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JOAN THYNNE 1558–1612

TWO ELIZABETHAN WOMEN:
CORRESPONDENCE OF
JOAN AND MARIA THYNNE
1575–1611

EDITED BY
ALISON D. WALL

DEVIZES
1983

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MARIA THYNNE c. 1578–1611

CONTENTS

<i>Frontispiece</i>	<i>pages</i> ii, vi
<i>Ralph Bernard Pugh</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xiii
<i>List of Frequently Mentioned Persons</i>	xv
INTRODUCTION	
Joan Hayward and the Thynne Marriage	xvii
Expansion to Caus Castle	xxii
A Secret Marriage	xxv
The Documents and Editorial Method	xxxii
THE LETTERS, nos. 1 to 68	1
APPENDIX	
Other Relevant Letters, nos. 69 to 75	54
Joan Thynne's Will, no. 76	61
INDEX OF PERSONS AND PLACES	63
INDEX OF SUBJECTS	70
<i>List of Members</i>	72
<i>Publications of the Society</i>	78

RALPH BERNARD PUGH

Ralph Bernard Pugh, President of the Wiltshire Record Society, died on 3rd December 1982. Ralph Pugh was the principal founder of the Records Branch of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, which in 1967 became the Wiltshire Record Society. Editing the first volume himself he remained general editor and honorary secretary of the Branch until 1953. From that date until his death he was continuously Chairman of the Branch, and President of the Society. Three further volumes were edited by himself, and in every other one he took a close personal interest. He was indeed still working for the Society on the very day before he died. An appreciation of his life and work for the Society was published in 1981 in volume XXXVI of the Society's publications.

A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Ralph Pugh was held in the church of St John the Baptist in Devizes on 12th January 1983. An address was given by the Rev Dr John Kelly, formerly Principal of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, and a lifelong friend. Several hundred pounds have been donated to the Society by more than forty people in his memory, thus forming a Pugh Memorial Fund which will assist the Society with future publications.

PREFACE

Mrs Alison D. Wall wishes to acknowledge the help and advice in the editing of this volume from two previous honorary general editors of the Society, Dr David C. Cox and Miss Janet Stevenson. She would also like to thank many colleagues in the University of Sydney who have assisted her, especially her research assistant, Mrs Avril Harvey; also the Humanities Research Centre, Canberra; and Sydney University for its Research Grant.

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J. L. KIRBY

ABBREVIATIONS

B.L.	British Library
Botfield, <i>Stemmata Botevilliana</i>	Beriah Botfield, <i>Stemmata Botevilliana</i> , 1843
C.S.P.D.	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic</i>
Collins, <i>Peerage</i>	Arthur Collins, <i>The Peerage of England</i>
D.N.B.	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
G.E.C.	G.E.C[ockayne], <i>The Complete Peerage</i> , 1910–53
H.M.C.	Historical Manuscripts Commission
Hoare, <i>Mod. Wilts.</i>	R.C. Hoare, <i>The History of Modern Wiltshire</i> , 6 vols. 1830
O.E.D.	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
P.R.O.	Public Record Office
S.P.L.	Shrewsbury Public Library
T.P.	Thynne papers, MSS of Marquess of Bath, Longleat House
T.S.A.S.	<i>Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society</i>
V.C.H.	<i>Victoria County History</i>
<i>Vis. Shropshire 1623</i> , i and ii	Harleian Society, vols. 38 and 39, <i>Visitation of Shropshire for 1623</i> , ed. G. Grazebrooke and J.P. Rylands, 1889
W.A.M.	<i>Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine</i>
<i>Wilts. Vis. Peds. 1623</i>	Harleian Society, vols. 105 and 106, <i>Wiltshire Visitation Pedigrees, 1623</i> (Thomas Lyle), ed. H. St. George and S. Lennard, 1954
W.R.O.	Wiltshire Record Office
W.R.S.	Wiltshire Record Society

LIST OF FREQUENTLY MENTIONED PERSONS

Note: The correspondents frequently used terms such as 'my brother', 'my mother' for in-laws as well as blood relatives. The form 'my brother Warren' denotes the surname of the brother-in-law. 'Cousin' was very widely used.

The Hayward Family

Sir Rowland Hayward, of London (d. 1593).

Joan, his first wife, daughter of William Tillsworth (d. 1580).

Catherine, his second wife, daughter of Sir Thomas Smith.

Children of Rowland and Joan:

Elizabeth, married (1) Richard Warren

(2) in 1597, Thomas Knyvet, from 1607 Lord
Knyvet of Escrick.

Susan (d. bef. 1594), married Henry Townshend.

JOAN, 1558–1612, married JOHN THYNNE in 1576.

The Elder Thynne Family

Sir John Thynne, of Longleat (d. 1580).

Christian, his first wife, daughter of Sir Richard Gresham.

Dorothy, his second wife, daughter of William Wroughton, later married
Carey Raleigh.

Children of John and Christian included:

JOHN, son and heir (c. 1551–1604), married JOAN HAYWARD.

Elizabeth, married John Chamberlain of Prestbury, Glos.

Francis, of Kempford, Glos.

Family of John and Joan Thynne

Children:

THOMAS, son and heir (1578–1635), secretly married MARIA AUDLEY
in 1594.

John (b. 1584).

Dorothy (Doll) (b. 1590).

Christian (b. 1592).

Touchet or Audley Family

George Touchet, Lord Audley, later Earl of Castlehaven, of Wiltshire,
Stalbridge in Dorset, Clerkenwell in London, and Ireland (d. 1617).

Lucy, his wife, daughter of Sir James Marvin of Fonthill, Wilts, by his wife
Amy, daughter of Valentine Clark.

Children of George and Lucy:

Mervin, later Earl of Castlehaven (exec. 1631).

Ferdinando.

MARIA (c. 1578–1611) married THOMAS THYNNE.

Anne, married Edward Blount.

Eleanor, married Sir John Davies.

INTRODUCTION

Joan Hayward and the Thynne Marriage

The Thynne family of this period is an example of a gentry family with court connections seeking to expand its lands and influence. Many of the letters illustrate such aims. More specifically the correspondence shows the role of a Tudor-Stuart gentlewoman, whose husband with Court interests was often absent and left considerable responsibility for the running of the estates to his wife, in addition to her usual concern with provisioning, medical and family problems. Joan Thynne's correspondence is a record of the life and activities of such a woman covering nearly 40 of her 54 years. The letters start with her engagement, early days as a resented and resentful young bride at Longleat, and continue through motherhood and family problems, legal and estate concerns, up to her will of 1612. Much of her personality is revealed in her correspondence and in her portrait, which appears in the frontispiece to this volume. It is however difficult to judge how far she was representative of the gentlewomen of her time and how far she was exceptional. There is little comparable material for this period, especially in print, the few other collections being generally earlier or later.¹

Joan was baptised on 28 August 1558, the third daughter of a rich and prominent merchant, alderman and Lord Mayor of London, Sir Rowland Hayward, by his first wife Joan Tillsworth.² Two sisters, Elizabeth and Susan, survived to adulthood and feature in the correspondence. Five other children died. We know little of Joan's education before the age of sixteen when her parents started to organise a marriage for her. In Elizabethan upper class marriage the parents arranged a match, in which the prime considerations were usually the financial and other advantages to be joined, and this is the background to the early letters.

The family which they chose had risen rapidly in the sixteenth century to become one of the leading families in Wiltshire, with important City and Court connections.³ John Thynne of Longleat in Wiltshire descended from the family of Botfield, or Botteville, of Church Stretton, Shropshire. The surname Thynne derived from a John Botteville who lived at the mansion, or inn there, hence John o' the Inne, and so John Thinne or Thynne. A later John Thynne born about 1513 became steward in 1536 to Edward Seymour,

¹ *The Paston Letters 1422-1509*, ed. J. Gairdner, 6 vols., 1904; new edn. by N. Davis, Oxford, 1971-; *The Letters of Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple, 1652-54*, ed. K. Hart, 1968.

² See W. Jay, 'Sir Rowland Hayward', *London and Middlesex Archaeological Society Transactions*, vi, 1933, pp. 509-27; G.E.C., vii, p. 352 says Pilsworth; G.B. Hall, *Records of St. Alphage London Wall*, 1885, pp. 59-60 has Tillsworth. On Hayward's tomb the executor is given as Edward Pilsworth.

³ *D.N.B.*: Botfield, *Stemmata Botevilliana*; Hoare, *Mod. Wils.* i, *Heyesbury Hundred*; J. Morris, *Historical account of the family of Thynne otherwise Botfield*, 1885; Collins, *Peerage*, ii, pp. 496-503; *History of Parliament, House of Commons 1509-1558*, ed. S.T. Bindoff, iii, N-Z, pp. 463-6; T.P., i-iv.

later Lord Protector Somerset, and under his patronage bought much land, especially in Wiltshire. In 1540 Thynne bought the small former priory of Longleat which had passed to the Crown at the Dissolution. The name refers to the long pond, or leat, beside the house.

In 1547 Thynne gained a City post, and soon after married Christian Gresham, daughter and heiress of Sir Richard Gresham, mercer and former Lord Mayor of London.⁴ She brought mercantile wealth, which probably assisted Thynne in his further purchases from the Crown of land in several counties. She brought important City connections too, through her father, and her brother the famous financier Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange and benefactor of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. John and Christian's eldest son, also named John, was born about 1551, when times looked harder for the family.

On the arrest of his patron, Protector Somerset, in 1549, Thynne went to the Tower too, and again in 1551: a warrant to Mr Marvin, sheriff of Wiltshire, for conducting Thynne to the Tower may help to explain later enmity between the families (see below). However Thynne soon regained his freedom each time, and added the manor of Kempford in Gloucestershire to his holdings.⁵ By now too he occupied the London house at Cannon Row to which many of the letters in this collection refer. After this he turned his attention to his Wiltshire properties, and a major concern became the building of the magnificent Italianate mansion at Longleat, in stone quarried from Haselbury. He supervised every detail until his death in 1580. The house appeared by then much as it does today on the exterior; a beautiful sight with its turrets, stone parapets, and big leaded windows. Internally, it was not entirely finished, and his son John completed the hall. Much of the decoration, tapestries, and wallpaper are later additions. Queen Elizabeth visited the house in the summer of 1574.

Thynne was anxious to found a dynasty, and had sixteen children by his two wives, the second being Dorothy Wroughton, whom he married about 1566. Late in 1574 he was especially anxious to marry off his son and heir, John. The reason for this was that he had commenced negotiations with Sir James Marvin of Fonthill to match John with Marvin's daughter, Lucy, but the arrangements had turned sour. Sir John thought Marvin was trying to cheat his family by offering as Lucy's dowry lands which were, in fact, entailed or limited to the name of the Marvins, and so Marvin and Thynne became very bitter enemies, in a feud which lasted to the end of the century, and was to have repercussions which appear throughout the correspondence. At first John was reluctant to follow his father's demand to drop the match, but the threat to disinherit him brought acceptance; and to clear the way entirely for another match, the Salisbury ecclesiastical court issued a revocation of contract between John and Lucy.⁶ Thus Sir John was looking for a better

⁴ *Marriage Licences at the Faculty Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury 1543-1869* (Harleian Society, xxiv), 1869, p. 12; *D.N.B.* s.v. Gresham.

⁵ T.P. xlviii.

⁶ T.P., Box II, xlix; iv, f. 146; v, f. 129; i, f. 162; W.R.O. Salisbury ecclesiastical court records, 31 Oct. 1575, stated that they intended to bestow themselves elsewhere.

endowed bride for his son. As in his own first marriage, he looked to a City merchant and Lord Mayor's daughter who would bring further wealth to the Thynnes.

By June 1575, Richard Young was negotiating between Sir John Thynne and Sir Rowland Hayward for a match between John Thynne and Joan Hayward, and Young's letters give some information about the sixteen-year-old Joan.⁷ Sir John considered Hayward to be 'of good religion', and the education of the young people was discussed, though unfortunately no precise details of Joan's education are given. Young described Joan as wise and very well brought up both in learning and in all things that appertain to a gentlewoman, and as negotiations continued he told Sir John that Sir Rowland would do much for her 'for she is his darling'; her mother was also very eager for the match. Sir Rowland had said that 'her face was not so beautiful as some other, but she had no evil fault'. The parents were to conclude the financial arrangements, then the young couple were to meet and see if they could like one another, but they would have to give good reason for not liking (69). Joan accepted these plans, telling Young she trusted 'that God will put into my father's heart to choose me such a one as God will direct my heart not to dislike'.

To prepare for the crucial meeting, John acquired new clothes – white satin, a black velvet cloak, lace for a doublet, and a felt hat were purchased. Between 19 September and 10 October 1575, the young people met, and John Thynne told Richard Young that he did 'well like the gentlewoman'. It must have been soon after this that Joan wrote the first two letters (1, 2); the problems obliquely mentioned may reflect doubt as to a previous contract with Lucy Marvin, or the disagreements over the dowry.

The financial agreement proved difficult. In July 1575, Young reported that Sir Rowland would be glad to see them placed in Caus Castle in Shropshire; but in August the amount of money and lands which he would grant with Joan were still under discussion. On 27 August Hayward promised to give the Castle of Caus which he had lately bought of Lord Stafford at a price of £1833 6s. 8d. and this seems to have clinched the deal. Ironically, however, Caus was to prove a constant worry for 30 years (see below). The marriage probably took place on 26 February 1576, as indicated in various indentures made in October, assuring to the young couple and their heirs the Castle and town of Caus and other possessions in Shropshire including the manor of Stretton from Hayward, while Sir John promised to convey a variety of lands to John and Joan for life and to their sons, and the house and park of Longleat to John and his heirs after Sir John's death. All those lands together would make considerable extension to the holdings in the Thynne name, an example of merchant money making an alliance with a Wiltshire gentry family of great landed estate, although of recent holding.

Hayward as a result of this alliance assumed that he would maintain some control over his new son-in-law (5, 6, 11) and the hot-headed young man's

⁷ The following paragraphs are based on T.P. iv, ff.79, 83–8, 91–7; Box II, f.300, p. 305; Unbound MS 3912, i, f.199; v, f.253; Box V, ff.3–23.

failure to fall in with this assumption caused the newly-weds some problems. John Thynne's own father seems also to have disapproved of his son's behaviour, for in 1578 he instructed the young man on the clothes he should wear 'as you see used of sober gentlemen', warning him not to make himself a mocking stock. In 1583, Morris Brown gave Thynne some acerbic instructions on the need to buy himself some new clothes. At first it seems that Joan lived partly at Longleat with her new father-in-law and his second wife Dorothy: an unhappy arrangement, since Joan and Dorothy felt equally acrimonious towards each other (4, 70).⁸ Meanwhile the new husband was in London staying with Joan's father, and Joan's letters suggest considerable conflict there too – not an auspicious start.

