Bubwith. The larger cluster is representative of the merchants who had cargo on two ships.

Figure 21 shows that the cluster that represented the eight tried by Bubwith were better connected to the rest of the burgess network in the parish of St Thomas the Martyr than previously thought by historians. Previously, Christina More has been regarded as the bridge between the group of dissenters and the burgesses of Bristol.¹³⁰ Her husband was William More, a burgess and merchant who died in 1411. However, the cluster is brought further into the burgess network through Edmund Broun's connections to will makers and merchants in the parish. The survival bias of the evidence means that there is less evidence for those of lower status (whose supporters or friends likely did not make wills, did not make wills that would have been proved in the lower probate courts whose probate registers have survived, or were not involved in mercantile activities recorded in custom valuations). This means that not everyone who lived in the parish is included in the network graph and the graph cannot be taken to be representative of the whole parish. Instead, it only represents the networks of the burgesses of the parish. Even so, it demonstrates that at least some of those tried by Bubwith were connected to the great and good of the town to a greater extent than historians have previously thought.

However, before I go on to discuss these connections, it is important to think about the impact of the evidence of the networks that are presented in Figure 21. Clusters appear as a result of the type of source material from which the network has been extracted. The eight deponents appear as a cluster because they are grouped together in the bishop's register. The context of the trial and the presentation of the eight as a group tried by the bishop may have brought together eight people who had not otherwise been connected. Figure 22, therefore, shows the changes to the overall network graph when the connections between the accused are only maintained between the individuals who were tried together

¹³⁰ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 248; Fleming, 'Women in Bristol, 1373-1660', p. 40. Kightly and Fleming both suggest that the Mores household was a hub of heretical activity in south Bristol prior to 1414 and that the Mores ran a heretical household.

and the edges between the eight more widely are deleted. Edmund Broun and Christina More continue to be integrated into the wider network of burgesses in the parish, while John Ruell, John Jordan (alias Jordan Corverser) and John Colchester are on the periphery of the graph and are unconnected to anyone else in the wider network. They were 'souters' (shoemakers) and 'barbours' (barbers): occupations of lower status than those to whom the first group appear to have been connected to. We have the most information about Edmund Broun from

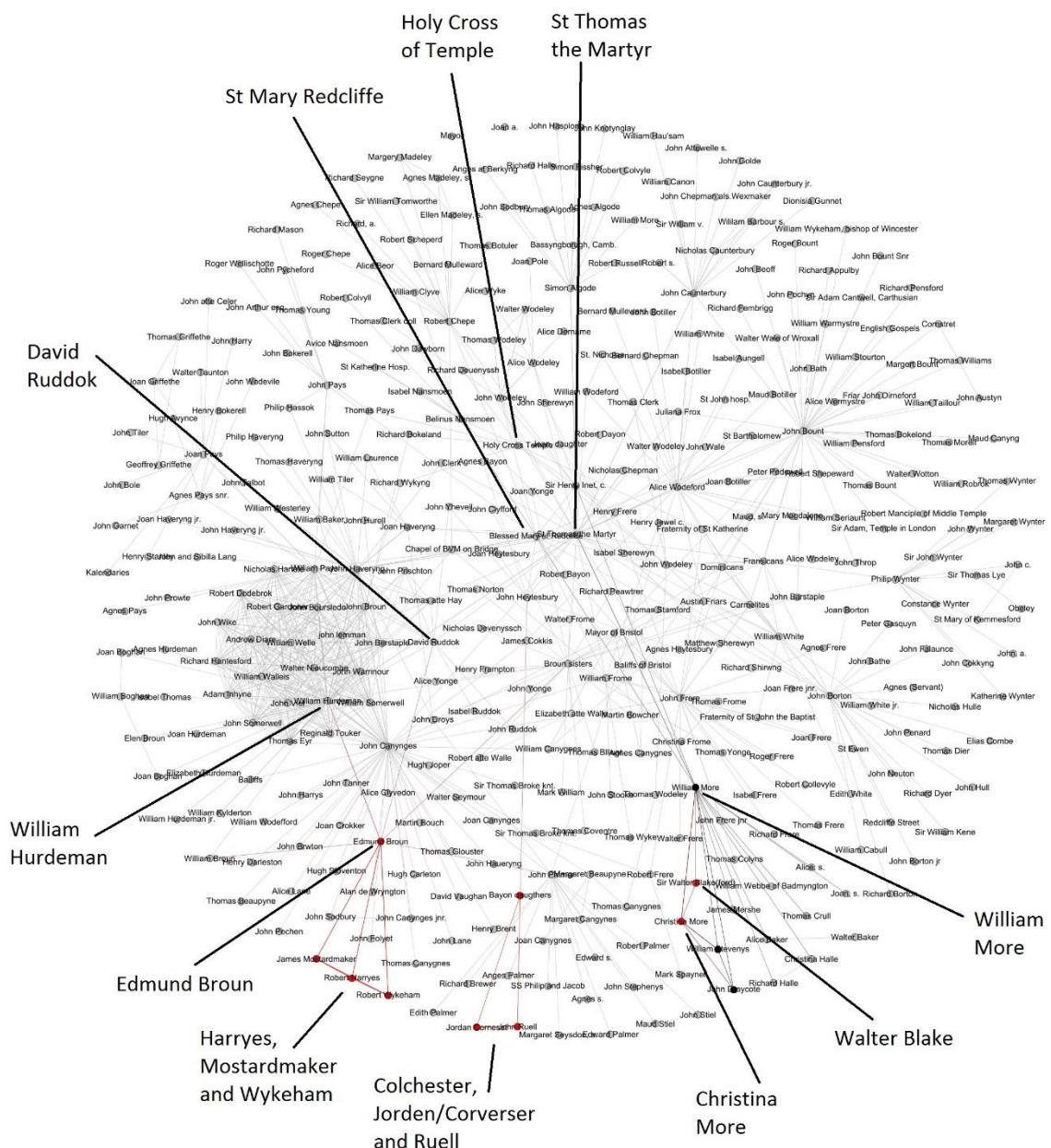


Figure 22: A network graph of the parish of St Thomas the Martyr without edges maintained between the deponents tried by Bishop Bubwith in 1414.

both the trial and the last wills and testaments, which makes him a good case study through which to investigate the relationship of the suspects with the wider social context.

Edmund Broun is connected to three important people in Figure 22 through his mention in three wills. This draws him closer into the centre of the network graph. John Palmer left a bequest to Broun and to William Hurdeman of St Thomas's parish in 1403.¹³¹ Palmer was from the parish of SS Philip and Jacob, east of the town, but had many contacts in the parish of St Thomas. He was twice executor of wills alongside parishioners of St Thomas's.¹³² Palmer appeared in Thomas Atte Hay's will with William Hurdeman, a burgess and merchant of the parish of St Thomas the Martyr who is part of the cluster of merchants in Figure 22. Hurdeman appeared to be an important contact for Broun as Broun and his children appeared in Hurdeman's 1417 will.¹³³ Wills were public documents and the inclusion of Broun in Hurdeman's 1417 will, three years after his purgation, suggests that Hurdeman was not afraid to show his relationship with Broun publicly despite his previous bad *fama*. David Ruddok, another parishioner of St Thomas's who held common office and was also a merchant, made Broun overseer of his will in 1426.¹³⁴ The role of overseer demonstrates the great trust that Ruddok placed in Broun.¹³⁵ These links demonstrate that Broun had connections with important men in the parish, in the town's economic activity, and in common office holding. It is a possibility worth considering that Hurdeman and Ruddok may have been two of his compurgators in 1414.¹³⁶ In other contexts, wills have been used to explore the social dynamic of heresy. Imogen Luxton has found that wills can shed light on the wider social context in instances of lollardy in early sixteenth-century Coventry.¹³⁷ It

¹³¹ JOr/1/1, f. 85.

¹³² He was executor to Nicholas Chepman in 1382 with John Cauntebury (here Cauntelbury) of St Thomas's and Chepman's wife, and executor to Thomas Atte Hay in 1393 with William Hurdeman and Atte Hay's wife, and in this will is described as 'John Palmer in the Market'. He is also mentioned as William Steyl's neighbour in the parish of St Philip 1393 in Steyl's will. *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills in the volume entitled the Great Orphan Book or Book of Wills in the Council House at Bristol*, ed. by T. P. Wadley (Bristol, 1886), pp. 8, 32, 50.

¹³³ JOr/1/1, f. 131v-132r.

¹³⁴ JOr/1/1, f. 155.

¹³⁵ J. Colson, 'Local Communities in Fifteenth Century London: Craft, Parish and Neighbourhood' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2011), pp. 254-60; M. Wilson, 'Community, kinship and piety: Lincoln Cathedral close, c. 1450-1500' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2014), ch 3.

¹³⁶ I have previously argued that this was a key part of Broun's successful compurgation despite his guilt. Lewis, 'Resistance, Self-Defence or Sticking up for your Friends?'

¹³⁷ Luxton, 'The Litchfield Courtbook'.

would be too much of a jump to suggest that Ruddok and Hurdeman were associated with the unorthodoxy and dissent that the 1414 group were accused of, but it demonstrates that some of those in that group were well connected to a greater extent than has previously been realised.

Another possible contact of Edmund Broun's could have been John Broun, who is also in the network graph. He is in the late fourteenth-century shipping records also with Hurdeman, Ruddok, and others from the parish of St Thomas the Martyr. In the surviving wills from the early fifteenth century, he appears to have been associated with the parish of Holy Cross of Temple. He was mentioned in the wills of Richard Bokeland in 1418 and Richard Wykyng in 1419.¹³⁸ Bokeland was a brewer and burgess who requested burial by his pew in his parish church, suggesting that his parish church was important and central to his piety, and Wykyng was a burgess who left a brief will from the same parish. There is no link between Edmund Broun and John Broun in Figure 22 and so we cannot say that they were connected. However, the shared surname, their mutual contacts and friends, and their habitation in neighbouring parishes and the same suburb suggests that they may have had a familial connection. If they were connected, Edmund Broun would have been pulled further into circles of powerful men in the parish and the wider suburb. This, of course, could only be confirmed by a will from John or Edmund but no such document survives.

The support for deponents like Broun might reflect the wider religious culture in the southern suburb of Bristol in the early fifteenth century, and shows that there was sympathy in the neighbourhood toward those accused of lollardy. William More, the late husband of Christina More, was a burgess and merchant. He was clearly a reputable man in the town despite his employment of the lollard chaplain Walter Blake. This indicates that there was some lollard activity in the suburb before the death of William More in 1411, even if this was only limited to his household. However, there are other examples that demonstrate engagement with some devotional practices that might suggest sympathy towards lollardy. In 1404, John Bount, a merchant and burgess of St Mary Redcliffe's parish, bequeathed English Gospels in his will to John Caunterbury of the parish of St Thomas the Martyr.¹³⁹ He

¹³⁸ JOr/1/1, ff. 134r-135r, 139v-140r.