Hayward's settlement of Caus on the couple turned out to be a dubious advantage, at least in the short term, for Edward Lord Stafford refused to yield possession. This dispute and the resultant problems profoundly affected the life of Joan and John Thynne, and form the background to much of the correspondence. The lands had been confiscated by Henry VIII at the execution of the Duke of Buckingham in 1521 (see 58).⁹ His son Henry Stafford recovered only parts of Buckingham's estate, including Nethergorther. These changes created the uncertainties and some of the dissensions over manor customs and courts, to which the letters refer. Henry's second son Edward inherited the Caus lands on his elder brother's death in 1566, sold them to Hayward in 1573, but steadfastly refused all efforts to make him give them up. In 1578 he expelled the Thynnes' tenants, and much of John Thynne's correspondence of the period also deals with the dispute.

Sir Rowland was especially concerned. Stafford was summoned before the council in the Marches of Wales, but refused to appear, and though judgement was given against him it could not be carried out. In 1580 it seemed that possession might soon be won, as Stafford's 'trusty friend Lingen' had been cast off and had turned (temporarily?) against his master; again in 1582 after the Assizes, Hayward thought Stafford would yield. But in 1587 Stafford was still so far from it as to call Joan's brother-in-law Henry Townshend, the lawyer, justice of Chester and one of the council in the Marches, 'an open cankered enemy': Stafford wished to meet Townshend and John Thynne a mile out of town with his sword.

One result was that for the first four years of marriage Joan and her husband had no home; this may be partly why they lived for a time in each other's parents' households; Joan's early letters to her husband are addressed to him at Hayward's in London. In 1580, when Sir John died, Joan and John took over the magnificent new renaissance house at Longleat, with the wide estates that Sir John had built up through his service with Seymour.

The twenty-year-old Joan had to take on the management of a large and complex household, with its obligation of hospitality in the county – the

⁸ Joan was at Longleat in April 1576, T.P. Box LXXIX. Book III.

⁹ The next two paragraphs are based on *D.N.B.*; P. Williams, *The Council in the Marches of Wales under Elizabeth*, Cardiff, 1968, pp. 308–9; A.H. Anderson 'Henry Lord Stafford (1501–1563) and the Lordship of Caus', *Welsh History Review*, vi, 1972–3, pp. 1–15; T.P. v, ff. 163–4, 182–3, 186, 195; *D.N.B.* s.v. Hayward Townshend.

kitchen books preserved there give indications of the size of the household, the numbers of local gentry entertained, and the menus offered them. There might be over 70 of the household, and four or five local gentry present, as on 15 July 1604, when Sir Edmund Ludlow, Mr Willoughby of Knoyle, Sir Arthur Hopton, Sir Jasper More, and Mr Earnley dined at Longleat. The menu may have included boiled mutton, roast mutton, red herrings, white herrings, stockfish, butter, cheeses, and eggs.¹⁰

For most of the 1580s the absence of correspondence from Joan, and the large number of letters to John at Longleat, suggest that Joan spent much of this time in Wiltshire, with visits to London, as in the winter of 1582.¹¹ In the summer of 1582 Joan's sister Elizabeth Warren and her husband stayed at Longleat, as did Sir Rowland and his new young wife Catherine, who was younger than Joan.¹² Apparently Joan chose Longleat for the births of her children; **14** shows her knowledge of the local midwives when she was awaiting the birth of Dorothy there in April 1590. Her eldest child, Thomas, had been born in 1578, John in 1584, and Christian, the last, was born about 1592 – quite a wide spread – Joan was aged from nineteen to thirty-three at the births of her children. Perhaps this period when her children were small was the time when Joan built up her garden at Longleat (**49**).

Joan's sister Elizabeth was an important influence on her. After the death of her first husband, Richard Warren, Elizabeth in 1597 married Thomas Knyvet, later Lord Knyvet of Escrick.¹³ Thomas was gentleman of the privy Chamber to Queen Elizabeth, helped to discover the Gunpowder plot in 1605, and received favour and office, including membership of the privy council, from King James. He had a town house in King Street, Westminster, where sometimes Joan stayed (**32**) after the death of her father in 1593. This brought the influence of the monarch and the court closer to the Thynnes. The calm voice of Joan's sister, Elizabeth, glimmers through the papers, giving accounts for accommodation and other expenses, describing the making of a doublet and pair of hose for Joan's son Thomas in 1591, when apparently he lived with her in London for part of the time (**71**), and advising John Thynne against hot-headed anger about Thomas in 1601 (see below).¹⁴ Joan relied on Elizabeth to purchase her requirements in London, and to find a midwife (**71, 14**). Unfortunately the letters to Elizabeth mentioned in **14** are not in the collection.

The Thynnes, in keeping with their aspirations for further influence in the county and favour at Court, kept a London residence at Cannon Row in Westminster (**29, 30**), and much of the correspondence is addressed there. This remained the London base for the family throughout the period of this volume, and both John Thynne and later his son and heir, Thomas, spent

¹⁰ T.P. v. f. 139; Box LXXXIX. Book III. 119.

¹¹ T.P. v. f. 187.

¹² Jay, *op. cit.*, pp. 522–3.

¹³ *D.N.B.* See Charles Pascoe, *History of 10 Downing Street*, 1908, re Thomas's leases of King Street from the Crown in 1581 and 1605. Information kindly supplied by Mr Geoffrey Knyvet of the Australian National University.

¹⁴ T.P. vi, f. 197; vii, f. 200.

considerable time there. John Thynne was very busy in London as a member of Parliament, and at other times in matters pertaining to the estates; he was involved in numerous Exchequer suits about various manors, as well as lawsuits with his enemies, especially Marvin.¹⁵ Thomas, too, was a member of Parliament from 1601.¹⁶ During these absences their wives looked after the estates. This is one of the major features of the correspondence, illustrating the very important role played by a wife if the husband was involved at the Court, as John Thynne so often was. It is not very clear what he achieved by it, although as a magnate with important estates in Wiltshire and neighbouring counties he expected to cut a figure at Court, and he did forge links with some of the leading courtiers such as Leicester.¹⁷ Joan certainly thought her husband did not make as good use of these contacts as he should, especially as shown in her acid comments on his failure to obtain a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth, when her sister's husband did (29). She was ambitious for her husband's advancement, but resented his long absences.

One reason for resentment was the amount of work she had to do, and the fact that her husband did not appreciate her efforts, (44) – his own correspondence shows that in his later years John Thynne became hard and irascible; privy councillors and secretary of state Cecil told him to moderate his behaviour.¹⁸ Her responsibilities were wide, involving the receiving and disbursing of money, dealing with rents and leases, buying cattle, organising plumbers and masons to repair the property, as well as giving advice regarding legal proceedings, the handling of sheriffs and other officials, and choosing juries. Yet this, as also later in the case of Maria at Longleat, made for domestic conflict with the husbands, who were frequently critical, in spite of the fact that these women appear to have been very capable of running extensive and complex landed estates.

Expansion to Caus Castle

The 1590s saw considerable change in the life of the Thynnes; changes which had not been expected, and which gave rise to much of the 1590s correspondence, and hence the insight we here gain into the life and attitudes of an Elizabethan family. The first of the changes¹⁹ occurred because the Thynnes had gained possession at law of Caus Castle, but Stafford defied calls by the privy council and the council in the Marches, and continued his occupation. On 28 May 1591 John Thynne, with the help of the sheriff of Shropshire, William Hopton, assaulted the Castle while Lord Stafford was away. Lady Stafford with a small force withstood them for a time, but they entered and expelled her 'with small hurt doon'.²⁰ Possession hard won would have to be

¹⁵ *V.C.H., Wilts.* v, pp. 124–5; T.P. vi, f.26; Exchequer information kindly supplied by Mrs S.M. Jack.

¹⁶ *V.C.H., Wilts.* v, p. 125.

¹⁷ T.P. v, f.253. See A. D. Wall, 'Faction in Local Politics 1580–1620', *W.A.M.*, 72–3, 1980.

¹⁸ T.P. Box VII, lix, f.15; *Acts of the Privy Council*, N.S. XXV, p. 79.

¹⁹ For the second see below, p. xxv.

²⁰ *T.S.A.S.* 1st ser. iii, 'Early Chronicles of Shrewsbury', p. 320. T.P. vi, f.172 is from Hopton on 28 March, saying he is ready to execute the Queen's writ for possession.

maintained, since Lord Stafford still refused to yield, accusing Thynne of forcible entry, and bringing numerous lawsuits, which continued for many years.

Thenceforth it would be necessary to occupy and defend the Castle. John Thynne wished to continue his pursuits in London and at the Court, and also to oversee his other estates in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. So, for much of this period, Joan Thynne took up the task, and with it a whole range of activities. She was to spend a great deal of time at Caus, travelling between there and Longleat during the years 1591–1604 (she was at Longleat in November 1604 when her husband died).

Caus stood on a steep high point of the Long Mountain; a bleak prospect compared with the beauty of Longleat nestling in its valley, as is shown by illustrations of the castle ruins.²¹ The stone castle, probably dating from the twelfth century, had not been continually inhabited in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, although additions in the fourteenth and repairs in 1541 must have improved its amenities. Further buildings within the walls had been erected about 1556. The Staffords had presumably made it habitable, when John Thynne expelled them in 1591. But there were to be continued difficulties with keeping the castle in good repair, judging from Joan Thynne's complaints about masons and plumbers, and the rain coming in.

Her brother-in-law, Henry Townshend welcomed her arrival (15), and later he lived at Caus part of the time (56); the inventory at Joan's death lists the furnishings in Sir Henry Townshend's chamber. Since Stafford continued his legal tactics, trying to secure a friendly jury, Joan became deeply involved in legal matters too, in order to secure the property she had brought to Thynne in her marriage settlement, and to continue that expansion of the Thynne holdings which had been one of the prime motives for the marriage. She worked at building up solid alliances with the local worthies (16, 21, 40), and acquired a detailed knowledge of legal procedures, so that she advised, and sometimes reprimanded her husband in these matters (24, 26, 28, 40, 46); she laboured to acquire evidence to defend the ownership of the property (58). Many of the people she names in the letters of the 1590s were associated with Stafford (26, 28, 34), and there were attempts both to attack, and to win over, his supporters. Alexander Topp, who married Thomas Lingen's daughter, apparently maintained an equivocal position (28).²²

When Joan was with her husband the letters to him cease, so in general they only give us information on what she did alone. Apparently only two of his letters to her survive, so that we have less information on how he reacted to her advice and information. But presumably he also kept her in touch with events at Court, as in his dramatic letter of 1601, describing the Essex revolt with first-hand immediacy (27). He also told her of his purchase of Imber parsonage, and the Cannon Row house which had formerly been leased, and he kept in close touch with her sister Elizabeth and her successive husbands.

²¹ *V. C. H., Shropshire*, i, pp. 399–400; viii, pp. 308–11; *T. S. A. S.*, 3rd ser. vi (1906), 'Notes on the parish of Worthen and Caus', p. 107 gives two views of the castle and its position.

²² *V. C. H., Shropshire*, viii, p. 313; *V. C. H., Wilts.*, xi, p. 214; *D. N. B.* s.v. Hugh Broughton.

Joan's reference to 'your great ladies' (24) suggested that she did not entirely approve of his activities at the Court.

While involved in the legal proceedings Joan also had to worry about Stafford attempting to repossess the castle, and she kept two arquebuses and muskets in her bedroom.²³ Her letters mention the defence of the castle, and there are her repeated requests to her husband to send gunpowder. She must have been a formidable woman, and indeed those letters which deal with her handling of estate business suggest that she was a hard, even ruthless, landlady (50, 56). But she also worked towards establishing a comfortable establishment at Caus, as well as at Longleat, fit for the gentry life-style. The brewing gear requested in her letter to her husband duly appears in inventories.²⁴ In addition, she asked for strings for lutes and virginals; for the fashionable farthingales; and starch (for ruffs).²⁵ By 1604, in addition to dining and bedroom requirements, there were three pairs of virginals and a box of regals, and singing books. Joan figures as a patron, for John Maynard dedicated a set for viol, lute and voice 'To his ever honoured lady . . . the Lady Joan Thynne, of Caus Castle; . . . this poore play-worke of mine had its prime originall and birthright in your house, when by nearer service I was obliged yours . . .'.²⁶ There were thirteen pictures, a clock and a ladder to it, and plenty of curtains including yellow and white silk ones, as well as household implements.

In 1604 John Thynne, recently knighted, died, and amid great controversy (see below), Joan left Longleat entirely, to live at Caus, which was her widow's jointure, until her death, when it was to go to her son (hence references in 49, 56). There she became an entrepreneur. In 1609 Thomas Knyvet wrote to Joan's son Thomas, about how Joan 'had been at charge digging upon Mendip for lead . . . no small charge, considering the short time, but during her own life she can benefit therein but you and yours may receive a commodity thereof forever; you should be contented to allow her the better share (two-thirds), one-third to you [if] you contribute one-third of the charge when finished . . .'.²⁷ Clearly she was resourceful, although this venture does not appear to have prospered in her lifetime. Most of her letters of these later years are connected with securing the Caus estates, and with efforts to arrange an advantageous marriage for her daughter Dorothy. In these enquiries, Joan's sister Elizabeth, with her Court connections and worldly experience, played a part (60, 61). None of the negotiations discussed in this volume proved fruitful. However, very soon after her mother's death, Dorothy married Charles Roscorrock of Cornwall, and according to letters of Elizabeth Knyvet, travelled there to live in the summer of 1612. Christian later married Francis Leigh, probably also with the help of her aunt.²⁸

²³ Longleat MS Unbound 3952. The guns were still there in 1612.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ C.W. & P. Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Sixteenth Century*, 1954, pp. 157–70, 179; I. Brodie, *English Costume in the age of Elizabeth*, 1950.

²⁶ Botfield, *Sermata Botevilliana*, pp. 35–6.

²⁷ T.P. viii, f.88.

²⁸ T.P. viii, f.14; Collins, *Peerage*, ii, p.502.

Joan Thynne died suddenly in London on 3 March 1612, having made her will three days previously; the letter to inform her son Thomas, then at Longleat, was signed by Thomas Knyvet, George Hayward, and William Bowyer.²⁹ They suggested private burial 'at no great charge' to fulfil her desire to be buried at Deverill. The letter also informed Thomas that his mother left considerable debts. A detailed account of events following her death shows that her supporters acted quickly on behalf of her two daughters, expecting disagreement with Thomas, the heir, over the goods at Caus, while Thomas also sent servants quickly to take possession for him.³⁰ Mistress Ann Crouch rapidly fetched away trunks – possibly those which held the majority of Joan's private papers, and this may explain why almost none of her husband's letters to her survive. Edward Morris had ridden north 'within two hours of my Lady's death' with leases newly sealed, and Edward Purslow had one; Mr Newbury, then at Longleat was intended to have a new lease – it appears that Joan was attempting to secure all her allies in their leases as best she could while she was dying. The inventory taken on 12 March shows the level of comfort which Joan had been able to bring to Caus; although not so well provided as Longleat, especially in terms of plate, there were comfortable chairs, and beds, and a child's high chair, as well as the pictures and musical instruments mentioned above. She must have been in good health until quite near her death, for there was the 'covering and canopy new made by my Lady', and she was caring for her infant grandson.