¹³⁹ PROB 11/2A/139.

also left Caunterbury 40s. 'pro bono & vero amore suo' (for his good and true affection). In the early fifteenth century, it was fashionable for individuals of high-status to own English Bibles.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, Bount's ownership of these books may have been nothing more than an orthodox interest in the Scriptures.¹⁴¹ It is only made suspicious by the benefit of hindsight with the controlling of vernacular literature by Arundel's Constitutions in 1407/09 and the Oldcastle rebels who came from his immediate locality. But it is clear that lollards were possessing and reading vernacular scripture at this time too.¹⁴² Bount's will reveals that, at the time of writing, his gospel books were in the possession of William Stourton, a gentleman of Wiltshire. Kightly has suggested that Stourton may have had lollard sympathies because his own will makes references to his putrid body that he desired to be buried naked. This is similar to the wills of knights in the Royal Court who have been regarded as lollard knights by McFarlane and others.¹⁴³ Andrew Brown, however, suggests that Stourton's piety was just particularly penitential.¹⁴⁴ Nonetheless, Brown also suggested that William Stourton might have known Sir Thomas Broke the elder on a local level.¹⁴⁵ Broke was a knight who arranged for his son's marriage to Sir John Oldcastle's step-daughter. Through this association, Stourton may have come into contact with possible lollards at court in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries at about the same time that Bount made his will and said that Stourton was in possession of his gospels. This evidence is circumstantial and speculative. It is viewed with the benefit of hindsight and in the context of the broader narrative. But it also suggests that there was a wider culture of vernacular reading in the southern suburb of Bristol that contextualises the suggestion that Broun, Wykeham, Harryes and Mostermaker had the

¹⁴⁰ A. Galloway, 'Writing Heresy, Apostasy and Anticlericalism in Medieval England', in *A Companion to British Literature, I: Medieval Literature 700-1450*, ed. by H. Chang (Chichester, 2013), pp. 226–27.

¹⁴¹ McSheffrey argues that the ownership of vernacular texts was more to do with status than heretical opinion. S. McSheffrey, 'Heresy, Orthodoxy and English Vernacular Religion 1480-1525', *Past & Present*, 186 (2005), pp. 47-80.

¹⁴² Kightly suggests that Purvey was translating the lollard Bible while he was in Bristol in the late fourteenth century. Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 222.

¹⁴³ K. B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 210–15; Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 237; J. Catto, 'Sir William Beauchamp between chivalry and Lollardy', in *The ideals and practice of medieval knighthood, III: papers from the fourth Strawberry Hill Conference*, 1988, eds. by C. Harper-Bill, & R. Harvey (Woodbridge, 1990), pp. 39–41; J. A. Tuck, 'Carthusian Monks and Lollard Knights: Religious Attitude at the Court of Richard II', *Studies in the age of Chaucer*, 1 (1984), pp. 149-161.

¹⁴⁴ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, pp. 203-204.

¹⁴⁵ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, p. 209.

reputation for having read, listened to or possessed 'libros lollardorum' (books of lollardy).¹⁴⁶ Lollard books is a vague term, but if it meant that they were reading the gospel in English then what they were doing was not exceptional in the context of the southern suburb.

In 1499, eight people abjured in front of the Bishop of Bath and Wells for various charges of heresy and lollardy.¹⁴⁷ While the Bouways may have been of higher status, the rest of these occupations all appear to have been of lower status than burgess. This led Kightly to argue that there was no relationship between heresy and the burgesses of the town after 1414. Yet, the evidence from a will in the Great Orphan's book and from the Coventry lollards tried in 1511 shows that dissenters appear to have been connected to the burgesses of the town and that lollardy continued to exist across the social strata in Bristol. In 1493, John Penke made his will. He was a merchant from the parish of All Saints' and he left a ton of wine to John Bouwey.¹⁴⁸ This may be John Bouway senior or junior, both of whom were tried in 1499.¹⁴⁹ Penke was Mayor of the town in 1472 and 1489.¹⁵⁰ It demonstrates that some of the accused in 1499 were well connected to important men in the town.

As already discussed, the mentions of Bristol by the accused in Coventry during the trials of 1511 to 1512 give a more comprehensive overview of dissenting activity than the 1499 abjurations in the diocese of Bath and Wells do. John Johnson and Robert Qwyck mentioned an array of people including cutlers, wiredrawers, bottle makers, hosiers, and servants. However they also mentioned a merchant called 'Karolo Viller parochie sancti Nicholai mercatore' (Charles Viller merchant of the parish of St Nicholas).¹⁵¹ He does not appear in any of the surviving wills for Bristol. We cannot say whether he was a burgess of the town, but he was certainly of a higher status than the weavers, fullers, and servants, and his presence in this list suggests that dissent continued to reach the higher strands of Bristol's society at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century. Given that the dissenting network had clearly spread beyond the southern suburb in 1499, and as there is

¹⁴⁶ The Bristol wills give some sense of book ownership across the century, and the ownership of English books continued also. In 1474, John Cogan of St Nicholas's parish left a 'sawter and mateyns book' and a pater noster in English. PROB 11/6/232.

¹⁴⁷ D/D/breg/9, ff. 46, 48v, 50v-51r, 52, 63r.

¹⁴⁸ JOr/1/1, f. 250r.

¹⁴⁹ The difference in spelling is likely down to different scribes.

¹⁵⁰ *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (London, 1872), pp. 45, 47.

¹⁵¹ *Lollards of Coventry*, p. 223.

not enough surviving evidence, a formal social network analysis cannot be attempted for the 1499 group. Nonetheless, we can see that in both 1414 and 1499 lollards were connected to the powerful men in the town. This was not always the case throughout the century, as the instance of William Fuer shows us in the mid-century, but this again might be the result of surviving evidence.

4.4.2: Lollards, artisans and guilds

It is clear, then, that those who were involved in unorthodox beliefs and activities continued to have traceable relationships with the upper sections of Bristol's society including common office holders and merchants. Dissenters had deep roots in the social context that surrounded them: they were not simply a 'network of disaffected individuals'.¹⁵² The above discussion has considered dissenters' connections to burgess society, but it is also possible to see how dissenters were connected to other parts of society as well.

Ruell, Jordan (alias Corverser), and Colchester were not connected to the rest of the network in Figure 22. This does not mean that they were isolated from the rest of the parish but that they were not connected to the burgess network specifically. Colchester and Corverser were both masters of craft guilds and so it is unsurprising that they were not part of the burgess social network.¹⁵³ Bristol was largely governed by an oligarchy made up of burgesses, as Fleming has established, who were broadly from the mercantile ranks of society (although some richer members of the artisan trades also held burgess status).¹⁵⁴ Some of the craft guilds occasionally came into conflict with the town's governance.¹⁵⁵

These deponents appear to have maintained their place in the guilds after Oldcastle's revolt. Kightly found this was the case for John Colchester who, having been master of the barbers' guild in 1408, appears again in 1418 as the surveyor of the guild.¹⁵⁶ This again demonstrates that they managed to restore their good *fama* through their compurgation. The

¹⁵² Burgess, 'A Hotbed of Heresy', p. 61.

¹⁵³ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 249.

¹⁵⁴ P. W. Fleming, 'Telling Tales of Oligarchy in the Late Medieval Town', in *The Fifteenth Century II: Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England*, ed. by Hicks, M. (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 177-193.

¹⁵⁵ D. H. Sacks, 'The Demise of the Martyrs: The feasts of St Clement and St Katherine in Bristol, 1400-1600', *Social History*, 2/11 (1986), pp. 141-169.

¹⁵⁶ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 249; *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, p. 135.

prevalence of lollardy in guilds has been explored by David Sacks. He argues that discontent with obligations and expectations placed on guild members coincided with Wycliffite ideas about the rejection of the veneration of images.¹⁵⁷ It is possible, then, that these men were not alone in their unorthodox beliefs in the weaver's guild which was part of a different social network to the burgess and mercantile networks that governed the town.

The case of William Fuer in 1448 also shows that, in the middle of the fifteenth century, lollards largely came from the vocations of weavers and smiths. He claims to have lived with a weaver, John Lesman, and learnt lollardy from him and his servant. Lesman and his servant might represent a lollard household, much like the More household in the southern suburb nearly forty years earlier. Having lodged on Redcliffe Street, Fuer also mentioned two other weavers who lived nearby: one on the same street and another on St Thomas Street. The shared vocation of these men suggests that there was a strong vocational basis for the network between them. It is possible that Fuer was an apprentice, having stayed with Lesman for two years.

However, Fuer did not only mention weavers. William Smyth who lived outside of the town was a smith and, as mentioned earlier, appears to have been an important figure in mid-fifteenth century lollardy in Bristol. It demonstrates that lollardy was not contained within a single vocation, or exclusively facilitated by the cloth trade as historians such as Sacks have argued.¹⁵⁸ William Smyth does, however, demonstrate that lollardy was only active in the lower status parts of Bristol by the middle of the century, and did not involve the burgesses.

The evidence from the trials in Coventry between 1511 and 1512 demonstrate that vocational ties and trade links facilitated connections between dissenters amongst the artisanal population. John Johnson admitted that he had stayed with 'a certain W[...]' for three years in Bristol.¹⁵⁹ Like Fuer, he may have been staying with them as an apprentice. It was through his host that he met one of the Bouways, weavers, and Henry Padwell, a cutler, who talked with him against the Eucharist, offerings, images and pilgrimages. After staying in

¹⁵⁷ Sacks, 'The Demise of the Martyrs', p. 166.

¹⁵⁸ Sacks, 'The Demise of the Martyrs' p. 166.

¹⁵⁹ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 109-113. The manuscript is damaged so the name of the person and the parish is not readable.

Bristol, he went on to Taunton, Brittany, Bordeaux and London before returning to Coventry. This movement was likely facilitated through vocational ties. Similarly, Thomas Villers of Coventry ‘dicit quod artificium suum in Bristollia et partibus extraneis didicit’ (said that he learnt his craft as a spicer in Bristol and in other foreign parts).¹⁶⁰ Villers was denounced during the Coventry trials by William Lodge, a mercer from Coventry, who claimed that Villers had attempted to talk to him about his faith in 1508 when they were sharing a bed together.¹⁶¹ It is possible that Villers learnt his heresy in Bristol where he was present for vocational reasons. There was a strong trade relationship between Coventry and Bristol, and this connection also impacted on mainstream pieties.¹⁶² The register of the Guild of Holy Trinity in Coventry contains the names of at least seventy-seven people from Bristol who were members of this Coventry guild.¹⁶³ The register records thirty-nine men, thirty-four named wives and two unnamed wives between 1340 and 1450. The register highlights that heterodox and orthodox pieties followed trade routes, and this was certainly the case for artisan lollards too.

4.4.3: Women and dissent in Bristol

While the above has considered lollards in social, economic, and vocational sub-groups, one sub-group that also needs to be considered is women. There were six women who are known to have engaged with lollardy in fifteenth-century Bristol. In 1414, Christina More, widow, and Julia, wife of John Kenfeke, were indicted by the King’s Bench following Oldcastle’s revolt. More was tried by the Bishop of Bath and Wells, whereas no charge was pursued against Julia Kenfeke.¹⁶⁴ The other four women are not named, but are mentioned by John Johnson of Coventry in his 1511 trial. They were the wives of four men that Johnson points to as lollards that he knew while in Bristol.

Most of these women appear to have been involved in lollardy as a result of their position as wives of male lollards. This was the case for the four wives mentioned by Johnson and for

¹⁶⁰ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 191-192.

¹⁶¹ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 199-201.

¹⁶² E. M. Carus-Wilson, ‘The Overseas Trade of Bristol’ in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, eds. by E. Power & M. M. Postan (London, 1933), pp. 186-187.

¹⁶³ *The Register of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, St. Mary, St. John the Baptist and St. Katherine of Coventry*, ed. by M. Dormer Harris (Oxford, 1935).

¹⁶⁴ KB9/209/1/84; KB29/54/20; D/D/breg/4 ff. 139r.

Julia Kenfeke. Largely, this fits into Shannon McSheffrey's argument that women did not make up a large part of lollardy, and that they were involved in lollardy through their family connections.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, Johnson said that conversations were undertaken in Padwell, Capper and the bottle maker's houses in the presence of their wives. He also stated that Charles Viller had had Thomas the bottlemaker, John Nayler and Johnson to his house to talk about heretical matters and that his wife had been present and listening.¹⁶⁶

However, not all women followed the profile outlined by McSheffrey. Christina More, a widow at the time of her arrest, appears to have been the patroness of the lollard chaplain Walter Blake and another lollard rebel who had previously been in her employ. McSheffrey notes that Alice Rowley of Coventry was an exception to the general pattern that she outlined, and it appears that More was an exception to this rule in the case of Bristol too.¹⁶⁷ It was perhaps her status as widow that allowed her to take on a prominent role: prior to her husband's death, it is unknowable what her position and relationship with her chaplain and servant was with regards to religious beliefs and activities.¹⁶⁸ Indeed, the only other woman indicted in Bristol in 1414 was described as a wife of a man still living. Since More was the head of the household in 1414, it was her widowhood that gave her this elevated position. It does not mean that Bristol lollards highly valued female leaders or promoted them, as McSheffrey has argued more broadly.

Indeed, broader attitudes towards women's role in dissent and devotional practices more widely can be gleaned from the trial record of Sir John Younge, a chaplain from the parish church of Holy Cross of Temple in 1449. When asked whether anyone could preach, he asserted that 'anyone could preach the word of God in churches and elsewhere, except for women who could not preach in churches because of the words of the apostle.'¹⁶⁹ Here,

¹⁶⁵ McSheffrey states that 28% of heretics were female. She does acknowledge an exception to the general profile of female lollards: Alice Rowley of Coventry was a woman of high status and appears to have been central to the local lollard activity. McSheffrey, *Gender and Heresy*, pp. 5, 58.

¹⁶⁶ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 223-227.

¹⁶⁷ McSheffrey highlights that Rowley appears to have been a leader and teacher of the Coventry lollards. McSheffrey, *Gender and Heresy*, pp. 29-38.

¹⁶⁸ C. Cross, 'Great Reasoners in Scripture': the activities of women Lollards, 1380-1530', in *Medieval women: dedicated and presented to Rosalind M. T. Hill on the occasion of her seventieth birthday*, ed. by D. Baker (Oxford, 1978), p. 361.

¹⁶⁹ D/D/breg/6, ff. 94r-96r.

Younge was talking about Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians where he states, 'women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says.'¹⁷⁰ Younge was holding to the literal word of the scripture, but he clearly still thought that women could be lollard evangelists outside of the context of church. This might imply that in Bristol, women were active in spreading lollardy outside of the Church's conventions, but this cannot be proven beyond the implication of Younge's statement.

4.4.4: Wide bridges

In 1414 and in 1499 there were a range of people who were actively engaged with dissenting ideas, beliefs and activities. Lollardy clearly affected different parts of Bristol's society at different points in time across the century. To better understand this, we can apply Centola and Macy's idea of wide bridges, which comes from network theory. They theorise that lots of short ties between people can create wide bridges for ideas to travel through: that is to say, lots of little connections creating a larger pathway through which an idea can travel. They stress that wide bridges are important for the 'spread of high-risk social movements'.¹⁷¹ Although not a social movement, I think that dissenting ideas under consideration here, in the context of inquisition and persecution, can be deemed to be 'high risk' and so we can begin to apply Centola and Macy's theory to this current case study for a new perspective.

The network analysis in Figure 22 only shows the burgess networks and, as discussed, this is why the likes of the guild masters are unconnected to it. But the vocations of those listed in Appendix 3 show that the accused from across the century came from a variety of vocations. Indeed, as I have previously demonstrated, these individuals were also closely connected to burgesses and common officeholders of the town. The image this creates contradicts the one put forward by Burgess. Instead, it suggests that the unorthodox ideas and questioning of faith that led some into dissent were present in several parts of the late medieval town. They were not isolated cases. Rather, a diversity of opinion and belief beyond the parish-centric piety, that the richest of the town pursued, appears to have existed across

¹⁷⁰ I Corinthians 14. 34.

¹⁷¹ D. Centola & M. Macy, 'Complex Contagions and the Weakness of Long Ties', *American Journal of Sociology* 113/3 (2007), pp. 702-734.

the late medieval town, both geographically and socially. They were not isolated, but very much part of Bristol's society in many different places.

This does not mean that these dissenters were not still subject to the larger pressures of social status. As already stated, John Johnson stated that Thomas the bottlemaker and John Nayler of the parish of St Thomas the Martyr used to have conversations as they walked over the fields to St Vincent's chapel. But, Johnson says, Charles Viller, the merchant, did not walk with these people. Instead, they came to his house and talked with him there about their beliefs with his wife present.¹⁷² One possible interpretation of this arrangement is that Viller could not be seen with people of lower status than himself without good reason and that, if seen walking over the fields to a chapel outside of Bristol, he would have raised suspicions.

A conclusion can be drawn here that those who were tried for heresy were not simply a network of disaffected individuals, but a range of people who were integrated into many levels of Bristol's society. The associations and networks of these people cut across boundaries of status and vocation. Although the lack of surviving evidence means we do not have a complete picture, we can get glimpses of how deeply rooted some of those who held dissenting beliefs were in Bristol's society. This does not mean that their contacts were also implicated in dissenting activities, but it does show that they were able to function and co-exist together. If they did know about the accused's activities prior to arrest it either meant that they were tolerant of their activities or that they had reported them.¹⁷³

The fact that dissenters appear to have lived alongside people who practised a mainstream, inoffensive piety attests to the dissenters' multiple belongings. It is important to remember that, although they were part of a group which explored an unconventional belief set and practices, they continued to belong to their parish churches, guilds, neighbourhoods and vocational networks. This is similar to Derek Plumb's findings concerning the mid-Thames valley: that 'Lollards were normal sixteenth-century gentry, yeomen, artisans, farmers,

¹⁷² *Lollards of Coventry*, p. 226. 'Charles Viller, however, did not walk with these same people but they came to his house and communicated there about the above matters, with Charles's wife present and listening'.

¹⁷³ Tolerance of neighbours with heretical views has been found in some localities in Kent and in the mid-Thames valley. Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion*, p. 149; D. Plumb, 'A gathered church? Lollards and their society', in *The World of Rural Dissenters, 1520-1725* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 163.

craftsmen, labourers, and full-time members of their communities, their guilds and their parish church.’¹⁷⁴

4.5: Attitudes to ecclesiastical institutions

Like the patterns of association highlighted in testamentary giving in chapter 2, association between lollards appears to have functioned on the basis of neighbourhood and suburb at the beginning of the century. Those who followed Walter Blake to St Giles’s Field appear to have come from the south of the town. Therefore, their connections seem not to have been exclusively through the parish, but were contained within some kind of geographical boundary. The shared occupation of ‘weaver’ of twelve of those indicted suggests that their dissent and treason may have spread through their occupational networks. This is further suggested by involvement of Guild masters, such as John Colchester who was Master of the Barbour’s guild and tried by Bishop Bubwith for his connection to Blake’s rebels, and Juliana Kenfeke, whose husband had been the master of the Corwainers’ guild. In 1414, Walter Blake was accompanied by four other chaplains to St Giles’s Field, and later in the fifteenth century a further two chaplains and a rector were also investigated for heresy with other members of the clergy being implicated too (Appendix 3). These examples show that dissenters engaged with the church in the early fifteenth century, and the question of how these deponents related to the institutions of the Church (to both their parishes as well as other ecclesiastical institutions) is an important one. It has the potential to tell us about their connection to the rest of the society around them, their views of themselves, and their motivations. Evidence of their involvement in and engagement with the Church suggests that they wanted reform rather than abolition, as they did not completely abandon it.

There was clerical involvement in dissent in Bristol throughout the fifteenth century which started prior to 1414 with Walter Blake.¹⁷⁵ Four more chaplains accompanied him in Oldcastle’s revolt (John Scorlage, John Batyn, Robert Payn, and William Worcestre).¹⁷⁶ From 1417, the chaplain William Taillour became active in the diocese of Worcester and was tried by the Bishop of Worcester. After purging himself, he was again arrested in Bristol for

¹⁷⁴ Plumb, ‘A gathered church?’, p. 163.

¹⁷⁵ KB9/209/1/82-84.

¹⁷⁶ KB9/209/1/84; Kightly, ‘The Early Lollards’, p. 244.

preaching in the parish church of Holy Trinity, and rearrested in 1423 when letters were intercepted from him to a chaplain in the parish of St Nicholas in Bristol.¹⁷⁷ Up until 1420, all members of the clergy who had been accused of heresy had been chaplains and seemingly unbeneficed. However, the rector of Holy Trinity, Thomas Drayton, was arrested for heresy in 1420 and purged himself in front of the Bishop of Worcester the same year.¹⁷⁸ Among other charges, he was arrested for allowing William Taillour to preach in his church and was further accused of preaching a sermon on St Augustine's Green. As well as showing that a beneficed member of clergy was actively dissenting in Bristol, the case of Thomas Drayton shows that other beneficed clergy in the town were engaged, or had been engaged in dissent also. As mentioned, Drayton's compurgation certificate shows that John Mybbe, a beneficed chaplain at the neighbouring parish church who had previously been indicted for heresy after Oldcastle's revolt, was in Bristol at the time.¹⁷⁹

The only other clergyman to be tried for heresy in fifteenth-century Bristol was Sir John Younge, a chaplain from the church of Holy Cross of Temple. His abjuration reveals that he was aged: it was read out for him by William North.¹⁸⁰ This raises the possibility that he had taught dissenting ideas and had written on heresy over the course of his career for a long time before his arrest. Having been a part of the established church, some of Younge's beliefs were about the institution of the Church. He held views that opposed the counsels of the Church, the power of the Church to excommunicate, and believed that the Pope was not a true vicar of Christ.¹⁸¹ However, as a man of the church by vocation, he clearly did not object to the church on a local level. He was also recorded as saying that the smallest chapel in the diocese of Bath and Wells had the same authority as the church of Rome. This suggests that he saw equal value in the smaller places of worship, and places where most people said their prayers to God, as in the hierarchically superior places within the Church. In fact, this sentiment might have been read as positive or empowering for the churches and places of

¹⁷⁷ 716.093/5/iii, f. 16r; *The register of Henry Chichele*, pp. 157-173.