A Secret Marriage

The link between Joan and Maria is complicated, and the details concerning it do not appear in biographical and other sources, yet many of these letters reflect the circumstances. As noted above, the Thynne and Marvin families became very bitter enemies, engaging in a long and rancorous feud, involving nearly all the major landed families of Wiltshire with their servants and supporters. The feud reached a high pitch from 1589, with confrontations at Assizes and Quarter Sessions in which some of their supporters were injured, and which resulted in many Star Chamber cases which continued the animosities.³¹ In 1592 John Thynne was warned that Marvin continued to be dangerous, and supported 'that Irish matchevyll [Machiavelli] friend of all evil'.³² The Thynne's son Thomas lived with Joan's sister Elizabeth in London for part of the early 1590s; in May 1592 Elizabeth was paid £40, and she informed the parents that Thomas would go to Oxford after Whitsuntide.³³

In 1594 Thomas, then about sixteen, was still a student at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he had his lute, and his books such as Ariosto's

²⁹ T.P. viii, f. 182.

³⁰ T.P. Box XI, ff. 101–4.

³¹ See A.D. Wall, *ut sup.*, n. 17.

³² T.P. vi, f. 238. The person was most likely Richard Bermingham, clerk to Marvin, and allied to the nobility in Ireland: P.R.O., St.Ch. 5T 39/16.

³³ T.P. vi, ff. 197–8.

Orlando Furioso; he was not apparently a serious scholar (20). John Marvin, nephew of Sir James Marvin, but evidently an ally of the Thynnes, was his very familiar friend – this is a somewhat confusing feature of Joan’s letters, since we might expect all the Marvins to be considered enemies. On a Spring evening, on the Thursday in Whitsun Week 1594, 16 May, Thomas rode down to the Bell Inn at Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire on the road to London.³⁴ Some of the Marvin family held a supper there, and Thomas for the first time met sixteen-year-old Maria, granddaughter of the feud leader Marvin by his daughter Lucy and her husband George Lord Audley. She had come from the Court, where it was later alleged, Mr Manners was a suitor for her hand. Maria and Thomas talked together, and later the same evening they were married, with the encouragement of Maria’s mother. Apparently they spent the night together, clothed, on a bed and later sitting on cushions. Next morning they parted, and did not see each other for a long time. They kept the marriage secret from all except those present, and it was a year before Joan and John Thynne found out about it. In the meantime the families had become further embittered over the killing of Henry Long, friend and close relation by marriage of John Thynne, by members of the opposite faction, the Danvers brothers of Dauntsey.³⁵

Joan and John Thynne hoped the marriage could be declared invalid (17, 18, 19, 20) and a suit over its validity commenced in the court of Arches early in 1597, continuing until 1601 (30, 55).³⁶

Possibly under the persuasion of his parents, Thomas’s evidence differed from that of some other witnesses as to the details, but many are similar to the account in Joan’s letters. The major differences in evidence were over whether Thomas was informed that he was going to the inn simply to ‘make merry’, or to meet Maria, and whether or not Thomas was told (incorrectly) that his father would approve of the match (*cf.* 19). The witnesses averred that Thomas and Maria liked each other, and would be married forthwith, although John Marvin stated that he left the room because of the absence of John Thynne who was his friend – this suggests that he knew Thynne would disapprove. Witnesses stated that one Welles, a minister on his way to London, was brought in and performed the marriage in an upper chamber of the inn by candlelight.

Thomas’s own later statements were equivocal, if we compare what he told his parents (17, 18) with his other actions such as his deliberate secrecy in concealing his marriage (72); according to one witness, Thomas was joyful the next morning about the marriage, and sent a letter two or three months later to Maria, calling her his wife. Years later the dean of Arches, Sir Daniel Donne, stated that Thomas had been very eager for the match to be declared valid (55), yet in May 1601 Thomas was denying its lawfulness – this may

³⁴ T.P. Box XLIII, Box XXXVII; *D.N.B.* s.v. Sir Reynold Donne or Dun.

³⁵ See A.D. Wall, *ut sup.*, n. 17.

³⁶ See refs. to n. 34. Bodleian Library Tanner MS ccccxxvii has notes on some cases in the Court of Arches 1596–1602, but does not include this. The official records are no longer extant.

account for his father's exasperation with him (30). However, in 1601 the validity of the match was affirmed (55).³⁷

The unusual hasty marriage had been a matter of public comment since November 1595, if not sooner, as shown by Roland Whyte's remarks on it.³⁸ Joan had hoped it would be kept secret (19). But in such circumstances, considering the widespread relationships of the Marvin and Thynne families in Wiltshire and London circles, and the notoriety of their feud, it was no doubt a vain hope. This secret marriage and the events surrounding it possibly prompted Shakespeare, late in 1595 or 1596, to take up an old tale about civil dissensions and secret marriage between opponents' offspring, and to write *Romeo & Juliet*, a very popular play in performance.³⁹ The details were not quite the same, but the early part of the theme was remarkably similar, especially in the changes which Shakespeare made to his source, which can be seen as incorporating details of the Marvin and Thynne families and their feud. Shakespeare's patron, Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, was closely connected with the Thynnes, and knew the circumstances well.⁴⁰ In 1583 he had sold the manor of King's-hold Hackney to Sir Rowland Hayward.⁴¹ Hunsdon had been involved in the Thynnes's dispute with Stafford, as well as their feud with the Marvins, and the Knyvet brothers, Henry and Joan's brother-in-law Thomas, were close to him as well as to the Thynnes. Possibly Hunsdon, cousin of the Queen and an important official, was eager to see a play on the evil consequences of feuding: as propaganda which might discourage highly placed families such as the Thynnes from engaging in it – many of Shakespeare's other plays propagate some of the ideals of the Elizabethan regime, such as the insistence on 'degree, priority, and place'.

If an object lesson was intended, it failed. Thomas's parents were not reconciled to the marriage of Thomas and Maria, nor was the rift with the Marvins healed. Maria must have decided to attempt a conciliation with her mother-in-law soon after the marriage was ratified; her first letter in this vein is dated 15 September 1601 (31). In a poignant gesture, under the Audley seal of the letter, she placed a lock of dark red hair, which makes the twentieth-century researcher vividly aware of the emotions and passions involved. However, her efforts, and those of her mother Lucy, which allude to the troubles of the past, made no headway with the Thynnes (38, 41, 42, 43), and by 1602 they had clearly failed (73). This was so in spite of Elizabeth Knyvet's effort to persuade John Thynne to moderate his anger, and accept a situation

³⁷ D. Burnett, *Longleat*, 1978, p. 46 is incorrect about the date of marriage which he gives as 1603, and about the circumstances. His erroneous remarks on p. 41 about Lucy Audley are based on misunderstandings, such as her use of the term 'my son Thynne', which was normal usage for son-in-law, refers to Thomas, and in no way suggests that she thought John Thynne had fathered her own first son, as Burnett claims. She also mentions 'my son[-in-law] Davies' (64). Throughout the correspondence 'my sister', 'my brother' are used of in-laws. 'Cousin' is used for people remotely connected with the family.

³⁸ H.M.C., *De Lisle and Dudley*, ii, p. 186.

³⁹ See A.D. Wall, 'The Feud and Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*: a reconsideration', *Sydney Studies in English*, v., 1979–80.

⁴⁰ See n. 2, also Jay, *op. cit.*, p. 518; T.P. vi, f. 172.

⁴¹ W. Robinson, *History and Antiquities of Hackney*, 1842, pp. 312–3.

which could not be altered, not 'bitterly in displeasure condemn as an unpardonable offence' in his son.⁴² She entreated John and Joan that in their anger they would not forget the love of parents, and she promised that Thomas Knyvet would endeavour to deal with Sir James Marvin 'for some good conditions of an honest agreement'. This is presumably an attempt to overcome one of the reasons for the Thynnes' bitter anger about the marriage – the fact that such a marriage brought no dowry with the bride, a fact noted by Whyte.⁴³ However it might be disadvantageous to the bride in that she would have no jointure agreement to safeguard her future, although her children would inherit Longleat. It seems from letters of Lucy Audley to Thomas that some arrangements about lands were being discussed. She mentioned later that another son-in-law had no more than her word for his wife's marriage portion (64). She said that Lord Audley and she would make assurance of Compton and Witcombe manors, except that Marvin's interest in them complicated the matter. Later, around 1604, she asked Thomas to forbear troubling his counsel over the question, for he might 'expect to be satisfied with as much security as you can wish and with much less difficulty than in Compton or Witcombe'.⁴⁴ The outcome is not clear, and although later Lucy encouraged Thomas and Maria to buy Warminster manor from the Audley family, Thomas paid a very substantial sum for it (64, 65).

In spite of the bitterness and the many lawsuits between Marvin and John Thynne, Marvin made a further effort at conciliation. In March 1603 he wrote to Thynne, asking for all old griefs and dislikes between their families to be suppressed, and for Thynne to forgive Thomas and Maria.⁴⁵ But of course the Marvin-Audley interest had far less cause for continuing the feud, since from their point of view Maria's marriage to the heir to Longleat was a considerable financial advantage for her, although it was alleged that she might have married others of higher birth. Joan Thynne expressed the contemporary respect for degree in replying to Lucy (42), and conceding the point on Maria's high birth, as a daughter of Lord Audley.

But Thomas and Maria remained closer to the Marvins (42), and took on some Marvin servants such as John Exall.⁴⁶ Thomas was involved in Marvin's arrangements of Compton Bassett and Witcombe manors, along with Marvin's nephew Hugh Hill, presumably the 'cousin Hill' mentioned by Maria (64), Hugh Hill of Grays' Inn. After the marriage was ratified in 1601, Thomas and Maria lived at Compton Bassett, one of James Marvin's manors which was assured to Lucy after Marvin's death. However, Lucy died shortly before her father. Maria also spent some time at her mother's house at Stalbridge in Dorset (31). Unfortunately few records remain to give details, but the Audley family did hold lands at Stalbridge, and a house in which they lived part of the time, at least between 1594 and the early 1600s. The parish

⁴² T.P. vii, f.200.

⁴³ See n. 38. For Audley pedigree see *Genealogist*, N.S. xxxvi, pp. 9–21.

⁴⁴ T.P. viii, ff.61–3.

⁴⁵ T.P. vii, f.253.

⁴⁶ T.P. Box XI, ff.66, 93; VIII, f.154; Marvin's Inquisition post mortem and Will, pr. W. Drake, *Notes of the Family of Mervyn of Pertwood*, 1873, Appendix, pp. 4–8.

register was extant until about a hundred years ago, but is now missing, hence the birth date for Maria is not available.⁴⁷

Probably Thomas' continued adherence to the Marvins did not please his parents (38, 42, 73). Samuel Bowdler advised Thomas to go and visit his mother and attempt to win her over (73); there is no evidence that he took the advice and made the journey for the purpose. Soon after the relationship between Joan and her son and his wife became even more embittered. John Thynne died suddenly in November 1604, intestate – Joan was then at Longleat. There was immediate disagreement, and allies of the parties started giving advice.⁴⁸ Thomas and Joan Thynne went to law over the administration of the estate and the provision for her three younger children.⁴⁹ Several draft indentures were drawn attempting to settle the administration and the other matters; Joan seems to have used several lawyers. The copious marginal comments show the degree of hostility and mistrust evoked: one article has a note in the margin 'if the power be in her to alien, then notwithstanding this covenant, she may lease for a thousand years if she please'. Joan and Thomas each petitioned the Lord Chancellor. Matters in dispute included ownership of the plate, money and goods at Longleat, various lands and leases, money for Dorothy and Christian for their maintenance and marriage portions, and the fate of the lands in Shropshire which Joan had brought to the Thynne estates, and which Thomas wished her not to alienate. A proposal to divide the treasure, money and plate at Longleat into parts of which Joan was to have one is margined 'how if the Lady Thynne found such treasure'.

Thomas alleged that his brother and two sisters, by the persuasion of Joan, were trying to defraud him in claiming part of their father's goods, and asked for them to be subpoenaed to the Chancery, since he stood in peril to pay their portions, and was in hazard by some act in the spiritual courts to make satisfaction to the three children. Joan's petition outlined the extensive wealth of her late husband, some of it from herself, and mentioned his desire to provide large portions for his daughters. She complained that Thomas 'without the privity, liking or consent' of his father and mother, married Maria, with whom there came no portion of money or land such as might have provided portions for the younger children. She claimed that Thynne had proposed to disinherit Thomas on hearing of the sudden marriage, but had been dissuaded by her before his unexpected death. She outlined a written agreement with Thomas, saying that as a consequence of it she let him take possession of the London house, leases, plate, goods, and money, but he then disallowed the draft agreement and denied such agreement was ever made, so that the younger children were likely to be destitute, as Thomas was alienating what he thought good. Whatever were the rights and wrongs, which are very hard to disentangle from the mass of claim and counter-claim, agreement was eventually reached, whereby Thomas agreed to provide for

⁴⁷ *C. S. P. D. 1611-18*, p. 451; John Hutchins, *The History and Antiquities of the county of Dorset*, 3rd ed., 1868, iii, pp. 671-80; private communication from St. Mary's church, Stalbridge, and Dorset County Archivist.

⁴⁸ T.P. xi, f. 103.

⁴⁹ Following section: T. P. Box XXXVII, vol. lxxxiv; Box XI.

his brother John, and to pay each of the girls £1,000 when they should marry or turn twenty-one. This promise was the basis of the series of marriage negotiations Joan undertook, as shown in this volume. It is not clear whether each of them fell through because the portions were insufficient. At least one of those Joan would have chosen for her daughter, Simon Archer, later became a notable antiquary.⁵⁰ In the event Joan had to importune Thomas to pay the portions when the time drew near (66, 67, 68).

It is not known what part was taken by Maria in this controversy. But she was now the mistress of Longleat, and her letter of convoluted invective to Joan (49) shows that she had dropped all attempts at conciliation. The style of her writing both in this and other letters is quite individual for the period. Little is known about her upbringing and education. She spent some time at the court. Both she and her sister, the millenarian pamphleteer Eleanor, clearly received an education which made them fluent with the pen, possibly from their mother or from their brother's tutor.⁵¹ She also knew some Latin and possibly had an extensive grasp of it (48, 52). Her brother Mervin was condemned by his peers for homosexual offences and executed in 1631.⁵² Maria's family had connections with Ireland, although only one letter in this volume refers to this fact (54). Her father, George Lord Audley, lived much of his later life there, gathering up estates, and was made Earl of Castlehaven not long before his death in 1617.⁵³ Sir John Davies, poet, lawyer and attorney of Ireland, was a friend of the family, and married Eleanor nearly two years after the friendly letter to Maria (54).⁵⁴ The Audleys also had a London residence at Clerkenwell,⁵⁵ and it seems that Lucy disliked Ireland, and spent more time in England than her husband.

Presumably the first letter in this volume from Maria to Thomas (47), complaining that after their hard fortunes, he will not now take her advice, belongs to the period immediately after Thomas inherited Longleat, and during or after the lawsuit with his mother. Her letters do not bear dates, and so have been placed in what seems the most likely order according to internal evidence, and comparison with other letters and documents. Thomas's refusal to ask her advice may even have been merely a temporary disagreement. The account books at Longleat add weight to the evidence of these letters that Maria did in fact take considerable responsibility for the running of the estates when Thomas was away, usually in London, since most of her letters are addressed to him at the Cannon Row house. Thomas sat in Parliament, and may have been an assiduous attender (48), although not a

⁵⁰ See 61, n. 2.