¹⁷⁸ 716.093/5/iii, ff. 16v-18v.

¹⁷⁹ Kightly, 'The Early Lollards', p. 251.

¹⁸⁰ D/D/breg/6 f. 95r. 'abiuratorem in scriptis redactam in organo voce mei Willelmi North predicti fecit...' (the abjuration in writing was rendered in my voice, William North foresaid...).

¹⁸¹ D/D/breg/6, ff. 94r-96r.

worship in his locality. It was the hierarchy and institution of the Church that he objected to, not the pious practices of the laity in their locality.

Indeed, it is clear that Younge did not object to all aspects of the Church. When asked about the legality and necessity of confirmations of young persons, ordinations of clergy, and consecrations of places, he agreed that they were both legal and necessary.¹⁸² He clearly did not completely reject the institution of the Church and saw some value in its rituals and rites. The rites that he supported protected his own position as a member of the clergy and brought people and places into the fold of God. It was the hierarchy of the Church, that was detached from the everyday piety of most people, which he rejected. This suggests that he was likely to have been motivated in wanting reform to bring the Church back to what he saw as the true purpose of God.

Some of the accused clearly thought that the Church should be made more accessible. William Emayn said that anyone can preach the gospel in their mother tongue, promoting an agenda of vernacular religion that took the power away from the priesthood through using shared language. He also stated that every priest was bound to preach the word of God openly.¹⁸³ By openly, it is likely that he meant in a manner that is easy to understand.¹⁸⁴ As mentioned previously, John Younge said that anyone could preach in churches and elsewhere, but women could not preach in churches on account of the words of the apostle. This statement empowered any man to preach in church and this, again, opened the Church to more people and broke down the sanctity and power of the priesthood over the word of God. It also enabled women to be evangelists in other contexts such as the home.

Despite their views about the institution of the Church more broadly, the accused appear to have continued to attend church in Bristol.¹⁸⁵ The compurgations in 1414 all happened in the same parish church (St Thomas the Martyr). This shows, simply, that they were all from the same parish. As discussed above, they were from different social, economic,

¹⁸² D/D/breg/6, ff. 94r-96r.

¹⁸³ D/D/breg/5 f. 52v-53r.

¹⁸⁴ *OED*.

¹⁸⁵ None of the trials accuse them of non-attendance, as is the case in trials elsewhere in the country. For example, Richard Hyde was tried in Coventry 1511-1512. He appears not to have been a heretic but was caught up in the trials because he had not been to church for twelve years. *Lollards of Coventry*, p. 168.

and vocational groups. The common association between these individuals was their parish church, and so their association with each other may have been through their attendance there.¹⁸⁶ No wills survive for those tried by Bubwith in 1414 and 1415 so we cannot assess their testamentary relationship with the church as has been done in chapter 2 for others. However, William More's will does survive. It shows a typical relationship with the parish. He requested burial in the church of St Thomas the Martyr and asked for the priest to organise it. He also left 6s. 8d. to the vicar for tithes forgotten, 3s. 4d. to Henry Juet who was the chaplain of the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the church, and requested that the priest celebrate divine service on the day of his death and be paid 4d..¹⁸⁷ He used his parish church and the clergy therein to facilitate his good death and proper commemoration. There is nothing to suggest that he objected to his parish church and, therefore, the will suggests that he and Christina were participants in parish life. This sense is particularly strong with his request for the priest to arrange his burial which suggests a level of familiarity and trust.

Elsewhere in the country, heresy trials can occasionally reveal how lollards dealt with the Mass in their parish church. Despite not believing in the sacrament of the altar as it was set out in church doctrine, many still attended mass. In 1511, Roger Landesdales of Coventry had been taught that 'When you see the elevation of the sacred body of the Lord at the altar, think of Christ's true body in heaven and not of the host...', while Thomas Bown, also of Coventry, had learnt that he 'should receive the host spiritually'.¹⁸⁸ Not all those who engaged with the mass differently did so in a positive way. Roger Browne of Coventry was, in 1486, accused of refusing to look at the host as it was elevated.¹⁸⁹ In 1499, Thomas Boughton of Hungerford in the diocese of Salisbury explained that he had taken the sacrament of the altar, knowing that it came from bakers' hands, so that 'I should not be noted'.¹⁹⁰ Similarly in 1499, another group from Reading said that they took the sacrament of the altar 'only for dread of the people'.¹⁹¹ From Bristol, there is only one example of a dissenter participating in the mass at Church: John Willis said that he had received communion at Easter and made confession

¹⁸⁶ However, with limited evidence it is difficult to say this with any certainty.

¹⁸⁷ JOr/1/1, f. 117.

¹⁸⁸ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 130, 131.

¹⁸⁹ *Lollards of Coventry*, p. 69.

¹⁹⁰ D1/2/13, f. 74r.

¹⁹¹ D1/2/13, f. 70r.

during Lent, but that he did so knowing that these actions had no worth.¹⁹² Bristol lollards, like lollards elsewhere, continued to engage with normative devotional practices such as attending mass, making confession and making wills. This further shows integration into the community around them and demonstrates that they were not isolated or disaffected. Instead, they were part of the society and culture around them, even if they did not always agree with the broader theology.

4.6: Meeting Places

As mentioned above, the parish church was one possible place where people made dissenting associations. However, chapels were another form of ecclesiastical institution where groups of dissenters met to discuss their beliefs. The 1511 and 1512 depositions from Coventry state that the Bristol lollards walked to St Vincent's chapel to have their heretical discussions. The use of chapels for heretical meetings is documented elsewhere in the country, such as in Coventry and Kent.¹⁹³ In some cases, the physical isolation of the chapel meant that it provided a safe space for heretics to meet. Certainly, any group meeting in St Vincent's Chapel, which was in the rockface of the Avon Gorge, would be able to see anyone coming to the chapel and leave before they arrived.

Meetings, however, were also sometimes in privately owned places.¹⁹⁴ Before 1499, there is little detail about how and where the accused met. The recollections of the Coventry lollards, however, show that dissenters met in private houses. Robert Silkby admitted that 'he had a disputation with him [John Bouway] in [...] of John Holywod.'¹⁹⁵ The word is either illegible or there is a hole in the manuscript, but I think that it is likely to be 'house of John Holywod'. John Johnson's testimony very clearly demonstrates that homes were used for meetings between dissenters. He said, 'There is a bad suspicion concerning the wives of Padwell, Capper, and the bottle-maker, in whose homes communications of this kind have

¹⁹² Thomson, *The Later Lollards*, p. 68.

¹⁹³ P. Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: a history of the English Reformation* (New Haven, 2017), p. 108; N. Orme, 'The Other Parish Churches: chapels in late medieval England', in *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, eds. C. urges & E. Duffy (Donington, 2006), p. 93.

¹⁹⁴ For households as meeting places in Kent, see Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion*, p. 165.

¹⁹⁵ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 104.

taken place, in the presence of their wives', showing that they were having discussions in their houses which their family were privy to.¹⁹⁶

Heresy was clearly also spread through servants and apprentices who lived with their master, and through taking lodgers. John Johnson stated that he stayed in a house in Redcliffe Street for three years. Inside the house, he talked with Bouway junior, Bouway's father, and Henry Padwell, '...against the sacrament [...], offerings, images, and pilgrimages', which suggests that he came into contact with dissenting ideas through his residence.¹⁹⁷ Hudson argues that some dissenters travelled around the country and stayed with people. These included well known lollard leaders such as William Taillour or William Thrope, but also those who claimed to have learnt their heresy while staying away from home. She suggests that they found lodgings in houses that were already sympathetic to their views, stating that 'recurrence of certain towns and areas within heretics' itineraries suggests that there was widespread awareness of places friendly to their views.'¹⁹⁸ It may have been, then, that there were 'places friendly' to traveling dissenters in Bristol, but both Hudson's argument and the example of John Johnson show that, by the end of the fifteenth-century, dissenting discussions and activities had become something that happened in private spaces.

4.7: Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the evidence for dissent in Bristol throughout the fifteenth century. It has demonstrated that dissent had deep roots in the town in certain instances, links to dissent outside of the town, and that it was present in many different parts of Bristol's society. Fundamentally, dissent has been shown to be more than just a 'network of disaffected individuals'. This chapter has demonstrated that there were different groups of people who were externally described as lollards who existed throughout the century, and that, although tried by the ecclesiastical authorities as criminals, some did, in places agree with the Church or at least go along with the requirements of the Church in daily life.

¹⁹⁶ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 225-226

¹⁹⁷ *Lollards of Coventry*, pp. 111-112.

¹⁹⁸ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 140-141.

What is also apparent is that some of those tried found a positive alternative in their unorthodox spirituality. John Walcote, for example, did not worry about what was going to happen to his body after he died as long as he knew his soul was saved. This is in contradiction to wider concerns in late medieval society about a good death which included a good burial. However, it should also be noted that the views of people like Walcote also intersected with other devotional attitudes in mainstream piety. References to the body being unimportant have been described as penitential by historians such as Brown.¹⁹⁹

An agenda for reform of wider religious structures is apparent. Sir John Younge, for example, clearly did not see everything that the Church did as bad. William Taillour never denied the transubstantiation at the Eucharist, but perhaps he felt so passionately about idolatry that he felt compelled to challenge the Church about it on many occasions to the point that they decided he could not be saved and excommunicated him. Some of those tried clearly had a different idea of what the Church could be and about what was important in their faith and their relationship with God. With the exception of the Oldcastle rebels, they did not want to completely do away with the Church as they knew it but instead wanted positive change and reform in the aspects of religion that affected lay devotional practices and daily life. This is clear in John Younge's views on his local church and its value. What has not been discussed in this chapter is the attitudes to the wealth of the Church, the mendicant orders and religious orders. The views on these were much harsher and did often advocate the destruction of these aspects of the organisation of the Church.

It is interesting and significant that those who were labelled as lollards were well connected to various parts of Bristol's society. What is most interesting, I think, is that they were well connected to the great and the good of the town: the very men who were meant to defend the Church against them. The 'gap' between heterodox and orthodox was not so great, it seems, in a social sense.

Lollardy is only one line of investigation into the conversations and discussions going on in late medieval England concerning the nature of faith and religious life.²⁰⁰ From some of the wider sources used in this chapter we can find other examples of interpretations of faith.

¹⁹⁹ Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England*, pp. 203-204.

²⁰⁰ Arnold, 'Voicing Dissent'; Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*.

For example, in 1499 Katherine Love of Wells was tried as a witch and abjured before the Bishop of Bath and Wells.²⁰¹ There is no such evidence for other strands of unorthodoxy and dissent in Bristol, but what the examples and discussion put forward in this chapter do show is a diversity of religious devotion and opinion. It takes the historical narrative away from a homogenous and monolithic interpretation of the late medieval Church and shows that, alongside lay enthusiasm for their Church, there was also a diversity in religious attitudes that challenged the established Church. People in Bristol were actively thinking about their faith, and were concerned with making their faith as true to God as possible.

²⁰¹ D/D/breg/9, f. 51.