⁵¹ G. Ballard, *Memoirs of British Ladies who have been celebrated for their writings or skill in the Learned Languages, Arts, and Sciences*, 2nd ed., 1775 (1st ed. 1752), pp. 191-7, writing on Eleanor gives no details of Eleanor's (and presumably also Maria's) education. C. Cable, 'Lady Eleanor Davies: her Writings and Circle' (unpublished Sydney University B. A. Hons. thesis, 1980) was also unable to find more detail on this.

⁵² J. B. Howells, *State Trials*, 1816, iii, pp. 410 and foll.

⁵³ *D.N.B.*; *C.S.P.D. 1611-18*; Collins, *Peerage*, vi, p. 554; G.E.C.; H.M.C., *Salisbury (Cecil)*, x, pp. 151-2, 353; xi, pp. 2-3; xii, p. 235; xvi, pp. 52, 384; xvii, p. 140; xx, p. 112.

⁵⁴ *D.N.B.*; *Chamberlain Letters*, ed. N. McClure, i, p. 288.

⁵⁵ H.M.C., *Salisbury (Cecil)*, x, p. 353; xvi, pp. 52, 384; xx, p. 112.

conspicuous one in the annals of the House of Commons.⁵⁶ In January 1605 Thomas and Maria rode to London, but on 15 August Maria was back at Longleat, meeting her mother and father there, and during October and November she was receiving the rents.⁵⁷

Most of her letters show a detailed knowledge of the lands, and of the tenants and neighbours; Cogswell, Curtis, or Salisbury figure here, and she took Cogswell's advice about trusting people. Nearly all the names of people mentioned in her letters to Thomas appear, often in her handwriting, in the Longleat estate accounts – as well as Cogswell, there is Ned Smith paying in £200; Smith the clothier (on the same sheet and presumably a different man), only £10. William and Richard Cable are tenants too.⁵⁸ With the stewards and retainers she seems to have had less happy relationships – Halliwell being weary of his office, and Woodlands threatening to leave, perhaps because she receives the rents, suggest problems. Her mocking tone 'I will offend his worship no more' (52), may be the clue. Similarly there may be mockery intended with Geoffrey Hawkins, the clothier of Bishopstrow, whom she dubs 'Sir Geoffrey the clothier'. It cannot have been easy, especially considering the bitterness of the lawsuit between Thomas and Joan, to take over servants who apparently went with the estate. Woodlands seems to have been on Joan's side in the suit, and this may explain his resentment towards Maria. George Sudlow had been a Longleat retainer since at least 1576.⁵⁹ The Halliwells too, were Joan and John's men, but seem to have stayed on both estates.

Throughout the collection the stewards and bailiffs, and the other servants are seen to be very important in the running of the enterprise, as indeed they had to be, considering the extent of the estates, and the size of the households maintained. Probably a number of those mentioned in these letters made themselves indispensable; certainly many of them stayed with the estate for very long periods. Edward Morris was still bailiff in 1616, and perhaps later, Sudlow as noted above, Thomas Newbury was still active there in 1614 and probably later, and George Halliwell was still important in 1612.⁶⁰

Maria played a very prominent role in the estate work in 1609 and 1610. In April, May and July 1609, and March, April, May, June and October 1610 she received rents and made up accounts.⁶¹ In Easter term 1610 she made up the list of money paid in, and also about the same time, notes of money borrowed. She took a major part in organising the money borrowed and collected for the purchases that her husband made.⁶² He bought East Woodlands from Sir Thomas Vavasour for £2,450, during 1610. He also bought Warminster manor from her brother Mervin Audley, for £3,650 (64). Her cousin, Hugh

⁵⁶ *V. C. H. Wilts.* v, p. 125.

⁵⁷ T.P. Box LXXX, Book 120; Box XI, f.41; Box XIV, ff.15–17, 21. Woodlands signed the receipts in May 1605, T.P. Box XIV, ff. 21–2, as he had done in earlier years before Thomas and Maria held Longleat, *ibid.* and f.78.

⁵⁸ T.P. Box XIV.

⁵⁹ T.P. Box XXXVII, 3; Box LXXIX; Box III, f.1d.

⁶⁰ Unbound MS 4026; T.P. viii, f.153 (Sudlow Letter, 1606); Box XI, f.101.

⁶¹ T.P. Box XIV.

⁶² T.P. Box XIV, 72A; Box XI, f.55.

Hill of Gray's Inn, presumably did some of the legal work, since she writes that he had upon note £13 for fees laid out by him.

In these activities, Maria and Joan showed similarities, in spite of their antipathy to each other, and their apparent total lack of correspondence with each other during this period. In Joan's later letters to her son, there is an occasional grudging good wish to 'you and yours', but no warmth. But in 1611 Maria died in childbirth, aged about 34, leaving three sons. She had had her portrait painted during her last pregnancy and it hangs at Longleat.⁶³ Presumably, had she lived, she would have taken even more responsibility for the lands, especially after Thomas inherited Caus also on the death of his mother in March 1612. It is perhaps ironical, that with all her care for Thomas's health, he in fact outlived her by nearly thirty years.

The Documents and Editorial Method

The Thynne Papers in the archives of the Marquess of Bath at Longleat comprise a variety of documents.⁶⁴ The correspondence (volumes i-xlvii), mostly incoming letters on paper, has been well bound in volumes of varying size, and given folio numbers in pencil. The Thynne letters range from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth century – there is a fairly accurate typescript index to the collection at Longleat. The letters now published come chiefly from the three volumes of correspondence of Sir John Thynne who died in 1604 (vols. v, vi, and vii) and from volume viii which is bound in non-chronological order and entitled 'Family Correspondence'. The folio and volume number appear at the head of each entry in this edition. Generally the letters are in good condition, although some are torn, faded or stained. Some are in the hands of secretaries; many are holograph. Most of Joan's letters appear to be in her own hand, which is noticeably more unformed and straight in letter forms than those of most later-sixteenth-century men. As noted below her spelling is often phonetic. As there were three surviving daughters she may have been educated by her mother. By contrast, Maria's spelling conforms more closely to contemporary usage, while her hand is a modified form of italic, using thick strokes and a dark ink which has lasted well. She wrote on large sheets, and sometimes continued sideways along the margin. Addresses are intact, and many letters contain whole or part seals.

All the letters in the collection to and from Joan Thynne, and Maria, have been included, so far as can be ascertained. There does not appear to be any further corpus of such correspondence in other likely repositories such as the British Library, the Bodleian, Shrewsbury Library, or the Wiltshire Record Office. The greater proportion of the letters are addressed to their husbands, and reflect the lives of these women during the lengthy periods when they ran

⁶³ M.L. Boyle, *Biographical catalogue of the portraits at Longleat*, 1881, p. 87. The details of Maria's children are incorrect, see Botfield, *Stemmata Botevillianana*, p. cxli. She left 3 sons, John (b. 1604, d. young), James and Thomas. See J. Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis 1500–1714*, 1891–2.

⁶⁴ H.M.C. Var. Collections, 3rd Rep., App. p. 199.

the major estates whilst their husbands were elsewhere. It is thus unfortunate that most of the correspondence is one-sided, and that we do not have the replies, nor the 'kind wanton letters' which Thomas wrote to make Maria blush. Possibly John Thynne's letters to Joan were mostly in the trunks which were 'fetched away' within days of her death, as only two are now extant. The few letters to Joan and Maria which do remain mostly concern the important interests of the family, which may explain why they are preserved. All the letters are in various volumes of the Thynne papers, but not in the order in which they appear here, since they are not bound in the volumes in a very logical order, but are somewhat scattered. The arrangement here is as nearly as possible chronological. This order has been chosen in preference to other possible schemes such as printing all letters from and to Joan, then all Maria's, because it does give each concern its historical place as it touched the participants. An exception is the Appendix, which contains letters from others which throw considerable light on the otherwise sometimes obscure allusions in the main entries of this volume, and these are referred to at each relevant entry. Joan Thynne's will is included in the Appendix. Joan's correspondence covers the period from 1575 to 1611. Maria's falls within this time from 1601 to 1610, while many earlier letters from 1594 onwards refer to her.

Undated letters, including most of those from Maria, have been put into what appears to be their chronological order, by using internal evidence and comparison with other documents. For instance any addressed to Sir Thomas Thynne must be after 20 August 1604 when he was knighted. Some of her letters to him presented problems, and the footnotes in these cases suggest other possible dates to which they might be attributed. For example her fears for his health because of the plague may refer to the summer of 1607, when there was a particularly bad outbreak in London, but there were other lesser outbreaks especially in 1604 and 1609. Each document has been given an entry number, and these are printed in bold type. Where an address is given the place to which the letter was addressed has been added to the heading of the entry. In many cases the date of the letter is derived from an endorsement. Where this is so it is in square brackets. John Thynne endorsed most of Joan's letters with the year if not with the exact date. Dates in the introduction and headings have been given in the modern, new style, form, and since the New Year then began on 25 March, dates between 1 January and 25 March in the text of the letters are one year earlier than in the headings. Many of the letters retain their seals.

Joan Thynne used at least four different seals. In 1601 and 1602 she used a seal of the Thynne arms depicting a *lion rampant* in the second and third quarters with a *Barry of ten* in the others. (28, 40). She also used one showing the *lion rampant* alone (20), but the seal she used most frequently, and at the same period that she was using the Thynne arms, was a stag or *reindeer statant* taken from the crest (22-24, 36). She used another seal at least once, and three different ones in April - June 1602, so that the basis of her choice is not clear. The Hayward arms also bore a *lion rampant*.⁶⁵ John Thynne's letter of 13

⁶⁵ Hayward tomb, church of St. Alphage, London Wall.

February 1601 (27) has the seal intact, bearing the Thynne *lion rampant*. Maria's important letter of 15 September 1601 (31), attempting to overcome Joan's hostility and anger, bears a *fretty*, the seal of arms of the Audley family.⁶⁶ Under the seal Maria had placed a lock of dark red hair in a poignant gesture. The rest of her letters which retain seals have a *butterfly* device in two different forms, taken from the Touchet crest (33, 39, 41, 43, 48, 50).⁶⁷

Abbreviations have been extended, and punctuation and spelling have been modernised throughout – this is particularly useful in the case of Joan's letters, since she uses some very idiosyncratic, or phonetic forms. Original forms of surnames have been given in round brackets wherever they differ from the modern spelling. In some of the letters the ink has faded or the hand is very indistinct, especially where the writer has continued sideways in the margin. Where there is doubt about a word a probable reading is given in square brackets. In one or two cases where the MS is torn or badly stained, this is noted, and likely words supplied in square brackets where possible. The aim has been to supply a reading giving the final intent of the writer. Hence, ordinary false starts and corrections made by the writer are not normally noted, except where it seems that the writer may have intended a different idea, and then changed it – these cases are noted in footnotes. In a few cases words or phrases have been completely obliterated by the writer so that it is not feasible to resurrect them.

⁶⁶ Botfield, *Stemmata Botevilliana*, pp. dxxx–dxxxiii, for drawing.

⁶⁷ *Genealogist*, N.S. xxxvi, pp. 9–21.

THE LETTERS

1 Joan Hayward to John Thynne, [soon after 10 October 1575],¹ v. f.4.

Good Mr Thynne I give you most humble thanks for your letter, but that will not suffice me from letting you to understand of my heavy heart and my pensive [i. e. sorrowful] mind, hoping that when you understand the cause you will do your endeavour to release me of some part of it, which if I could speak with you it should not be long unknown unto you. For as the distance is short, so I think your absence long.

By your pensive friend in heart and mind

J.H.

¹ Belongs to the period of negotiation over the marriage of Joan Hayward to John Thynne, soon after the first arranged meeting, Oct. 1575. Possibly the slow progress of the settlement caused her unhappiness, see 69.

2 Joan Hayward to John Thynne, [after 10 October 1575], v. f.5.

Mr Thynne, as the hours be short so I have thought the time long since I last saw you, but I am glad to see you so willing to keep your promise, in hope you will keep it as well hereafter, and as I am glad to hear of your health so I would wish the painter to show me your picture to see if I could perceive by your countenance that you continued in your old [fever] which was against my mind.¹

But as fire can not be separated from heat nor heat from fire, so is the heart of faithful friends which share in one desire.

By your assured

J.H.

¹ Circumstances not explained.

3 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (London), 1576, v. f.10.

Mr Thynne. I may not impute it unto you for not writing to me, for either the messenger[s] are very slack in bring[ing], or you slothful for not writing to me, for I either think that your health is not so perfect as I would swear, or that your business falleth otherwise than you looked for.

I pray you send me word how the matter stands between my Lord Stafford (Stafered) and you.¹ Thus with my hearty commendations to my father and mother, yourself not forgotten, my brethren and sister and all my friends, I

leave you to God. From Mr Berington's (Berntongtons)² this present Wednesday.

Your obedient wife
Joan Thynne

¹ See Introduction. Joan's letter is addressed to Thynne at the house of her father, Sir Rowland Hayward.

² Walter Berington, clerk of the peace c.1567–80, on John Thynne senior's appointment. E. Stephens, *The Clerks of the Counties 1360–1960* (Newport) 1961, p. 178. She may have written from there because she disliked being at Longleat with her father-in-law's wife, see 4 and 70.

4 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (London), 7 December 1576, v. f.12.

My hearty commendations remembered, since your departure I have thought it no short time. If return be not made speedily I shall think it much longer, for almost daily my Lady¹ keeps her accustomed courtesy towards me which I may count a hell to heavenly joys or such lady's love that will force me to leave this country, [i.e. county] which I would be loath since your pleasure is to the contrary, but I hope you will not have me stay where I shall be so vilely abused as now. I am more meeter for some servant than for one of my estate. Wherefore as you tender my case I am most humbly to crave you to redress the same.

Thus longing to hear from you and your business, I wish you increase of health, my hearty commendations not forgotten to my parents, I leave you to God. Longleat this 7 of December 1576

Your obedient wife
Joan Thynne

¹ Addressed to Thynne at Hayward's. 'My Lady' is Thynne senior's second wife Dorothy, daughter of William Wroughton, who married secondly Carey Raleigh: *Wilts. Vis. Peds.*, 1623, p. 219. See 70.

5 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 1576, v. f.13.

Mr Thynne¹ this is to let you understand that my brother Palle² is come to Sir John Horner's (Hornars)³ to speak with you from my father, desiring you to meet him there, and by him you shall understand my father's mind. And I for my part would be very glad you would seek any way to appease his anger so that we might be together. For if you did know the unquiet mind that I have in your absence, I think you would seek for any way to be in my company still A[nd] therefore good Mr Thynne fulfill this my request in waiting with my brother Palle who will tell you his mind as your friend and no otherwise. And he stays for you at Sir John Horner's (Hornars) desiring you to meet him there tomorrow.

Your obedient wife
Joan Thynne

¹ Followed by *I pray you* struck through.

² No brother or brother-in-law Paul, or Pole, or Poole identifiable in pedigrees.

³ Sir John Horner, Mells, Somerset, d.1587: Harbin. *M.P.s for Somerset*, Som. Arch. Soc., 1939, p. 145.

6 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 1576, v. f.14.

Good Mr Thynne I have received your letter with thanks for the same. And whereas you write to me of the zealous love you have unto me I persuade myself your love is worth as good affection towards me as mine is towards you, which is as much as I desire. And further to let you understand that I have talked with my father twice or thrice since your departing and at the first time I found him much moved with anger as it seemed to me. But afterward I found his anger was not so much as it was to the outward show, as he said, to make you humble yourself and know your duty towards him, as it is the part of a natural son to do to his father as I need not reveal it unto you, for you know it very well. Therefore good Mr Thynne let me persuade you to seek all means possible to please and comfort him, for you must think that you have oftentimes moved him to great displeasure against you and so often must you seek to pacify him again and so doing it will make your friends think it proceeded from good nature in you. And therefore as he is very well content to have your company and to forget all, so would he have you to fulfill his mind in putting away of [illegible] your man, as I would wish you so to do and to write to him a letter, somewhat acknowledge your faults although they be many, and fulfilling these my requests I shall think myself bound unto you

By your obedient wife during life

Joan Thynne

7 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, [n.d.], v. f.15.

Good Mr Thynne I have received your letter which is welcome unto me with all my heart and I give you a thousand thanks. For whereas you wrote to me of my unquiet life, I think my life the unquieter by reason of your absence therefore I want nothing. I gave God thanks at this time but your company is which I pray to God to send me shortly. Mr Thynne, my father have sent you a letter by master Browne (Bwrune)¹ he should have sent it by the carriers but he thought it not good because he would not have it come to your father's hands for [their hired] one to deliver him. My Lady have sent you a token and my Lady your mother another, and my sister Townshend (Thouneshend)² have sent you one with their commendations and mine first to your self and then to my father and to my Lady and to all the rest of our friends. And thus I bid you farewell leaving you to His keeping to whom I make my daily prayers unto³ for your safe and speedy return

By your loving wife during life to command

Joan Thynne

¹ Probably Morris Brown, friend and ally of Hayward and adviser to John Thynne on political and court matters. He drowned on Sir Humphrey Gilbert's Newfoundland expedition in 1583. T. P., v. f. 138, 163; Hakluyt, R. *Principall Voyages . . . of the English Nation* (Everyman) 1926, vi, pp. 29–30.

² The three are: her mother Joan Hayward, Thynne's stepmother Dorothy, Joan's sister Susan, married to Henry Townshend, *Vis. Shropshire* 1623, i, pp. 464–5. Susan was dead by 1594: Hayward's will, P. R. O. Prob 11/83 (24 Dixy).

³ Followed by *you*.

8 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, [n.d.], v. *f.17*.

Mr Thynne (Thenne) I have received your letter at the lackey's hands whereby I do hear of your good health and well doing which I pray to God long to continue. And whereas you write to me of the setting up of a balk,¹ I know not your meaning thereby, and therefore I think it good to let it alone till your coming home. And you tell me that your bow and your arrows be ready bent, and if you will do by my counsel you shall unbend them again and heigh ye home to London and so into more fields which is best shooting there as I take it this fair weather. And further to let you understand I have my health, and lacking nothing as yet which if I did you must not think but to hear of it having no doubt of your relief in the time of my necessity

By your loving wife
Joan Thynne

¹ Refers to unspecified problem, possibly over the Stafford case.

9 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 7 March 1577, v. *f.18*.

Mr Thynne with hearty commendations I do not a little marvel that I hear from you but not by your own [hand], which surely giveth me occasion to think that you are not in good health. Wherefore sir, to put away such doubts I humbly desire you that you would take so much pains as to write to me yourself which shall not a little engladden me, whereas now I stand in great doubt. Sir I pray you let this bearer be entertained. Thus signifying unto you the good health of my father and mother who heartily commend them unto you, Sir John and my Lady, I do commit you to God from London the 7th of March 1576

Your loving wife
Joan Thynne

10 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Longleat), 8 March 1577, v. *f.19*.

Mr Thynne my hearty commendations not omitted, your letter I have received for the which I heartily thank you, and am not a little glad to hear of your good health, God continue it. I have also sent to Sir John a night cap of red satin which cost 6s. 8d. I pray you let him send up money for it. Also, for your hobby¹ there will not be any more given for him than three pounds, wherefore I pray you let me understand your mind, for he doth stand you in great charge and more will do. I have not yet provided a musk rose tree, but by the next, God willing, you shall receive it. Thus trusting you will make my humble commendations to Sir John and my Lady and the rest of my friends there I do commit you to God. London, the 8th of March 1576

Your loving wife
Joan Thynne

[p.s.] I have also sent you the key for the black chest. And for crystal buttons,

I can get none under 5s. 5d. the dozen. Also I have sent my brother Frances² two bonds.

¹ A hobby horse is mentioned in a later inventory.

² Francis Thynne, of Kempford, Glos.

11 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Worcester or elsewhere), 6 March 1580
v. f.23.

Mr Thynne I commend me unto you, trusting in God that [you] are in good health with my father and all your company. These are to certify you that I came to London this present Sunday at three of the clock. I did endure my journey very well but I was very weary at night, wherefore I hope you will pardon me because I did not write myself. My horses did travel excellent well, and I have sent them down as well. I pray you good Mr Thynne as you love me do something at my request, which is this (if my father do happen to speak anything angrily towards you or your father touching this matter) I pray you for God's sake bear with him, for that you do know his hasty nature and also it may grow to further inconvenience, for indeed my brother Warren¹ told me that he was moved towards your father about the matter before he went away, but say nothing who told you. Also I pray you if you love me come with my father to London presently, for my Lady is very desirous to see you. She is very weak and nothing like to live,² wherefore if ever you will do anything for me, come up with my father presently, that my mother may see you (before she die) which she does greatly desire.

Thus, nothing doubting your health I end. London the 6th of March 1579

Your assured loving wife

Joan Thynne

¹ Richard Warren, first husband of Joan's elder sister Elizabeth: B. Botfield, *Stemma Botteuilliana*, p. 115. Thynne and his father-in-law were often at loggerheads.

² Joan's mother died soon after, and Hayward married Catherine, the 16-year-old daughter of Customer Thomas Smith: G.B. Hall, *Records of St. Alphage London Wall*, p. 59; Jay, W. 'Sir Rowland Hayward', *London & Middlesex Archaeological Society Transactions*, vi, 1933, p. 523; S.P.L. MS 4077.

12 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 1580, v. f.34.

Good Mr Thynne you shall perceive by Mr Berington's (Berrintons) letter what good friends you have here in this country.¹ For as I hear, they would have you a conductor of two hundred men into Ireland. But I trust you will make such means to the Council as that you shall be discharged of that bad office. For if you should go, it will be a great disgrace to you. Therefore good Mr Thynne (Thinne) as you love yourself, deal so wisely in this matter as that your enemies may have no cause to rejoice at you. Thus with my commendations to you and my sister Bess, I leave you to God

Your loving wife

[torn]

¹ i.e. Wilts. The letter is T.P. v. f.145.

13 Elizabeth Willoughby to Joan Thynne (Longleat), 23 October 1589, *vi. f.115*.

After my very hearty commendations, I commend me unto you. These are to let you understand that I have for you now at Knoyle half a hundred of sugar of 8d the pound being 56 pounds with that you have already. My request is that you will cause it to be sent for tomorrow, for that in the morning I shall be at Knoyle where it shall be delivered. And thus my commendations not forgotten unto my father, I wish you both heartily well to fare. From Knoyle this 23d of October, 1589.

Your very assured to use
Elizabeth Willoughby (Willughby)

[*added*] received of Mrs. Thynne the 25th of October for 56 pounds of sugar at 8d the pound, 37s. 4d.

[*signature*] Joan Thynne

14 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 10 March 1590, *v. f.65*.

I have according to your letter sent up your horses and am glad to hear of your coming down, but nothing joyful to think of my bad and dangerous journey and were it not to that place, I should be very ill willing to travel in case as I am. If my sister be in London I pray you entreat her to provide me of a good midwife for me against Easter or a ten or twelve days after, for I think my time will be much thereabout.¹ Here is none worth the having now Goody Barber is dead and therefore I pray you be earnest with her and tell her that I hope she will not deny to come down to me, and so I pray you tell her from me. Desire her not to think any unkindness in me for not writing to her so often as I would, because I have not my health as I was wont. And therefore I pray you to make my excuse to her and to my father. It were good you did buy something for my sister Chamberlain's (Chamberlynes) New Year gift,² which you can do now you are there yourself.

If my gown be good I will thank you³ and so in haste I commit you to God. From Longleat the 10th of this month

Your loving and faithful wife
Joan Thynne

[*p. s.*] I pray you buy a brush and some pins for me, and to speak to my brother Thomas to buy two [Cornish agora rabbits] for my niece Doll.

[*p. s.*] I think it were best for you to come to Prestbury from London and not to make two journeys for if you do you shall be sure to have enough. Come for me [now].

¹ The child, Dorothy, was born at Longleat, Maundy Thursday 16 April 1590, T.P. Box XI, f.34.

² Thynne's sister Elizabeth, married to John Chamberlain of Prestbury. *Glos.*: Collins, *Peerage*, ii, pp. 500–02. The New Year, commencing 25 March, was the important gift-giving occasion.

³ Followed by *otherwise the dystruck* through.

15 Henry Townshend to Joan Thynne (Caus Castle), 1592, *vi. f. 237*.

Sister, I am very sorry that this bearer is so slothful and surly that he would not bring home with him the rabbits, pigeon, and fat lambs which he might have bought here. If you send a man and a horse he shall come home today. You do well to make much of yourself and to feed off such restoratives to make your life long, for pigeons be now but making their nests, lambs a week old, no wild rabbit till May can be¹ had, but you should send for green gifts which be now in [Exeter]. I am very glad that Caus land do yield such fine stomach, for by that I see our barren soil can not disregard your fine diet and therefore you do well to [put veal] into that high castle of Caus to [colour] your melancholy stomachs. Methought I found there lately very good cheer; I did greatly content me and I shent that I brought not home a lampril pic with me.² And so much for ye all. And now I will commend us to you and to my niece Starkey; I hope your horse hath harden[ed] her buttocks. So for the last part Amen.

By your loving brother
H. Townshend

¹ Followed by word struck through.

² Townshend uses puns and archaic terms: shent – reproach; lampril – lamprey.

16 Reynold Williams to Joan Thynne, 5 March 1593, *vi. f. 239*.

My very good cousin, having yesterday had some intelligence of a friend of your business I do learn that my Lord Stafford showed you that he will have no business in the sessions against you in his own name; but a bill shall be preferred for the Queen, in which course of proceeding as he imagineth, he may be judge himself, and as a justice of peace give direction in the court as if himself were no party at all.

To answer this conceit pleasing his own humour, he is to be challenged of the bench while this cause is hindered, for albeit the indictment be for the Queen yet it must make mention that Edward Lord Stafford was diseised and put out of his freehold, which proveth that he is a party and shall take advantage thereby, that is, to have a repetition of his possession upon the indictment. Therefore his gloss is but a false varnish that bears no plea.

Beside this, your solicitor must be circumspect to challenge all such persons heretofore more experienced on this matter. For as you shall not be admitted to have any juror that was returned and of opinion on your suit, not to find the indictment (so as you challenge all those that were returned before this time and did agree to fail the indictment) and this challenge the sheriff I know will allow you, for he meaneth to deal indifferently as he informed me.

Item: Foresee that troublesome freeholders, I mean those of the Overgorther and Leighton¹ be challenged, for they have appeared at the Lord Stafford's courts afore your purchase and will nevertheless acknowledge themselves to hold still of the Lord Stafford, though he hath sold them to Mr Pursell, therefore *cavete ab eis*.²

Item: Whereas Robert Lloyd of Deuddwr, John Davies of Tredderwen in Deuddwr¹ and William Cadwallaugh of the same shall be returned of your jury, allow of them, for they be honest men and my man shall be there. For the freeholders of Bausley, Thomas ap Robert and Mr Usher (Osher), they are Sir Edward Leighton's (Leigtons) tenants yet they are but sheep they can do neither good nor harm. Yet if your solicitor shall think good to challenge theirs you may. Regarding Kemble, my man shall commend to Mr Halliwell at Montgomery, who knoweth my friends and shall use them in my name. And so in haste I take my leave this 5th of March

Your cousin assured
R.C. Williams

[*Endorsed*]: My Cousin Reynold Williams to my wife 1592.

¹ Two manors.

² Probably Thomas Purcell, landowner in Montgomeryshire and sheriff there. *T.S.A.S.*, 4th ser. xii, p. 189. *Vis. Shropshire 1623*, ii, pp. 411–14. The Latin=*beware of them*.

³ *MS. Deythur, and Trethewen*: i.e. hundred of (modern form) Deuddwr in Montgomeryshire, and township of Tredderwen.

17 Joan Thynne to [Cousin Higgins],¹ 15 April [1595], v. f.80.

My good cousin, how hard is my hap to live to see my chiefest hope and joy my greatest grief and sorrow, for you know how much I have always disliked my son to match in this sort, but alas I fear it is too late. But if there be any remedy for it, good cousin let there be speedy order for it. He is contented to leave her,² seeing neither I nor his father am contented with the match. Alas the boy was betrayed by the Marvins (Marvens) which I have often told Mr Thynne what they would do, and now it is too sure. But I trust they may be divorced for I think it is no good marriage in law for that he is under age, and therefore I pray you persuade Mr Thynne for the best.³ I would be glad to hear some good news of your proceedings from you; I pray God it may be better than the last was to me. And so not doubting of your friendly persuading Mr Thynne who I hope will acquaint you with my letter and my cousin's,⁴ that you may see at large the deceits that hath been used to deceive a silly child which is most sorrowful for his fault and desires you to be a mean [i.e. intermediary] to his father for him. And so commending me to your good self, I take my leave from Caus Castle, 15th of April

Your ever assured friend and cousin
Joan Thynne

¹ See Introduction. The cousin is probably Thomas Higgins (cf. endorsement by Thynne of a letter from him 1595, T.P. vi. f.308). For his involvement in these events, cf. 18, 19. There were Higgins [sic] family estates at Little Wollaston, *V.C.H. Shropshire*, viii, p. 207. 'Cousin' was liberally used. The address of this letter is damaged and heading torn – it could be a copy sent to John Thynne.

² Maria Audley.

³ She was incorrect; see H. Swinburne *A Treatise of Spousals or Matrimonial Contracts*, 1686. He was an Elizabethan judge, expert in marriage law, and his treatise makes it clear that such marriages, with witnesses, were binding contracts; in 1601 the Court of Arches upheld the validity of her son's marriage: cf. 55.

⁴ Possibly cousin Halliwell who was familiar with the situation; see 72.

18 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 20 April 1595, v. f.82.