5: Conclusion

This thesis has questioned the nature of late medieval urban piety by exploring how people engaged with and used the religious institutions available to them in the town of Bristol, and by investigating the relationship between urban piety and institutional frameworks, as well as the topography of the town and civic and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. It has considered what sort of diversity existed in urban religious life in terms of practice and belief, and the extent to which this diversity challenges our understanding of the categories and descriptors of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. It has tackled these research questions by quantitatively examining the wills for late medieval Bristol to identify broad trends, and by building qualitative case studies to demonstrate what kind of devotional activities and religious expression were possible in an urban setting. It has also examined heresy trials relating to the town and its inhabitants, questioning what these records tell us about the beliefs of those tried and their relationships with the population around them. Throughout, this thesis has used Social Network Analysis to visualise and analyse the networks in the town. It has also considered how testators, and heretics, belonged to ecclesiastical institutions in the town; how they demonstrated their belonging through obligatory and voluntary acts and what these gestures that show belonging might tell us about the nature of urban piety.

Chapter 2 illustrated that a quarter of testators exhibited belonging to more than one parish church in the town, which then led this thesis to question the appropriateness of the parish as the sole unit of analysis. Unlike previous studies of Bristol, and of single urban parishes elsewhere, this thesis has looked at the surviving testamentary evidence for the whole town. While the parish archive of All Saints', that Clive Burgess has extensively studied, is incredibly rich, it is of limited use to studying how piety functioned in the urban context because it does not consider the parish in the context of the rest of the town.¹ Indeed, the lack of surviving parish archives has meant that the only way to study the whole town is through testamentary records in the way that Norman Tanner has done for Norwich.² However, unlike Tanner, this thesis has found that testators' piety was not always centred on

¹ C. Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls': The Parish of All Saints on the Eve of the Reformation* (Woodbridge, 2018).

² N. Tanner, *The church in late medieval Norwich, 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984). p. 1-18, 167-168.

the parish.³ Instead, testators left legacies to multiple parish churches either out of obligation to them or in voluntary acts, both of which demonstrate a sense of belonging. It is worth noting that around three quarters of testators only mentioned one parish church in their wills, showing that the parish did continue to be important, and that others, such as Thomas Malverne, did not mention any parish church at all in their will. This shows a variation in enthusiasm for the parish from one individual to the next and suggests that looking to the parish to understand lay piety does not always provide the whole picture; sometimes it extended beyond the boundaries of the parish, and sometimes the parish was not a priority for the testator.

Through the examination of case studies, this thesis has also explored some of the reasons behind the patronisation of multiple parishes. These included lifecycle, kinship links, social mobility, property ownership, and charitable giving. These factors are indicative of living in an urban space where a testator might have lived in several parishes before they came to write their will, resulting in the ownership of property in other parishes, having family links to other parishes, or the tombs of loved ones outside of their home parish church. Yet, as examples like Simon Canynges show, the testator did not always feel a sense of belonging to all previous parish churches and in some cases, such as that of the widow Isabel Ruddok alias Clive, the testator clearly showed which church they felt they belonged to and wanted to be remembered in at the exclusion of others. Yet, it was these personal networks of kinship, property ownership and, sometimes, guild membership that cut across the institutional boundaries of the parish and prompted lay people to engage with more parish churches than just their own.

This thesis has questioned how urban piety was organised, and one of the major findings in this regard is that testators appear to have given to additional parish churches on the basis of neighbourhood. Indeed, some testators left legacies to a variety of institutions within a suburb or neighbourhood of Bristol which appear largely to have been shaped by the topography of the town. This was particularly the case for the southern suburb of the town, which was comprised of three parishes. The two rivers meant that the northern and southern

³ Tanner found that testators engaged with a range of religious institutions in their wills, but maintains the parish continued to be the most central of these.

suburb were distinct neighbourhoods, whereas the closeness of central parish churches meant that testators often patronised their neighbouring parish church. It was the proximity of the urban context and the intensity of religious provision in the town that provided testators with a choice of places that could facilitate their pious needs. The continuity in the neighbourhoods found through Network Analysis in chapter 2 shows the stability of the urban setting. Bristol had developed from a small settlement between the Rivers Avon and Frome but, by the fifteenth century, the town had expanded and the town's layout had stabilised, and this facilitated the continuity in the pious associations of the laity. The prominence of neighbourhood in this study suggests that piety, in an urban setting at least, should be approached through the framework of place and locality rather than through the category of the parish, which limits actual lived experience that clearly extended beyond the confines of the parish and parish church.

The urban setting also facilitated an intensity of religious provision for the laity and this thesis has explored how the laity engaged with this provision. The discussion throughout chapter 3 demonstrates that the laity did engage with other types of ecclesiastical institutions such as friaries, hospitals and chapels, and with sub-parochial groups such as guilds that drew their membership from across the town. There are many examples of testators putting another ecclesiastical institution, such as a friary, hospital, or chapel, at the centre of their will where the parish church would normally have been. Hospitals could take on the same role as the parish church, as the cases from St John the Baptist's Hospital and St Mark's Hospital demonstrate. Yet, the parish clergy did not always accept this, feeling disgruntled about the loss of income, as the case of William Chew shows. As well as showing conflict, Chew's case is confirmation that hospitals were moving towards being viewed as 'virtual parishes' by contemporaries.⁴ Friaries could also become the focus point of the testator, as was the case in the will of Thomas Curety that only mentioned the Carmelite friary. The naming of specific friars in the will and the recognition of the friars' poor status, through

⁴ E. C. Roger, 'Blakberd's Treasure: A Study in Fifteenth Century Administration at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London', in *The Fifteenth Century XIII: Exploring the Evidence: Commemoration, Administration and the Economy*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 81-107; C. Barron, 'The People of the Parish: the close of St Bartholomew's Hospital in Fifteenth-Century London', in *The Urban Church in late Medieval England. Essays from the 2017 Harlaxton Symposium Held in Honour of Clive Burgess*, ed. by D. Harry, & C. Steer (Donington, 2019), pp. 353-379.

bequeathing to alms-houses specifically for friars, also shows that testators had relationships with the friars prior to requiring their mortuary services. Unlike hospitals, friaries did not become 'virtual parishes', but they were heavily and meaningfully engaged with by the laity in the late medieval town.

Chapels did not have the ability to replace the parish in the urban setting in the same way that hospitals clearly did. Unlike rural chapels, which were often the main place of worship for the population around them when the parish church was far away or hard to get to in bad weather, urban chapels could not overtake the parish. This is most clear in the example of John and Isabel Barstaple. The chapel of Holy Trinity at Lafford's Gate offered them pious opportunity that the parish did not, and it facilitated their piety during their lifetimes and at the point of their deaths. However, they could not forget their parish, evident in the compensation they gave the parish church of St Werburgh's in their wills. Although they did not replace the parish, devotional activities in chapels were often a means by which people practiced their piety outside of their home parish church, through their involvement in guilds and religious fraternities. This was largely the case for the craft guilds of St John the Baptist at St Ewen's church and St Katherine's Guild at the Holy Cross of Temple, but was also the case for some of the parish guilds such as the Holy Cross guild that met in the crypt of St Nicholas's church. It shows that there was a less clear distinction between craft guilds and parochial guilds in the urban setting than previously thought, and that guilds were not always sub-parochial but brought people together from many parishes.

Parochial and standalone chapels and friaries were also spaces used by the laity to create something akin to a family mausoleum. There are many instances of families using side chapels in parish churches for burial over several generations and these spaces becoming associated with them: the most notable example being found in the Lady Chapel in the church of St Thomas the Martyr, which became associated with the Canynges family. This also happened in standalone chapels such as the chapel of Holy Trinity at Lafford's gate, and sometimes in friaries, evidenced in the tombs of Thomas Gloucester and his daughter Margaret. So, while testators could and did use the parish to build lineage through tombs in exclusive devotional spaces, they could also do it outside of the parish church: the parish was not central or essential to this agenda. However, as well as being used to project lineage and images of orthodoxy, chapels were used to facilitate dissenting pieties. The diverse range of

activities are evident when comparing two chapels that lay just outside of Bristol: St Vincent's chapel in Clifton and St Anne's chapel in Bedminster. While St Vincent's was used by religious dissenters as a meeting place, St Anne's was filled with votive ships and wax offerings from the merchants and craft guilds of the town.

The exploration of engagement with ecclesiastical institutions in chapters 2 and 3 shows how useful the will is as evidence of popular piety. As outlined in the introduction, some, such as Burgess, Neal Galpern and J. J. Scarisbrick, argue that the will is a heavily limited document for studying piety because it only conveys a deathbed piety.⁵ However, what this thesis has shown is that wills have the capacity and the potential to convey pious associations that existed in life as well as in preparing for death, and that this is particularly relevant to assessing how testators engaged with extra-parochial institutions in the town and with multiple parish churches. Testators sometimes took the opportunity to reflect on their pious lives on their deathbed and to honour previous obligations in their wills. Sometimes this is explicit, such as when Henry Culmer left a tithe legacy to a parish church in Wales which he called 'lately my parish church.' Other times the meaning of bequests to other parish churches can be seen through reconstructing their lifecycle, as has been demonstrated in the case of Henry Darleston, the Prior of the Kalendars' Guild. Bequests to multiple parishes or engagement with a range of ecclesiastical institutions is a result of the testator's choice and of their feeling that they had obligations to their previous parishes or a sentimental attachment to them. For documents which have been criticised for being formulaic, this study demonstrates the will's capacity for self-expression, which supports the arguments of historians such as Elisabeth Salter and Lisa Liddy about the utility of the will.⁶

One limitation of this study is that testators under examination here were clearly wealthy and at the top of Bristol's society, so these findings cannot be applied to those of lower economic status in the town. While it is possible that they also moved around the town

⁵ C. Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered', in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. by M. A. Hicks (Gloucester, 1990), p. 17; A. N. Galpern, *The Religions of People in Sixteenth-Century Champagne* (London, 1976), p. 13; J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford, 1984), p. 11.

⁶ E. Salter, *Cultural Creativity in the Early English Renaissance: Popular Culture in Town and Country* (Basingstoke, 2006); L. Liddy, 'Affective Bequests: Creating Emotion in York Wills, 1400-1600', in *Understanding emotions in early Europe*, ed. M. W. Champion & A. Lynch (Turnhout, 2015), pp. 273-289.

and used different institutions for their worship, it is also entirely possible that they stayed within their immediate neighbourhood for their devotion. A clear example of how this could have been the case for those of lower status in Bristol is the weavers' guild of St Katherine that met in the parish of Temple. This was accessible to the weavers who lived in the three parishes of the southern suburb, and this proximity to the guild may have negated any need to leave the suburb for devotional activities for the weavers. Additionally, we must consider their potential to own property or to instruct the installation of monuments inside church buildings. The extra-parochial pieties discussed in chapter 3, such as Margaret Gloucester's use of the Carmelite friary or the Barstaples' use of the chapel of Holy Trinity at Lafford's gate, were enabled by their personal wealth. Yet, the networks that emerge from the heresy trials suggest that the people of lower status also functioned on the basis of neighbourhood, as the cases of heresy from 1414 and 1448 show that heretics were from the same street or suburb as each other, and the cases of the unorthodox clergymen, Thomas Drayton and William Taillour, in c.1420 show heretical connections with people from their neighbouring parishes.