Good Mr Thynne, I am very glad to hear of your safe arrival in London, although the news at your coming is nothing pleasing, yet I am glad the abode was no longer, for it was said here you were not released as yet. Such news was at Shrewsbury which was nothing pleasing unto me, but I thank God it is much better than I heard, and I hope will prove them liars that report otherwise than truth. Your commission shall not be slacked in anything that I may further: I cannot but marvel to hear with what face Sir James Marvin (Marven) can come to you, considering what traitorous abuses he and his have offered unto you and me, which for my own part I will never think well of him nor any of his. You may do as you please, for seeing they would not persuade by friendship, they shall never make me yield to my cradle for their good.

I have upon my son's submission and upon his promise and oath afore my cousin Higgins (Higens) given him my blessing conditionally that he will be ruled by you and me from henceforth, which I have good hope he will, and I trust there is remedy enough for that which is past, considering how coseningly they have dealt with him and you. Although the Lady Audley (Adely) have used all the policy and cunning to make it so sure that you nor I shall not break it. For after the contract she caused a pair of sheets to be laid on a bed and her daughter to lie down in her clothes and the boy by her side butted and sported¹ for a little while, that it might be said they were abed together, herself and Edmund Marvin (Marven) in the chamber a pretty way off, and hath caused her daughter to write divers letters unto him, in the last naming herself Maria Thynne which name I trust she shall not long enjoy.

I hope [f.82b] to hear some comfort from you by the next messenger which I pray God may be as good as yourself can desire or wish. Your children, I praise God, are all well and Doll² was in hope her father had been come when Morris (Mores)³ came and when she saw not you she cried out, and now she desires your blessing for herself and her sister. And so commending me to your good self I take my leave, not forgetting my good cousin Halliwell (Halywell). From Caus Castle the 20th April 1595

Your loving wife for ever
Joan Thynne

[p.s.] I pray you help me to some white starch and powder blue⁴ although I have some yet I would be glad of store, and a pair of knives if you please for myself; no fine ones but good edge to cut. The sheriff of Shropshire⁵ hath process against you as I hear; I think it is for the subsidy but I am not sure.

¹ MS. *boteid and sporde*.

² Their daughter Dorothy.

³ A bailiff, and a Thynne retainer c. 1595–1616. Longleat MS. Unbound 4026: T.P. Box xi, f. 101.

⁴ Needed for high ruffs fashionable from 1570's. Blue pother starch was more expensive than white.

⁵ Francis Albaney: P.R.O., *List of Sheriffs* (Lists and Indexes, no. 9), p. 119.

19 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 8 May 1595, v. f.84.

My good husband, I beseech you let not the disobedience of one be the overthrow of your other children and my good in whose health and life consists my joy and their comfort. And therefore in the bitterness of my griefs I desire you to have care of yourself as the head and wellspring of my good, not doubting but God will deal mercifully with us both in giving us patience to bear this His heavy cross, confessing my fault in loving him¹ too well above the rest, for which I fear I have offended almighty God. I have examined him what speeches Sir James had with him in Paul's² and the rest all which you shall receive under his own handwriting, with a full resolution never to come near or meddle with them or any that shall come from them, which I have good hope he will perform, and is very sorrowful for his unadvised disobediences, beseeching you humbly to pardon his undutifulness in this his childish doing; which they persuaded him was with your consent as he will verify to their shame. I hope he utterly denies that ever Mr Clarke³ used any speeches or persuadings unto him, but that which he set his hand to was a letter of ordinary commendations to John Marvin (Marven) of divers things which he bought for him at that time, which the boy upon his oath sweareth it to be nothing else but a[n] answer of John Marvin's (Marvens) letter for things which Mr Clarke bought for Marvin. Neither did Mr Clarke ever speak unto him of her,⁴ nor he ever see her since the first night that he saw her. For the women which he saw at Mr Croft's (Croftes), it was Mistress Borne and her daughter, and two more that he ken not their names as he avoweth to me upon his soul to be true.

For the keeping of it secret here, doubt you not of it, for here is no mistrust [i.e. suspicion] of this matter, but all my heaviness is imputed to the Lord Stafford's (Stafardes) suit and the overthrow of my father's will, which I have given out. And for my cousin Higgins (Higens) I am sure he is so honest and his love to us both such that he will not for a thousand pounds speak anything of it. And for that time I was forced by grief to confess, or else I think my heart would have broken with sorr[ow] for here was nor is none that shall know my mind. But with weeping tears I desire you not to [f.84b] grieve, but to remedy it if you can. For he is heartily sorry, and hath vowed to me to be ruled by us hereafter. For he was assured by the Lady Audley (Addy) and John Marvin (Marven) that he should have your good will, and all he doubted was to have my consent, which is as far from them as yours, protesting to you that he shall never have my consent or liking that ways. And so I have told him what your determination is if he will not be ruled and constant in that which he hath promised to me. Otherwise let him never take you⁵ for his father nor me for his mother if he consent to them.

But still I hope for the best, for he hath vowed never whiles he lives to offend you in this sort, and therefore I hope you will the sooner forgive him whose childish deed hath [thoroughly] brought him to a hearty repentance of his former fault, which I beseech you to accept of his humble desire. He thinketh that they will send unto him shortly some letter from her, for Sir

James told him so when he spake with him in Paul's. If I shall receive them let me know your mind, or what course I shall take if there come any from them; for the boy sweareth I shall know if any message be brought to him. But assure yourself I will watch him myself, for I fear if any be sent it will be to Patrick (Partrac), John Marvin's (Marvens) boy the cook which is here. And for the cornet boy, he shall be seen to well enough.

I would all things were ended to your content and yourself here with me where you were never so welcome as now you should be unto me, a most discontented creature till I hear from you or see you, which I heartily pray you, may be as soon as possible you may tarry as little as you will. And so commending me to your good self and my good cousin Halliwell (Halywell), praying God to send you health and to bless all your proceedings, I take my leave, from Caus Castle the 8th of May.

Your loving wife for ever

Joan Thynne

¹ Her son Thomas.

² St. Paul's, London, was a common meeting place: Thomas apparently had met Sir James Marvin there.

³ Audley kinsman.

⁴ Maria.

⁵ *nor me* follows.

20 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 30 May 1595, v. f. 73.

Good Mr Thynne I have received your kind letter by Cendret,¹ for which I think myself much beholden unto you for it and the knives and for my petticoat, hose, and pomegranates,² and the farthingale, all which I received the last week, with a letter from my cousin Halliwell (Halywell), which was opened afore it came to my hand, and so I pray you tell him.

My love to yourself is such not to be broken by knives or anything else whiles I live, yet much to be increased by your unfeigned performances which I have good hope of. And I trust your troubles will turn all for the best and to both our comforts, although the strain be great for the present, yet I hope our meeting shall be joyful to us both. And therefore my good husband I beseech you not to care for anything to hurt yourself, but to make much of yourself for my good and your children's comfort.

I have dealt with my son touching the contents of your former letter, who hath of his own mind written to you what he will do and bide by, upon his oath to me which I assure myself he will now perform³ unfeignedly to us both. And so I pray you to accept of his true repentances which I hope you will receive him into your favour again, and to have that fatherly care which heretofore you have had of him, although he hath justly deserved your displeasure. Yet consider of him by yourself when time was.⁴ And prevent danger to him and his brother hereafter in allowing one to teach him and his brother, which will be but one charge to you, and better for them both to learn together. For now this doth but lose his time and all long of⁵ yourself, [f. 73b] which if I might remedy as you may, it should not be as it is. For although he will never be

good[scholar], yet if there were one that could teach him with discretion and persuasion, I think he would learn more now after this trouble than heretofore he hath done. Which my cousin Higgins (Hegens) is of my mind, and would wish you to provide one from Oxford for them both. For I think it not good for him to go from you or me awhile, till this matter be passed. All which I leave to your consideration, being very glad to hear that cause⁶ is so near an end as I hope for our quiet and good, for which care and charge I do not think myself a little beholden unto you and my good cousin Halliwell (Halywell), to whom I pray you commend me most heartily, your good self not forgotten and my Lady Hayward (Hawarde) with my sisters and brother Warren. And so, praying God to send you well to come hither, I take my leave, from Caus Castle the 30th of May.

Your loving wife for ever
Joan Thynne

Doll remembereth her duty unto you and they are all well. Patrick (Pattract) was gone to his master⁷ as good hap was, afore I received your letter.

¹ Probably a servant, name uncertain.

² A popular ornamental shape for fastenings and decorative work.

³ Followed by *if he may be kept from them* struck through.

⁴ Referring to Thynne's friendship with Lucy Marvin in 1574, curtailed by Thynne's father, see Introduction.

⁵ Probably means 'on account of'.

⁶ Probably the Caus litigation.

⁷ John Marvin, see 19.

21 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Longleat), 3 October 1598, v. f.88.

Good Mr Thynne, here is great want of a brewing furnace, therefore I would desire you to take some order that there may be one provided, with all the speed that may be for that they cannot longer brew with this but to your great loss. He must contain thirty gallons at the least. [Marginal note]: Item, furnace to brew with with all.

For the cause touching the Lord Stafford, I have with the aid of my cousin Halliwell dealt with Mr Reynolds the undersheriff as effectually as we may, who seemeth to make show of unfeigned kindness toward you. Yet upon Sunday morning my cousin Williams sent me word that the high sheriff,¹ for some spleen towards you, would not, for the persuasion of any friend, delay the return of the writ, but of himself without the advice of his undersheriff set down the names of a jury which you shall receive hereinclosed. Yet I, not satisfied herewith, sent the same day to the undersheriff to know what had passed. Who sent me word that the high sheriff had set down the names but not returned them till his coming who absented himself of purpose. And at his coming to him finding him humourous² and not to be persuaded to delay it or to alter any of the names by him set down, wished him advisedly to deal therein. And told him that being a matter of such importance, it were good to take the advice of Mr Justice who would be the next day at Denbigh. And so by reason of many causes to him alleged, caused him to yield thereunto, and

the next day being the second present, the writ with the names should be with the Justice to have his advice for the return thereof. By which means, as he sayeth, it is utterly dashed for that there is not an attachment made, 15 days before. I have written yesterday to my cousin Halliwell to the same effect.

Good Mr Thynne let me entreat you so soon as may be to send so much of the like cloth as the children last had as will make them three gowns and John Thynne³ a hose and jerkin but of some other pretty colour. (f.88b.) I would have it the sooner because otherwise I shall hardly have it made before Christmas.

I stand in very great want of a furniture to ride with. Wherefore if it shall please you to give my Cousin Halliwell advice for one I shall think myself much beholden unto you, and you shall have my company with you a-hunting, for I have neither saddle nor pillion cloth.

I pray you to buy a bottle of horehound such as you were used to have, for that I think it will not be amiss for yourself and the children this winter. And even so with my heartiest commendations to yourself I end. From Caus Castle this third of October 1598.

Your everloving wife
Joan Thynne

[p. s.] I pray you send me an answer of my letter sent by Pinnock. Let me have your answer for nothing shall displease me, and return the boy with speed.

¹ Charles Fox: P.R.O., *List of Sheriffs*, p. 119; *Vis. Shropshire 1623*, i, p. 193.

² A choleric humour.

³ Their son.

22 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Longleat), 17 September 1600, v. f.95.

Good Mr Thynne, I was in good hope to have heard from you, but you have in some sort deceived my expectations and therefore hereafter I will not look for it, but howsoever it is I will wish you as much good as yourself can either desire or deserve. My sister hath written unto you as she sends me word. I pray you let me know to what effect it was, for I hear no answer of that which you and I did write unto her. I am very much destitute of money and corn for to sow and if you send in time it shall be done, otherwise it is like to lay unsown for me, neither can I tarry long here if you send not speedily. I sent for John Whitbroke (Whatbroke)¹ for that I could not finish my accounts, and because you shall know that he is here I thought good to acquaint you with it rather than any other should. For if I could have ended them in such sort as I would, he should not have troubled your house, but hereafter I pray you get wiser and perfecter than Basset (Bassett) and myself is, for otherwise I am not able to keep your reckonings. And even so with my kind salutes unto your good self I end in haste from Caus Castle the 17th of September.

Your everloving wife
Joan Thynne

¹ ? John Whitbroke of London, 2nd son of Hugh Whitbroke of Bridgnorth. Joan's paternal grandmother was a Whitbroke, S.P.L., MS. 4077.

23 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 30 September 1600, *v. ff. 97-8*.

Good Mr Thynne I am glad to hear of your good health desiring the continuance of the same to my only comfort. For my cousin Higgins (Higgins), I am sorry that he hath used himself so ill and unkindly towards you which is contrary to his speeches he had with me. I am heartily sorry you had such a hard and long journey, and to no purpose in respect Mr Snage¹ failed of his repair thither, but yet I hear it was not altogether in vain of which I am very glad to hear that there is love and friendship between your brother Francis and you.

I have received the wheat which is very little and not so much as we shall need at this time, not by forty bushels, for this will not serve one of your fields, and for the sacks they shall be presently returned to you again. They demand much more than you write that I should give them for the carriage of the millstone, but he shall have no more than you have set down. I have received a hundred and four score pounds five shillings and four pence, there is a great part of it owing, of the rest I will make what spare I can. I know your travel² to be both great and troublesome, for the which I am heartily sorry wishing that it lay in me any way to ease it.

For sending of beefs thither they must be fat and very forward in fat before they come hither, for here is very little grass to feed any here, by reason of the great wet which hath been here very lately, for all the Lord's meadow is covered with water so that there can be no feeding of any beast till there be frost to dry it up, and the rest of the grounds are not much for feeding, considering how many are here already. And therefore I pray you send as many fat ones as you can which must not be less than thirteen or fourteen, and for so many here will be feeding and fodder, so that you bring not many horses with you, which I wish were sooner than it will be for many causes.

Your hay this year was not so much as it was last year, not by twelve loads, and yet [f.97b] you bought great store of hay for your cattle and horses, and I think it will be very much more dearer and scarce in the end of the year. I have received the twelve quarters of malt from Gloucestershire and there must³ be provided for after the rate of the note here enclosed: I have sent unto my cousin Williams (Willams) for the certificate and as soon as he has sent it unto me I will send it unto you to London.

Richardson (Richardson) hath mended the window already so much as he can but yet it raineth in for all that he hath mended it, and therefore I have sent for a plumber to mend the leads which will be very chargeable I fear. Symes hath been told for the looking unto of the game, but I think this wet doth rot many of them for those that he brings into the house are very much [cured] already. Mr Eston hath not yet kept your courts but now they shall be very shortly. Davis hath been told what your pleasure is, and he is contented to serve you at a rate for fowl and not to come here. Stretton men came not as yet, but I will send unto them.

William Francis maketh great moan and is in great need; I would you would have given him something, but he shall be discharged presently. And for John

Whitbroke I am sorry that you should take it so unkindly for my sending for him. It was your pleasure that he should make up my books which business did concern you as well as myself, and for his coming into the house I was not the first that brought him in, and as I think it is not unknown to yourself although you would not take notice of it, but I do think that they that brought him in did it for my sake. And therefore I am more beholden unto them. And for his offence although it were very great to you, yet considering [f.98] his submission I think it pardonable and I doubt not but his carriage hereafter will be both towards you and yours as shall be fitting. Wherefore good Mr Thynne let me entreat you not to conceive otherwise of me than by leave I will deserve. For had I not had him to perfect my books I had been able to give you but a very slender account. And what account you will have hereafter I know not except you provide one that is wiser than either myself or Basset for to write, for by Christ I have lost by his simplicity more than is for my ease, and yet I think him an honest man.

And for your pleasing of me I neither have nor do mislike, and therefore sweet Mr Thynne, wrong me not so much as to condemn me without just cause of offence, for if I could as well have contented you, I should have thought myself a happy woman. But seeing that I never have nor shall content you, I am and will be contented to do my best endeavours if it please you to esteem of them, praying God you may never do worse than I have wished you, which I protest before God was never worse than to my own soul. Beseeching the Almighty to send you once to hold a better conceit of her who ever has and will pray for your well doing and prosperous estate. And even so, with my most kind and loving salutes unto your good self, I end, from Caus Castle the last of September.

Your everloving wife
Joan Thynne

¹ ? George Snygge of Bristol, bencher of the Middle Temple, knighted 1604, Baron of Exchequer 1605, M.P. Cricklade 1588–9, Bristol 1597–8, 1601, 1604–5. Information kindly supplied by Dr. Wilfred Prest.

² ? travail.

³ MS. *moste*.

24 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 15 October 1600, v. f.99.

Good Mr Thynne I heartily pray you, if that you have not already sent the malt and hops which are to come to Caus, that you would with so much expedition as most conveniently you may, give order for the present sending away of the same, for that I have here great want thereof, for that I am constrained to buy all, and malt is here at an excessive rate. And for your mill I have feared to leave the workmanship thereof until your coming for that Richardson the mason would not undertake the effecting of the stone work thereof under twelve pounds, wherefore I discharged him, and sithence his departure I cannot hear of any good workmen here in this country for the doing of the same.

Likewise Mr Edward Lloyd (Lloyde) hath sent very earnestly unto me for the money acknowledging his extreme want thereof. Wherefore I desire you to send me word before the next Assizes at the Poole¹ what your determination is touching the same, if possible you can. Also I desire you to let some of your own fat beefs for provision be sent hither so soon as you may, for fat ware here is very dear, and likely to be dearer. I pray you remember the search for the green-wax² for Caus and Stretton, and also to make search at Westminster in the Rolls as touching the deed, and also to remember the money d[elivered]d to Allcoxe for Suker's costs, and that you would speak unto Bradley (Bradlie) for enrolling of the deed. And even so with my kind salutes wishing you good health, I end. Caus Castle this 15th of October, 1600

Your everloving wife
Joan Thynne

¹ Welshpool, Montgomeryshire.

² Estreats of fines, issues and amercements in the Exchequer court concerning the two manors.

25 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 15 November 1600, *v. f.101*.

Good Mr Thynne, since the writing of my letter unto you I have called to remembrance that the barrel of salad oil last bought is all spent. Wherefore I pray you may it please you to, in respect you are there, to make choice yourself to buy a jar of oil of like quantity as the last which was bought. Also if it so please you, to buy a keg of sturgeon which will be very serviceable for your table and will be kept until you please to have the same spent, both which are very necessary, if it please you to afford the charges. And so, still praying for your prosperous health and wished success in all your actions, with my kind salutes I end. Caus Castle this 15th of November 1600

Your very loving wife
Joan Thynne

[*p.s.*] I heartily thank you for the wires¹ you sent me and do request you to speak to Mistress Lingen (Lyngen) to make for each of your children two hair wires and two robes.

[*p.s. added in another hand*]

Good brother, I would² request you to send down my great trunk, and then I would seek out that writing and send it to you. I pray set a double padlock on it. Also I desire you to send me down some stuff to make Nan a gown, for I have no money to buy her anything, and if you please a wire and a robe of³ for your daughters. It must be a hue a little lighter than Doll's.

Yours
Charles Thynne

[*p.s.*] You must forgive me for troubling you so much. I will remember it, I assure you.

¹ For the fashion of raising hair over wired support, or the wired arch over the head, or support for the high stand-up collar.

² Followed by *fain* struck through.

³ Word omitted.

26 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Westminster), 17 November 1600, v. f.102.

Good Mr Thynne I commend me unto your good self. I have sent this bearer Geoffrey Raben who is willing to come unto you, and will do you any service he may so he tells me. I pray you use him well and I hope he will break the back of Lingen (Lingam).¹ I pray you see the subsidy money paid. If Mr Stafford come unto you I pray you use him friendly and I hope it shall be for our good hereafter. And even so with my kind salutes unto your good self I hoping shortly to see you here I end. From Caus Castle the 17th of November.

Your ever loving wife
Joan Thynne

[p.s.] I have given this bearer thirteen shillings four pence.

¹ Probably a Stafford supporter. Various Lingen are mentioned, possibly of the Lingen family who held Whitton manor, *V.C.H. Shropshire*. viii. 313, or the Wallop Freeholder John Lingen of the Hurst, *ibid.*, 297. *Vis. Shropshire 1623*, ii. p. 327-8, Lingen of Whitton, Caus, and Hurst.

27 John Thynne to Joan Thynne (Caus Castle), 13 February 1601,¹ v. f.107.

Good Pug, I have received your kind and loving letter and do thereby perceive that I am ordered to pay five pounds charges on Hussey's (Hussyes)² suit, the copy of the order I desire to see. I perceive also that my son is not with you. He departed hence the day before my coming, I thought he had been come to you.

On Sunday last was such a hurly-burly in London and at the Court as I never saw. The Earl of Essex, accompanied with sixty gentlemen of account went into London, having before retained the Lord Keeper, the Earl of Worcester, the Lord Chief Justice and Mr Comptroller, being sent unto him by the Queen; and made the citizens to assist him of which he assured himself ill unto them that he should have been murdered by the Lord Cobham and Sir Walter Raleigh (Rawley) and Mr Secretary Cecil (Cissell) if he had gone to the Lord Treasurer's as he was sent for on the Saturday before. But he went to the Sheriff's Smith (Smithe)³ and there drank; and presently the Court was guarded, all men commanded to horse, with sound horses and I was commanded to attend Her Majesty's person at the lobby door where I waited till three of the clock the next night.

But the Earl finding his hope frustrate, came to go through Ludgate where Sir Christopher Blount (Blunte) was sore hurt and one of Sir John Tracy's (Tracyes) brothers slain, and then he returned and took boat at Queenhithe, [and] landed at Essex House where he with the Earls of Southampton and Rutland with the Lord Sandys the Lord Cromwell and the Lord Mounteagle (Mountegle) and divers knights as Sir Charles Danvers and that which you will be sorry for, Sir Robert Vernon (Vernone), to the number of eighty were taken and surprised, and the earls and barons are committed to the Tower,

and the knights unto divers prisons as Sir Robert Vernon to the Gatehouse. All the earls are sent for up to try these earls and it is thought that much expedition shall be used in the trial and execution in secret. I might say it is thought there are acquainted with the conspiracy fifteen hundred [word struck through].

For my admitting of my cousin Higgins (Higgens) to sojourn with me you know I never loved to keep sojourners neither will I now begin to sell my meat and drink, but if you like to let my cousin Higgins (Higgens) and his wife continue with you this Lent I shall be therewith content as of my free gift, besides you know that I may remove you and myself to London or Wilts; time permits me to write no more and therefore I will end letters. Samuel Bowdler¹ came, by whom I will at large write to you and then send my cousin Higgins (Higgens) further word from Doctor Wright (Write). And so good⁵ I have sent you by this bearer three marks and do so wish you as my own heart. From my house in Cannon Row the 13th February 1600.

Your ever loving husband
John Thynne (Thynn)

¹ See A.D. Wall, 'An Account of the Essex Revolt, February 1601', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, liv, 1981, pp. 131-3.

² Hussey family held property in Little Deverell, near Longleat: Hoare, *Mod. Wilts*, i, Heytesbury, p. 40. Or it may be the Husseys who leased manor of Nether Gother to Reynold Williams, *V. C. H. Shropshire*, viii, p. 202; *Vis. Shropshire 1623*, i, pp. 265-7.

³ *D. N. B.* s.v. Smith or Smythe, Sir Thomas (1558?-1625).

⁴ See 73.

⁵ *Pug* omitted, his pet name for his wife. cf. *O. E. D.*, term of endearment, 1611.

28 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 6 May 1601, v. f. 103.

I am sorry to hear that you are crazy [i.e. unwell];¹ I hope the worst is past. For the money which you sent by Newbury (Noubery) for Carlet² I have paid it yett unto him and have the bill of your hand from him back again, which I will deliver you at your coming which you say will be at Whitsuntide, although I can hardly believe it will be so. But fools and children may be made to believe anything.

Your commission for John Lingen (Lingam) was set on the last of April wherein there was a fault that you did not appoint better commissioners, for one came not at all and Mr Goff could do no more than he might, for the other two did overrule him. So that if it be not well you must lay the blame where it is, for they on Lingen's (Lingams) side checked and taunted your witnesses that they would scarce give them leave to speak. It were good your causes were better seen unto hereafter, for fear of the worst.

If Mistress Williams (William) have any occasion to use your friendship I pray you do her all the favour and kindness you may for I [f. 103b] am much beholden unto her, and therefore good Mr Thynne show her all the friendship you can, and speak unto my brother Townshend (Tounsand) to do the like for her, as I hope he will and that it may be requested from me unto him in her behalf.

It were not amiss if you did serve Tap³ with process for your common, for else you shall have but little by his good will. For he doth put in so many sheep and other cattle that you shall have no common there as I hear they say unto others, but I hope you will not let it pass so carelessly. The stable shall not be meddled with till your coming which I pray God may be shortly. And even so continually longing to hear from you I end with my best love to your good self, desiring the Almighty to send you a happy ending of all your suits and to send us a merry meeting. From Caus Castle the 6th of May.

Your everloving wife
Joan Thynne

[*p.s.*] commend me I pray you to my good sister and brother Knyvett (Kneveit) and to my niece Hawkins (Hawken).

[*p.s. on front*]⁴ I pray will you buy some tincture of saffron for Doll. You shall have it at one Keymis' at the Minories.⁵

¹ Unwell; J. Birch *Court and Times of James I*, 1848, i, p. 69.

² Scarlet?. There were Scarlets in Wilts.

³ Probably Alexander Topp, Thomas Lingen's son-in-law, *V.C.H. Shropshire*, viii, p. 313; *V.C.H. Wilts.*, xi, p. 214; *D.N.B.*, s.v. Hugh Broughton.

⁴ Note added by John Thynne: that lxx [?] overhurd] with my Comm[ission] and of Caus.

⁵ Street in London, near the Tower.

29 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 18 June 1601, v. f.108.

Good Mr Thynne if you were but half so willing to come as I am desirous to see you your stay should not be long after the term which now I hope will end very shortly. Doll is much better than she was, but not yet well nor I fear will not be yet unless you get some better help than is here to be had. I fear the worst but I hope the best. At your coming you shall know more. In the meantime I pray God send you good success in all your suits. The sheriff of Montgomeryshire¹ hath the process delivered unto him for the sending up of Oliver Lloyd (Lloide), rather the sheriff had the process on Monday last being the 15th of June. The cambric thread, silver and spangles with the silver case which you sent for your daughters gowns I have received for which I thank you. Mr Heneage (Hennege) was here with me to know your pleasure and whether I had heard anything from you, but seeing I did not he will stay your pleasure till your coming home. George Fichet (Fichet) desires you to buy some lute strings and copper some wires for the virginals, and even so in haste with my best love to your good self I end from Caus Castle the 18th June

Your ever loving wife
Joan Thynne

[*p.s.*] Forget not some white starch I pray you. It is reported here my brother Townshend (Tounsand) shall be knighted; if it be true I can be but sorry that your standing and credit at Court can not procure you as much grace as he were [in]. Mr Thynne as you are I would not have been without it if I had given well for it. If all your courtly friends can not procure you that title I think they

will do very little for you; if men can not procure it, yet methinks some of your great Ladies might do so much for you.

¹ Charles Lloyd.

30 John Thynne to Joan Thynne (Caus Castle), 26 July [1601], v. f. 110.

My good Pug I must confess that I have been long absent and much longer than my desire: I had well hoped to have been with you before the assizes, but by means of my Lord Stafford's [Staffordes] cause for which I was commanded to attend, and for one cause I have talked with the Lord Treasurer and Sir John Fortescue and Mr Attorney General: but chiefly and especially with my proud undutiful son whom after all these my troubles will be now a counterfoil and revolt, and hath to me most undutifully demeaned himself to my no small grief, and for which cause I will also especially stay to see the same either settled or no longer dissembled,¹ and you and myself no more abused, for to my face he used me undutifully, and is such cause of contempt of me as I neither can nor will endure, but will put him to the point either of having of her or utterly leaving of her, to the end I may no more spend in that suit my time and charges in vain.

If Mr [illegible] offer to proceed, let Samuel Bowdler offer to have in order the release. And let not my cousin Halliwell care for the matter of release for therein I have asked advice and let it rest as it doth till my coming which shall be very shortly and as I hope within ten or sixteen long days. Your son hath said and doeth that he will not come down into Shropshire and that he misliketh there, with which your lady sister² is offended, God give her peace.

I will say nor write more till I come to you myself which shall be I trust speedily for now London is stinking and chargeable. Also, parsonage of Imber I have purchased, and Cannon Row. I have sent you a keg of sturgeon and vinegar and Rhenish wine, and also other things not by me sent for you, in my trunk I will bring with me. And ever live to love thee more and more, I protest I now only desire to live and be with thee. And so good Pug farewell and God bless you and all my children and send me peace, with all the world. From Cannon Row the 26th July 1610³

Your ever loving husband during life

John Thynne

[p.s.] Let my cousin Halliwell (Hallywell) desire respite for to answer Mr Merchant's (Merchante)⁴ letters to me if she can, otherwise I have sent down their cause reformed and by Counsel overlooked, which send to the assizes speedily for delivery to George Halliwell (Hallywell) and let him [ask] Mr Sergeant Williams'⁵ advice therein for me.

¹ Refers to the Court of Arches suit over the secret marriage of Thomas and Maria, see Introduction.

² Elizabeth, married since 27 July 1597 to Thomas Knyvet, with whom Thomas lived in London at times. Susan died before 1594, see 7, n. 2. *Vis Shropshire 1623*, i, p. 465.

³ *Recte* 1601.

⁴ The son-in-law of Thynne tenant, Edward Cogswell, T.P. Box XIV, f. 152; See 63.

⁵ David Williams, sergeant at law, *D.N.B.* As identity of judges on Western Circuit in 1601 unknown, possibly Williams was one. J.S. Cockburn *A History of English Assizes 1558-1714* Cambridge, 1972.