Alongside considerations of pious practices which can be described as 'normative', 'mainstream', or 'orthodox', this thesis considers evidence of religious dissent and heresy. Through this consideration of both mainstream and dissenting pieties, this thesis argues that there was a diversity of religious attitudes and devotional practice present in late medieval Bristol. In mainstream piety, the use of exclusive spaces or extra-parochial institutions facilitated the piety of some individuals. Meanwhile the lay questioning of Church doctrine was also present, and could lead to unorthodoxy or, in the eyes of the established Church, religious dissent and heresy. Alongside the example of John Hemmyng, who lived in the parish of St Augustine and was clearly engaged with the devotional regime at St Mark's Hospital towards the end of the fifteenth century, there are also examples of people from across the town meeting in each other's houses to discuss unorthodox ideas about the mass which, when partially discovered by the church authorities in 1499, was heretical. That these two things were happening in relatively close proximity to each other in an urban setting demonstrates that urban piety and religious attitudes in the town were diverse.

Although the number of people tried for heresy was lower than one might have expected for a town with such a heretical reputation in the secondary literature, the surviving cases are representative of deeper networks that the ecclesiastical authorities were not able

to uncover and prosecute. It is highly likely that there were many more people engaged with dissent in the town but that it has gone un-recorded. This is best seen at the end of the fifteenth century when the Bishop of Bath and Wells found a group from the southern suburb guilty of heresy, yet there were clearly more people in their network. John Johnson and Robert Qwyck named some of those who abjured in 1499, but also exposed others that they knew of in Bristol during their own examination for heresy in Coventry between 1511 and 1512. Therefore, although not comparable in number to any devotional or pious activity seen within mainstream religious practice, lollard discussions of faith was present and so should continue to be considered in studies of popular piety more broadly, contrary to the objections of some historians.⁷

The interplay between heterodoxy and orthodoxy is apparent in this thesis and directly challenges the conclusions of Burgess.⁸ Chapter 4 has shown that dissenters were an integral part of many different groups in the town. They belonged to these groups and were interwoven into the fabric of the everyday, indicating that dissent and dissenters were deeply embedded in Bristol's society. They were not, as Burgess has argued, a 'network of disaffected individuals', but instead people who were well connected and integrated with orthodox society. This might suggest a level of tolerance from their neighbours, if they knew about these heretical activities, in a similar way to Rob Lutton and Derek Plumb's findings of tolerance from neighbours in their respective studies of the Weald of Kent and the mid-Thames valley.⁹ More directly, this is comparable to Andrew Brown's findings for the diocese of Salisbury: that heretical and orthodox lay people continued to live alongside each other in relative harmony and function normally together, despite their diverging religious views.¹⁰ The example of the merchant, Charles Viller, who was mentioned by Johnson and Qwyck in 1511-1512, indicates that heretical activity happened in the ranks of society that

⁷ E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*, 2nd Edition (New Haven, 2005), p. 2. C. Burgess, 'A Hotbed of Heresy?: Fifteenth-Century Bristol and the Lollards in Perspective' in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 61; C. Burgess, 'A Repertory of Reinforcement: Configuring Civic Catholicism in Fifteenth-Century Bristol', in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. by L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 107-108.

⁸ Burgess, 'A Hotbed of Heresy', pp. 43-62; Burgess, 'A Repertory of Reinforcement', pp. 107-108.

⁹ R. Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England: reconstructing piety* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 149; D. Plumb, 'A gathered church? Lollards and their society', in *The World of rural Dissenters, 1520-1725*, ed. by M. Spufford (Cambridge, 1995), p. 163.

¹⁰ A. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury 1250-1500* (Oxford, 1995), p. 218.

have traditionally been regarded as ultra-orthodox. Viller is an example of a merchant involved in dissent and provides a stark contrast to other merchants such as Edward Dawes who invested in his parish, exhibiting his commitment to the institution of the church and its doctrine, and left substantial wealth to the church to maintain it.¹¹ The difference between the actions, which are arguably indicative of belief, of Viller and Dawes demonstrates the different options open to people of a similar background in the urban setting.

This integration, however, raises important questions about the nature of lollardy more broadly. The lack of evidence from Bristol has often meant that it is excluded from broader studies of lollardy.¹² It is clear from the discussion in chapter 4 that lollards were not isolated from their orthodox friends, colleagues and neighbours in day-to-day life and public, devotional practice such as attending church. Indeed, in line with many other works, this thesis argues that a definitive gap between heterodoxy and orthodoxy is an artificial binary and perhaps is one that comes into being through the process of inquisition.¹³ Instead of an organised movement that lasted from the late fourteenth century until the Reformation, lollardy appears to have been a stereotype imposed onto people who saw themselves as trying to improve devotional practices to make them more Godly.¹⁴ In some cases, such as during Oldcastle's Revolt in 1414, dissenters were part of a national movement, however fractious and disorganised. But this is a point of view taken with the benefit of hindsight and it is unlikely to have been as organised as this. Throughout the century, the Bristol evidence shows that dissenters were part of informal groups, and by the end of the century dissenters in Bristol had contacts with dissenters in other parts of the country too. I am unconvinced, however, that these dissenters were part of some sort of malevolent secret society. What this thesis has shown is that dissenters continued to function within the broader, mainstream

¹¹ Edward Dawes, merchant, made a will in 1493 and left eight measures of woad of Bristol measure towards buying a pair of new organs for the church of St Werburgh. BA, JOr/1/1, ff. 247v-248r.

¹² For example, see J. P. Hornbeck, *What is a Lollard?: Dissent and Belief in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2010) and S. McSheffrey, *Gender and Heresy: Women and Men in Lollard Communities, 1420-1530* (Philadelphia, 1995).

¹³ J. H. Arnold, *Inquisition and power: Catharism and the confessing subject in medieval Languedoc* (Philadelphia, 2001), ch 3.

¹⁴ To some extent, this agrees with Robert Swanson's argument that lollardy was a stereotype in the eyes of the medieval Bishops or a construction by them, and therefore in the eyes of historians too. R. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 329-336.

frameworks, and that they clearly wanted reform of the Christian Church that, in their opinion, had lost its way.

Overall, this thesis has found that urban piety was diverse. While the available sources show an increase in dissenting activity in the 1490s in the town, the last wills and testaments attest to a continuation of lay engagement with orthodox religion and Bristol's many ecclesiastical institutions.¹⁵ Piety, both mainstream and unorthodox, was vibrant and very much a part of everyday life, which shows the laity were clearly engaged with their faith. Urban piety functioned on the basis of neighbourhood, rather than the parish, extra-parochial institutions were used by the laity to aid their piety, and there was a diversity of religious beliefs that could be described as heretical but were, at the very least, certainly unorthodox.

Whether or not this culture of urban piety was unique to Bristol is not yet measurable as no comparable studies have been done for other localities, but it is likely that Bristol was not a unique case. Testamentary engagement with multiple parish churches in the same locality has not, to the best of my knowledge, been picked up in any other study of late medieval urban space. It is a phenomenon observed and noted by other historians, but it has not been questioned in the way that this thesis has interrogated it.¹⁶ However, while there appears to have been some indication of giving to more than one parish in places like London, as Justin Colson's work has shown, other works, such as Jennifer Kermode's work on Merchants in York, note that the testator only focused their piety on the parish.¹⁷ It may be the case that giving to multiple parishes in a town was a result of the urban context, but not necessarily one that happens in all towns and cities in late medieval England. However, the difference between findings is probably the result of the author's focus and methodology, not actual different between urban settings.

With regards to extra-parochial institutions, this thesis has found some similarities to other localities, such as the hospital functioning like a parish.¹⁸ Although clearly not a unique

¹⁵ M. C. Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation c. 1530-c. 1570* (Oxford, 2003), ch 2.

¹⁶ Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People*, p. 4; K. French, *The People of the Parish: Community Life in a Late Medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia, 2001), p. 23; J. Colson, 'Local Communities in Fifteenth Century London: Craft, Parish and Neighbourhood' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2011), p. 221.

¹⁷ J. Kermode, *Medieval merchants: York, Beverley and Hull in the later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 153.

¹⁸ Roger, 'Blakberd's Treasure'; Barron, 'The People of the Parish'.

situation to Bristol, this was also not a universal phenomenon and was only possible for the richest hospitals.¹⁹ Urban chapels were clearly important and provided testators with something that the parish did not offer. This largely agrees with the work of Sarah Thomas on rural chapels, but the situation and details of the chapels discussed in this thesis are incredibly different to those examined by Thomas, and so although urban chapels were both important and sometimes rivalled the parish, this was for different reasons.²⁰

Piety in other urban spaces also functioned on the basis of neighbourhood, evident in the neighbourhood of Micklegate where a road ran through multiple parishes, or in Lincoln where the Cathedral Close cut across two parishes.²¹ There are some similarities between these studies and the present study of Bristol, but one key difference is the lack of cathedral in Bristol. Unlike urban centres that had a cathedral, there was no obvious focal point for the ecclesiastical organisation of the town, which is perhaps why St Mary Redcliffe became such an important parish church. It has also been noted that craft guilds cut across parish boundaries, which is similar to the situation in lots of other localities in the country.²² However in Bristol, parochial guilds did not always stay within the parish, bringing into question whether we can categorise them as sub-parochial.²³

This study has moved the debate about heresy in Bristol forward and brought it into contact with studies that say that dissenters came from higher parts of society as well as the lower ranks and were integrated with the society around them. By considering that heretics existed within a social framework and illustrating that they had trusted relationships with individuals that we would consider 'mainstream', this thesis has shown that there was a diversity of religious experience in the urban setting. This diversity, comprised of views ranging from dissent to orthodox enthusiasm, raises many possibilities about the flexibility

¹⁹ N. Ramsay, & J. M. W. Willoughby, *Hospitals, towns and the professions* (London, 2009), pp. xxxiii-xxxiv.

²⁰ S. E. Thomas, *The Parish and the chapel in medieval Britain and Norway* (Woodbridge, 2018), p. 3.

²¹ S. Rees Jones, 'Richard Scrope, the Bolton Hours and the Church of St Martin in Micklegate: Reconstructing a Holy Neighbourhood in Later Medieval York', in *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr*, ed. by P. J. P. Goldberg (Donnington, 2007), pp. 214–36; M. Wilson, 'Community, kinship and piety: Lincoln Cathedral close, c. 1450-1500' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham 2014), ch. 3, p. 223.

²² See Brown, *Popular Piety in late medieval England*, p. 146; Kermode, *Medieval merchants*, p. 134.

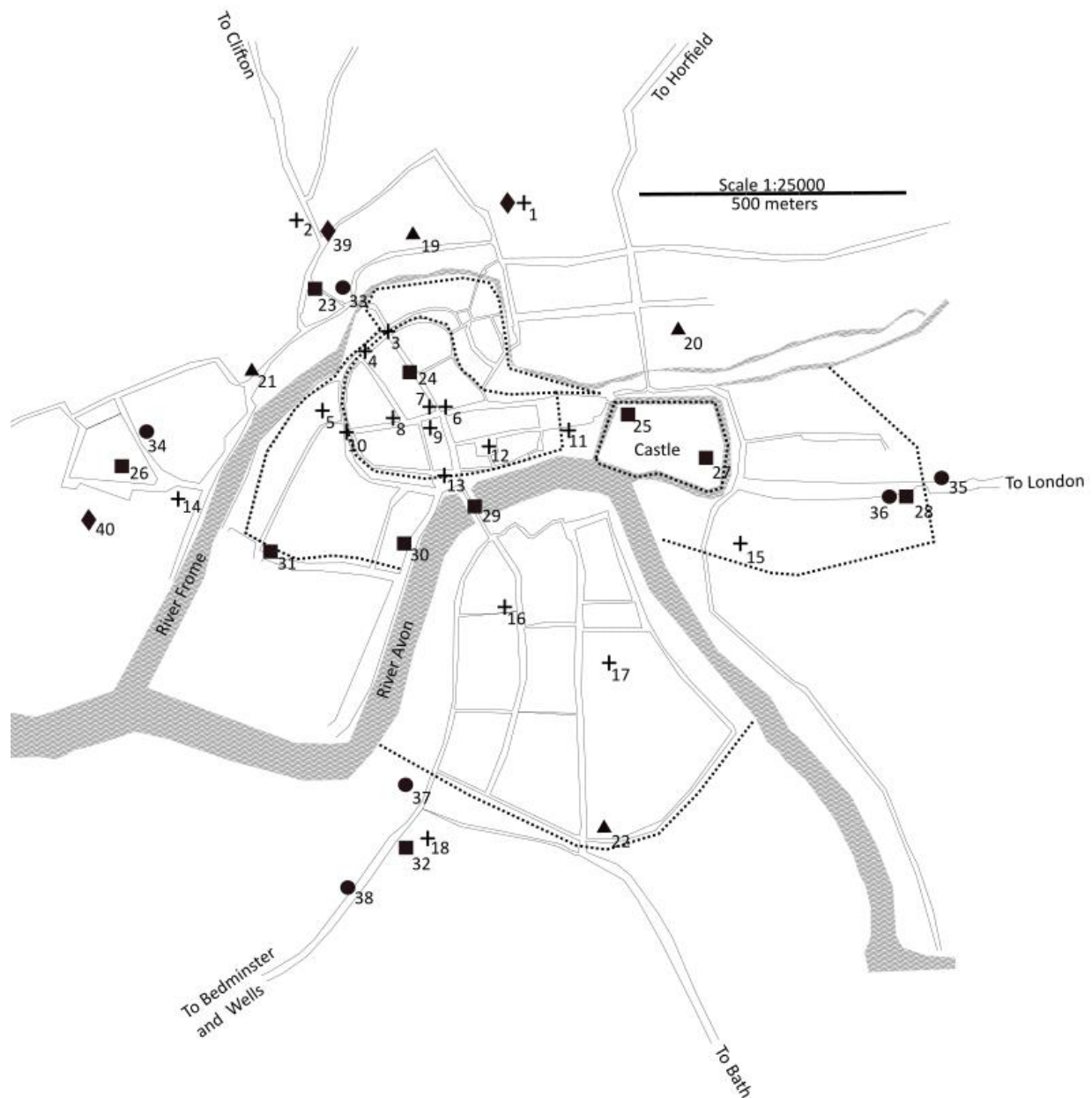
²³ G. Rosser, 'Communities of parish and guild in the late Middle Ages', in S. J. Wright, *Parish, Church and People. Local studies in lay religion 1350-1750*, ed. by Wright (Hutchinson, 1988), pp. 29-55, p.42.

and diversity of pre-Reformation piety and thus destabilises the narrative of pre-Reformation harmony put forward by Eamon Duffy and Scarisbrick.²⁴

Overall, this thesis has found some similarities with urban piety in other places, but has also found some things which appear to be specific to the Bristol context. This is because the layout of each town and the institutional framework therein is unique to the locality, and has an impact on the devotional activity, networks and religious culture of a place. It highlights the value in continuing to study specific localities to understand how faith was lived out in each circumstance.

²⁴ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 2; Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People*, p. 1.

Appendix 1: A map of late medieval Bristol



Parish Churches

- 1 St James's Priory
- 2 St Michael
- 3 St John the Baptist
- 4 St Lawrence
- 5 St Stephen
- 6 Holy Trinity
- 7 St Ewen
- 8 St Werburgh
- 9 All Saints
- 10 St Leonard
- 11 St Peter

Friaries

- 19 Franciscans
- 20 Dominicans
- 21 Carmelites
- 22 Austin Friars

Chapels

- 23 Three Kings of Cologne
- 24 St George
- 25 St Martin
- 26 St Jordan
- 27 Castle's Chapel

Hospitals

- 33 St Bartholomew's Hospital
- 34 St Mark's/Gaunt's Hospital
- 35 St Lawrence's Hospital
- 36 Holy Trinity's Hospital, Lafford' Gate
- 37 St John's Hospital
- 38 St Mary Magdalene's Hospital

Monastic Houses

- 39 St Mary Magdalen's Nunnery
- 40 St Augustine's Abbey
- 1 St James's Priory

12 St Mary le Port	28 Holy Trinity at Lafford's Gate	
13 St Nicholas	29 Assumption of the Blessed	Key
14 St Augustine the	Virgin Mary	 Town walls
Less	30 St John the Evangelist	+ Parish churches
15 SS Philip and Jacob	31 St Clement	▲ Friaries
16 St Thomas the	32 Holy Ghost	● Hospitals
Martyr		◆ Monastic Houses
17 Holy Cross of Temple		■ Chapels
18 St Mary Redcliffe.		

Appendix 2: In-degree centralities of religious institutions in Bristol, 1400-1500

There are some differences in the accumulative number of bequests by quarter century and the number for the full century, but this is because the quarter centuries overlap by one year.

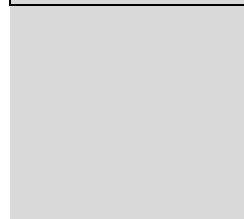
	Institution	1400-1425	1425-1450	1450-1475	1475-1500	Full network
Parish Churches	All Saints'	7	2	7	8	24
	St Stephen's	13	8	7	12	40
	St Leonard's	6	2	6	4	18
	St Lawrence's	3	0	1	2	6
	Holy Trinity	7	7	6	5	25
	St Ewen's	3	2	2	5	9
	St Werburgh's	21	7	7	8	42
	St Nicholas's	19	6	5	9	39
	St John the Baptist's	6	4	2	4	16
	St Peter's	13	6	1	8	25
	St Mary le Port's	5	1	2	4	12
	St Michael's	2	1	2	2	7

	Institution	1400-1425	1425-1450	1450-1475	1475-1500	Full network
	St Augustine the Less's	3	1	0	3	7
	SS Philip and Jacob's	5	0	3	5	13
	St James's Priory	15	3	7	5	30
	Holy Cross of Temple	18	5	6	9	37
	St Mary Redcliffe's	26	11	15	9	61
	St Thomas the Martyr's	21	12	12	8	53
Friaries	Carmelite Friars	82	29	21	23	154
	Franciscan Friars	75	28	22	22	146
	Austin Friars	70	28	20	22	139
	Dominican Friars	70	28	20	21	138
Chapels	Chapel of Our Lady in the Bell House, St Peter's	1	2	1	5	6
	Chapel of St Katherine, Temple	5	0	0	4	9
	Chapel of St Clement the Pope in the Marsh	0	0	0	3	3
	Chapel of St Katherine, St Mary le Port	2	2	0	2	6
	Chapel of St John the Baptist, St Ewen's	1	0	1	1	5

	Institution	1400-1425	1425-1450	1450-1475	1475-1500	Full network
	Chapel of the Assumption on the Bridge	8	1	3	1	13
	Chapel of St John the Evangelist	2	2	0	1	3
	Chapel of St George, Guildhall	1	1	0	1	3
	Chapel of St Stephen, St Mary Redcliffe's	0	0	0	1	1
	Chapel of St Mary in the porch of St Mary Redcliffe's	0	0	0	1	1
	Chapel of St Mary, St John the Baptist's Hospital	0	0	0	1	1
	Chapel of St Nicholas, St Mark's Hospital	0	0	0	1	1
	Chapel of St Michael, Holy Trinity's	0	0	0	1	1
	Chapel of St Anne, Brislington	0	0	0	1	1
	Chapel of Holy Trinity, Lafford's Gate	3	0	1	0	4
	Chapel of St Katherine, St Stephen's	1	0	1	0	2
	Chapel of St Nicholas, SS Philip's and Jacob's	0	0	1	0	1
	Chapel of the Holy Cross, All Saints'	0	0	1	0	1
	Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Thomas's	3	0	0	0	3
	Chapel of St Nicholas, St Mary Redcliffe's	2	0	0	0	2

	Institution	1400-1425	1425-1450	1450-1475	1475-1500	Full network
	Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, St Stephen's	1	0	0	0	1
	Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, St Werburgh's	1	0	0	0	1
	Chapel of St Anne, St Werburgh's	1	0	0	0	1
	Chapel of the Blessed Mary, Temple	1	0	0	0	1
	Chapel of the Holy Ghost, Redcliffe	1	0	0	0	1
Hospitals	St Mark's Hospital	0	0	2	6	8
	Hospital of St John the Baptist, Redcliffe	6	3	1	3	13
	Hospital of St Bartholomew	7	2	0	1	10
	Hospital of Holy Trinity, Lafford's Gate	3	1	0	1	5
	Hospital of St Lawrence, Lafford's Gate	1	3	0	0	4
Fraternities	Fraternity of the Holy Cross, Crypt of St Nicholas	4	1	5	3	13
	Fraternity of St John the Baptist, St Ewen's	14	5	7	2	28
	Fraternity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	5	4	2	2	13
	Fraternity of St Katherine, Temple	4	3	3	1	11
	Fraternity of the Jesus Mass, All Saints'	0	0	2	1	3

	Institution	1400-1425	1425-1450	1450-1475	1475-1500	Full network
	Fraternity of Our Lady in the Bell House, St Peter's	0	0	0	1	1
	Fraternity of St George, Guildhall	3	0	1	0	4
	Fraternity of the Holy Cross, St John the Baptist's	0	0	1	0	1
	Fraternity of St Clement, St Bartholomew's Hospital	0	0	1	0	1



Appendix 3: A list of heresy trials associated with Bristol

Where parish has been appended with a question mark ('?'), I have made an educated guess about the parish based on where the purgation took place or where they lived.

Abbreviations in the reference column are outlined in the list of abbreviations at the beginning of this thesis.

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff. 70v.	Richard Devenyssh, weaver	1413	Holy Cross of Temple	Weaver	Lollardy	Abjuration and penance	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82-4; Kightly, p. 243; Thomson, p. 22.	Walter Blake/Walter More/Walter More alias Blake	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Chaplain	Treason and Lollardy	Hanged	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/82, 84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 616,. Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.	John Colchestre	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/82, 84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 616,. Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.	John Boys	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
TNA, KB9/209/1/82, 84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 616,. Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.	William Terell	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/82, 84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 616,. Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.	John Raymond	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/82, 84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 616,. Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.	Henry Newcombe	1414	Unknown	Labourer	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 616,. Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.	John Scorlage	1414	Unknown	Chaplain	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 616,. Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.	Robert Bayon als Hattesbury	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
Rex, m. 12d, 16; Kightly, p. 244.							
TNA, KB9/201/1/84; Thomson, p. 22; TNA, KB 27 no. 622. Rex, m. 23; Kightly pp. 243-4 has it a KB27/622/24.	Walter Pollard	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB 9/209/1/84; KB27/614 m 56d.	Edward Greylake	1414	St Thomas the Martyr?	Servant (of Richard Harryes)	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/83, 84; KB 27/614 m 56d.	James More/Mershhe	1414	St Thomas the Martyr?	Servant (of Christina More)	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
Thomson, p. 22 fn 3.	John Touker	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Outlaw reversed - outlawed in error.	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82- 84.	Richard Keyfote	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Executed at St Giles's Field	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
TNA, KB9/201/1/82-84.	John Wyllly 'under the key'	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Executed at St Giles's Field	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84.	Thomas Swyste	1414	Unknown	Servant (of John Wyllly)	Treason and Lollardy	Never caught	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84; TNA, KB 27 no. 622. Rex, m. 23; TNA, KB 27 no. 627 (Rex) m 1d.	John Hunt	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84.	John Wermynster	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Never caught	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84.	John Porteshed	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Never caught	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82-84.	Thomas Smalcombe	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Executed at St Giles's Field	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84.	Thomas Pontsretyt/ Ponnsrett	1414	Unknown	of Keynesham	Treason and Lollardy	Unknown	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84.	Philip [Unknown]	1414	Unknown	Servant (of John Coke)	Treason and Lollardy	Pardoned	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84.	William Gogh	1414	Unknown	'Walschman'	Treason and Lollardy	Never caught	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 83.	Geoffrey Clerk	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Hung	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/82.	Richard Sharpe	1414	Unknown	Spinner	Treason and Lollardy	Unknown	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/82.	Richard Sterre	1414	Unknown	Skinner	Treason and Lollardy	Unknown	None
TNA, KB9/201/1/82, 84.	Elias Monke	1414	Unknown	Weaver	Treason and Lollardy	Never caught	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	John Batyn	1414	Unknown	Chaplain	Treason and Lollardy	No further information	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	Robert Payn	1414	Unknown	Chaplain	Treason and Lollardy	No further information	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	William Worcestre	1414	Unknown	Chaplain	Treason and Lollardy	No further information	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	Richard Lanender	1414	Unknown	Fuller	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	Henry Lesy	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	John Knett	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	Thomas Knett	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	John Hampton	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; KB29/54/20.	Julia, wife of John Kenfeke	1414	Unknown	Wife	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	Ludlow Dyer	1414	Unknown	Sheltered in the house of Richard Marche	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84.	William Lenahm	1414	Unknown	Unknown	Treason and Lollardy	Indicted with no further evidence of a trial.	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.133-134.	Edmund Broun	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Unknown	Lollardy	Compurgation	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.133-135.	James Mostardmaker	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Unknown	Lollardy	Compurgation	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.133-136.	Robert Wykeham	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Unknown	Lollardy	Compurgation	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.133-137.	Robert Harryes	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Weaver	Lollardy	Compurgation	None
TNA, KB 9/205/83,84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.133-138.	John Jordan/Jordan Converser	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Souter	Lollardy	Compurgation	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.133-139.	John Ruell	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Unknown	Lollardy	Compurgation	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.133-140.	John Colchestre	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Barber	Lollardy	Compurgation	None
TNA, KB9/209/1/84; SHC, D/D/breg/4/ff.139r.	Christina More	1414	St Thomas the Martyr	Widow	Lollardy	Compurgation	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
WAAS, 716.093/5/iii, f. 16r; Chichele pp. 157-173.	William Taillour	1420	Holy Trinity	Chaplain	Lollardy	Sent to the Convocation of Bishops in 1421	Previously tried in 1417 by the Bishop of Worcester (WAAS, 716.093/5/iii, f. 13r). After the 1421 Convocation, he then relapsed, tried twice and was sent to the secular arm (Chichele, pp. 157-173).
WAAS, 716.093/5/iii, ff. 16v-18v.	Thomas Drayton, rector	1420	Holy Trinity	Rector	Lollardy	Submitted and compurgation	Subsequently went to the Weald of Kent.
Thomson, pp. 27-28; WAAS, 716.093/5/iii, 46v-48.	John Walcote, shepard of the parish of Haleston.	1425	Haleston, Gloucestershire	Shephard	Lollardy in Haleston, Bristol, London, Northampton and elsewhere	Sent to prison and abjured the following year (1426).	None
SHC, D/D/breg/5.	William Emayn	1429	Unknown	Unknown	Lollardy	Abjuration and lifting of	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
						excommunicatio n	
SHC, D/D/breg/5.	John Jurdan	1441	Unknown	Unknown	Lollardy	Abjuration	None
WSHC, D/1/2/10 , ff. 53-54.	Thomas Bikenore, born in Bristol, lately dwelling at Oxford in Taklayse ynn and now in the diocese of Salisbury.	1443	Southern suburb, diocese of Bath and Wells	Unknown	Lollardy	Abjuration	None
Thomson, p. 34.	William Smith, smith who lived outside Laffordsgate in the Barton Hundred of Bristol - in the trial of William Fuer	Pre-1448	SS Philip and Jacob?	Smith	[No trial record]	Excommunicatio n and burnt at the stake outside Bristol	None
Thomson, p. 34.	John Lesman, weaver of Redcliffe Street in Bristol - in the trial of William Fuer	Pre-1448	St Thomas the Martyr or St Mary Redcliffe?	Weaver	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Thomson, p. 34.	John William, servant of John	Pre-1448	St Thomas the Martyr or St Mary Redcliffe?	Servant	[No trial record]	Unknown	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
	Lesman - in the trial of William Fuer						
Thomson, p. 34.	Newe -in the trial of William Fuer	Pre-1448	St Thomas the Martyr or St Mary Redcliffe?	Weaver	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Thomson, p. 34.	Nicholas Pascoo, weaver of St Thomas Street- in the trial of William Fuer	Pre-1448	St Thomas the Martyr or St Mary Redcliffe?	Weaver	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Thomson, p. 34;	William Fuer of Gloucester	1448	of Gloucester	Weaver	Heresy	Abjuration	None
SHC, D/breg/6, ff. 121-7; Thomson, pp. 35, 37-38.	Sir John Younge, chaplain	1449	Holy Cross of Temple	Chaplain	Heresy	Abjuration	None
D/breg/6, f. 283; Thomson, p. 34.	Walter Combe	1457	Hospital of St Katherine in the parish of Holy Cross of Temple, Bristol	Layman	Heresy	Abjuration	None
LA, DIOC/REG/20, f. 57v-58v, 60v, 62v.;	John Willis	1462	Unknown	Weaver	Heresy	Handed to the secular arm	Tried by the Bishop of Lincoln.

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
Thomson, p. 43, 68-69, 152, 242.							Identified as a weaver of Bristol.
SHC, D/breg/6, ff. 49v-50r.	Stephen Freene	1476	St Mary Redcliffe	Unknown	Suspected of heresy	No further information	None
	John Foregge			Unknown			None
	John Preste			Unknown			None
WSHC, D1/2/13, f. 78r-v.	John Gowgh alias Mathews late of Bristol now of the diocese of Salisbury	1499	Salisbury diocese	Unknown	Heresy	Abjuration	Tried by the Bishop of Salisbury. Had formerly lived in Bristol.
SHC, D/D/breg/9, f. 44v.	Nicholas White of Bristol	1499	St Thomas the Martyr	Unknown	Heresy	Compurgation	None
SHC, D/D/breg/9, ff. 46, 48v.	Robert Hutton alias Pynner of the town of Bristol	1499	Unknown	Servant	Heresy	Absolved and dismissed	None
SHC, D/D/breg/9, f. 50r.	John Bouway the elder of the parish of Redcliffe in Bristol	1499	St Mary Redcliffe	Weaver	Heresy	Abjuration	Mentioned in the interrogation of Robert Silkby and John Johnson, both of Coventry, in 1511. (Tanner and McSheffrey,

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
							104, 111-112, 225-226).
SHC, D/D/breg/9, f. 50v.	John Bouway the younger	1499	St Mary Redcliffe	Weaver	Heresy	Abjuration	Mentioned in the interrogation of Robert Silkby and John Johnson, both of Coventry, in 1511. (Tanner and McSheffrey, 104, 111-112, 225-226).
SHC, D/D/breg/9, f. 50v.	German Hay	1499	Holy Cross of Temple	Unknown	Heresy	Abjuration	None
SHC, D/D/breg/9f. 51r.	John Walssh, towker	1499	Unknown (blank space in the MS)	Towker (Fuller)	Heresy	Abjuration	None
SHC, D/D/breg/9, f. 52.	William Hall of Bristol, bottle maker	1499	St Thomas the Martyr	Bottle maker	Heresy	Compurgation	None
SHC, D/D/breg/9, f. ff. 50r-51v.	William (Wyllyam) Lewis, weaver	1499	St Thomas the Martyr	Weaver	Heresy	Abjuration	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, p. 104.	John Holywood of Bristol in the trail of Robert Silkby	Pre-1511	Unknown	Unknown	[No trial record]	Unknown	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 111-112.	W[unreadable] in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	St Thomas the Martyr or St Mary Redcliffe?	Unknown	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, p. 127.	Thomas Clerc, hosier and servant - in the trial of Robert Hachet	1504?	Unknown	Hosier and servant	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, p. 149.	Thomas Spense's father - in the trial of Robert Silkby	Pre-1511	Unknown	Weaver	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Robert Qwyck - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	St Thomas the Martyr	Unknown	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 111-112, 225-226.	Henry Padwell, cutler, - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	SS Philip and Jacob?	Cutler	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Henry Tuck, wiredrawer - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	Broadmead	Wire drawer	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Laurnece Capper - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	Broadmead	Unknown	[No trial record]	Unknown	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Charles Viller, merchant - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	St Nicholas	Merchant	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Thomas [blank] bottlemaker, dwelling in St Thomas parish - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	St Thomas the Martyr	Bottle maker	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	John Nayler, dwelling on the bridge - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	St Thomas the Martyr	Unknown	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Charles Viller's wife - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	St Nicholas	Wife	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Padwell's wife - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	SS Philip and Jacob?	Wife	[No trial record]	Unknown	None
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	Capper's wife - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	Broadmead	Wife	[No trial record]	Unknown	None

Reference(s)	Name	Year	Parish	Occupation	Charge	Outcome	Other trials
Tanner and McSheffrey, pp. 225-226.	bottle maker's wife - in the trial of John Johnson	Pre-1511	St Thomas the Martyr	Wife	[No trial record]	Unknown	None

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