31 Maria Thynne to Joan Thynne, 15 September 1601,¹ *viii. f.12.*

If I did know that my thoughts had ever entertained any unreverent conceit of you (my good mother), I should be much ashamed so impudently to importune your good opinion as I have done by many entreating lines, but having been ever emboldened with the knowledge of my unspotted innocence, I could not be so great an enemy to my own happiness, as to want your favour for want of desiring it. I must confess that if I had not diverse and sundry ways had great experience of God's powerful working, I should long since have been discouraged from presenting my suit, having often entreated yet could never obtain it, but knowing there is in God both a power and a will, I cannot but hope He will exercise that power to the turning of your heart towards me: so as one day you will say that I have undeservedly borne the punishment of your displeasure. I have lately written more at large to this effect wherefore I hold it needless to trouble you any farther at this present, only give me leave my dear mother to conclude with this assurance that if ever it be my great good fortune to gain your favour, there shall never want a will in me to deserve the continuance of it with my greatest affection, and best service, with this resolution and infinite well-wishings I rest now and ever

Your very loving and obedient daughter
Maria Thynne

Stalbridge this 15th of Sept. 1601

¹ This first recorded attempt of Maria to conciliate her mother-in-law bears the Audley seal, with a lock of dark red hair sealed under.

32 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, [late 1601], *v. f.105.*

Good Mr Thynne the continued desire that I have to hear from you will not suffer the fitness of so good a messenger as this bearer is to pass without these few lines, desiring you presently to send up your horses that I may return unto my children who daily expect my coming, as fit it were that I should be with them unless they were better able to help themselves than they be. And besides the year will be far spent and I am but a bad traveller, and to stay longer from my children were small comfort unto me; neither will I by your leave willingly, and especially because the castle is not settled for the safe keeping of it for any long time neither will I undertake the committing of it unto any but unto those that you shall appoint yourself, whatsoever shall or should happen hereafter. And therefore good Mr Thynne consider speedily what course you intend to take and I shall ever be ready to be commanded by you. Purslow (Pourslo) and Bassett (Basit) have written unto me that all provision is spent or very near, and besides they have borrowed money which must be paid upon my coming which I trust you will not stay long after the receipt of this, considering what a great household you have at the Castle and how there is neither money nor provision for them, nor none to take order for those things unless you or myself were there. And at my sudden coming I left

all things, but [barley] and malt they have none and corn they must buy to sow your grounds or else it will not be well, and now is the chief time, and more than time, to make provision for all the year, and for Christmas which now will come on apace. Desiring you once again to let me know your speedy answer and what you intend to do, for it is not a little that will [f. 105b] serve to provide and discharge all that is due, as they write, and I know it to be true. And so reserving it to your best consideration, I end, with my dearest love unto your good self, hoping that now you will perform that which is generally spoken either now or never, I bid you once again farewell with my hearty prayer unto God for your well doing and prosperous success. From St. James Park this present Saturday

Your ever loving wife
Joan Thynne

[p.s.] I neither heard nor saw your son since he went.

33 Maria Thynne to Joan Thynne, 24 February 1602, *viii. f. 14*.

My good mother, if you did but know at how high a rate I would estimate your favour, and how much I would endeavour to deserve the continuance thereof; the reverent conceit I hold of your virtuous disposition makes me rest assured that you would willingly bestow it; where it should be received with so grateful an acknowledgement of your goodness, and be requited with so large a measure of zealous affection. But it may be that you will say; what a[n] unequal satisfaction is here promised, justly may you take exceptions to it, for I confess that requital may never compare with desert, but dear mother, I beseech you impute the insufficiency thereof not to my will to have it so, but to my cross fortune which yields me no means to perform any matter of great merit towards you; I can say no more, but that I have a will to do you any service, and you have power freely to dispose thereof at your pleasure. Even so in haste I leave you to the protection of the Highest, with as many wishes for the increase of happiness, as yourself can desire

Your loving daughter at command
Maria Thynne

Compton Basset this
24th of February 1601

34 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 18 April 1602, *v. f. 112*.

Good Mr Thynne, let me be comforted in hearing from you and of your safe arrival where I now think you are, wishing all here with me were as well as they were at your going from me. But we must give God thanks it is no worse and I hope the extremity of danger is past for their life.¹ But how it will be for disfiguring of them I can not yet tell, but their faces are very full of sores, God of His goodness send them well. Doll takes it very heavily and mourns very

much by reason of the soreness and store of them, neither can I without mourning look upon her. If you can learn anything that is good for them I pray you send it down.

This day after dinner came Mr Charles Lloyd (Flode) from Mr Pendren's² to tell me that the Lord Stafford's (Staffordes) man hath been with him to have a writ drawn and to be sent to him for that he meant to take Mr Attorney's advice therein but neither by his letter nor man gave directions what writ he would have. Whereupon he returned his man to know his further pleasure and in the meantime as Mr Charles Lloyd (Flloyd) telleth me: Mr Pendren acquainted him with the cause, desiring him to signify so much to me in your absence. Since which time the Lord Stafford's (Staffordes) man is returned with further directions to have a writ of novel disseisin³ which is drawn and gone towards London to take further advise therein, and doth think that it will return shortly to be sealed and d[elivere]d to the sheriff.⁴ Mr Lloyd (Flloyd) came in kindness himself to signify so much unto me and saith that if there be any jury to be empanelled he will bring or send me the names of forty honest and sufficient gentlemen if please the sheriff to put any of them in, but would wish you to have a special care that [f. 112b] none that shall be of the jury were of them that indicted you. And further he saith for Oliver Lloyd (Flloyd) for that he hath dealt badly with you he would wish you to take the best course you can with him. And whereas there was a writ for his remove, he doth protest that he never saw it, but since examining the cause doth find that his man received such a writ and d[eliver]d it to his undersheriff, but never acquainted him therewith. He saith if you please to prosecute any matter against him he shall be content, for he hath him bound in a bond of a thousand pounds with sufficient sureties to save him harmless in and for all matters. And further he said that one that was on the last jury told him that if it had gone forward he would [have] passed with the Lord Stafford because he was one that indicted you: and therefore he said he would not have been taken with perjury because he had passed on the indictment before, which was a great oversight of your solicitor and yourself both. Let me entreat you to end the suit between Richard Lingen (Lingham) and Mr Beaumont (Bemond) his brother-in-law, for that he is contented that you shall have the hearing of the matter between them, praying you to do for Lingen (Linghame) what you can, and get for him as much as you may, desiring you to send for them both. Lingen (Linghame) will send for his brother if it please you to send for him and he will tell you the cause at large.

The certificate for the subsidy you shall receive of Mr Harry Corbet (Corbyt)⁵ with Mistress Corbet's (Corbytes) deed and so with [f. 113] my prayer unto God to send you health and long life, I end with my loving salutes, desiring the Almighty to send us both a merry meeting

From Caus Castle the 18th of April

Your ever loving wife
Joan Thynne

[p.s.] Mr Pendren (Penderen) had a letter from a great man in the behalf of

the Lord Stafford to friend him. It is thought it is the Lord Secretary's⁶ letter. Commend me I pray you to my sister Knyvet (Kneveit) and to my sister Broughton (Brotten)⁷ desiring you to friend her what you may. Starch and gunpowder I pray you forget not to send down.

¹ The children had smallpox.

² ? William Penryn, Sheriff of Montgomeryshire 1604.

³ Action at law for recovery of land by one recently dispossessed. See *O. E. D.* s.v. disseisin.

⁴ Francis Newton.

⁵ Either the Corbets of Leigh, or Henry Corbet of Newton, *V. C. H. Shropshire*, viii, 316. Corbets were the holders of Caus from 11th Century.

⁶ Robert Cecil.

⁷ No 'sister Broughton' apparent. Probably an unmarried relative of Sir John Thynne senior's second wife Dorothy Wroughton, given as Broughton in S.P.L. MS. 2792; see *Wilts. Vis. Ped.* p. 220. Otherwise perhaps a relative of Elizabeth Knyvet's husband, although Knyvet pedigrees do not readily show a likely one.

35 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 26 April 1602, v. *f. 114*.

[*This letter is torn all down the right side – gaps are indicated by square brackets – where a reasonable guess is made it is indicated*].

Good Mr Thynne if you did but know how [*torn*] I am to hear from you and how glad I should be to see you here I persuade myself you would not tarry so long as now I fear you will; which if it may be, sweet Mr Thynne let me entreat a speedy return into these parts. Our son John is this day taking his journey towards Oxford. God bless him and send him of His grace and give us comfort of him. I am much beholden unto his master who hath made this jour[ney] of purpose only to please him. I pray you be [tha]nkful and requite him for his pains: [*torn*] you will see the boy as you come down.

Your [two] daughters are reasonable well of the smallpox [*torn*] Doll is¹ now troubled with an ague [which is] very sore for the child, and no little grief [unto] me. God in mercy send her health. And even [so] with a heavy heart at this time I end with most loving salutations. From Caus Castle, 26th of April.

Your ever loving wife

Joan Thynne

[*p.s.*] I pray you bring John Thynne some reasonable suit from London.

¹ *fallne* struck through.

36 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 28 April 1602, v. *f. 116*.

Good Mr Thynne the best news that I can send you of from here is the recovery of your two daughters which I praise God is now reasonable well, and Doll's fits have left her which I am not a little glad of. But for my own I assure you it was not worse these many days. God send you your health and a speedy coming into these parts or else wheresoever you are I protest I will come unto you wheresoever it be.

The Lord Stafford makes great brags what he will do the next Assizes and

hath given out that he means to drive and to [im]pound your cattle. But I trust he shall come short of that he brags, for every night the bailiff drives them into one pasture, and if need be they shall be watched.

My corn is all done and so is all things else here, and therefore I pray you take some good course to settle this or else to stay here yourself, which I wish above all other joys. If it would please God once to put it into your heart to have a care of them who desires your good more than my own life. I hope you have received my other letters and the boxes.

Do what you may to have that sealed out of the Chancery for the dismissing of the suit between that wicked Lord Stafford and you. I pray you let the subsidy money be paid now by you whiles you are there now yourself. I pray you forget not the gunpowder nor the starch and even so desiring rather to see you here than to hear from you, I end in haste with my kind salutes unto your good self and to my dear sister Knyvet (Knevet) and my good brother with my sister Broughton (Broughton) whose good success I wish in her suit. From Caus Castle, the 28th of April

Your ever loving wife
Joan Thynne

[*p.s.*] I pray you buy Jack a suit of apparel of some reasonable stuff not of the best sort but one for Holy days, for I have done what I may for him praying God to bless him.

37 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 30 April 1602, *v. f. 118*.

Good Mr Thynne (Thynn) your letter this morning I received as a most welcome guest unto me who am very ill at this time. I beseech God send you yours to be much better. You write that I should send you word what writ the Lord Stafford had procured from Mr Pendren, which is as I hear, a writ of novel disseisin, but he had that from Pendren, but yet it is not come back from his counsel nor Mr Sheriff hears not of him. But I will send unto him and by the next you shall hear from me. I wrote unto you about this matter afore by Corbet (Corbyt), I hope you have received it, and sent up the note for Jack's [living] in a box, and three very fair and good cheeses which were given you at your being here, which on my faith were the very same, howsoever the carrier deceived you I protest they were such as I can not tell how to help you to the like. For the rest of your letter I will answer by the next messenger for this is in great haste and myself in no great ease, fearing my turn will be next to lie by it. For yesterday Bess Townshend (Tounsend) fell sick and so I think we shall do all. Your two daughters are past the worst, I praise God unto whom I will daily pray for your health and good success. And even so resting ever your loving wife, I end from Caus Castle the last of April

Joan Thynne

[*p.s.*] Commend me to my sister Knyvet (Knevet) and to my sister Broughton and tell her I pray for her good success.

[*John Thynne's note on front-(split envelope)-reads*]

the writings of William Fraunch I have not, for I delivered them unto you long sithence.

38 Lucy Audley to Joan Thynne (Caus Castle), 10 June 1602, *vii*, f.232.

Notwithstanding the doubt long since conceived how any letters of mine might find a grateful acceptation of yourself (many reasons inducing a mistrust) I have yet [forearmed] out of an assured hope, built as well upon mine own knowledge, as upon the general report of your virtue and courtesy, adventured the ensuing. Wherefore good Mrs Thynne let not me be wronged in these lines by a hard construction, for I protest that servile fear and base flattery my heart is not acquainted withal. If I desire your love or seek to embrace your friendship (as unfeignedly in all truth I do and wished it long since) believe it to proceed from such a mind, as willingly makes offer of the owner, for performance of the friendliest effects, that her kindness and ability may discharge. It is not a matter unlikely (though very unnaturally) that some, even near to me in blood, the better to establish their own credit with you, hath wronged me by misreporting. So have I heard, and so do I confidently believe, but mine own conscience who is my best witness, can not accuse me of giving breath to any thought, which might ever sound your least disgrace no not when mine own honour was touched in the highest degree. by a scandalous report of your husband's. Wherefore, since the offence I have committed against you concerning your son, rested more in manner than matter, and that all which I may justly be charged withal, I will hope between your good disposition and mine own good desert, the band being indissoluble that should tie our affections together, and withal the reason so unlike reason, that should divide when cause hath so nearly joined, you will the rather be pleased to accept of these lines, which are the true witnesses of a heart most willingly studying to become yours. Lastly since your son is mine, and so beloved as my dearest own, let me obtain this request, my daughter may be yours, but accordingly as to her merits, for did I not know that she would carry both a loving and dutiful regard to you as her husband's mother, it should be far from my will to engage my credit for her. So rest I both your eyes and my hands, remaining your assured friend

Lucy Audley

[*marginal note*] Stalbridge June 10th.

39 Maria Thynne to Joan Thynne, 13 June 1602, *viii*, f.16.

My good mother, having so good an advocate as your own son to plead for me, I think it needless at this present to trouble you with long petition for your favour, for if his presence may but prevail so far, as first to obtain a pardon for himself, I will not doubt but afterwards for his sake, it will please you to think well of me, who being his, am made as much yours in unfeigned love, as they

that are nearer in blood to you than myself. All that I desire is but to be blessed with your better conceit, so should I have just cause, not only to esteem of you as my dear mother, but also endeavour by all possible means to carry myself so towards you, as best becomes

Your most loving and obedient daughter
Maria Thynne

Compton Bassett this
13th of June, 1602

40 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Cannon Row), 21 June 1602, *v. f. 120*.

Good Mr Thynne although I wrote this day yet must I not let any fit messenger pass without a kind salute, being heartily glad to hear of your well doing. This day divers of the jury were here for the view of the castle, (as my cousin Adams (Admes)¹ can tell you, whose indifference² you need not fear if there be any truth in men) Mr Price (Pryse) of the Newtown and Mr Ravenstead (Ravanstade) behind the rest of purpose as it seems; who after all the rest were gone came into see me, and told me that I should assure myself of their indifference with favour, and many other good words from Mr Price (Prise) with assurance of his friends, which if it please you to go to trial, I think, and so do all your friends that you can never have a better jury. And therefore good Mr Thynne be careful and well advised not to pass this good opportunity. And so, reserving it to your good consideration, I end with sleepy eyes praying God to send you health and good success in all your suits. In haste with my hearty commendations to your good self, from Caus Castle, the 21st of June

Your ever loving wife
Joan Thynne

¹ A John Adams signed Thynne documents in 1604: T.P. Box XIV, f. 88.

² MS. *endeferncy* i.e. impartiality.

41 Maria Thynne to Joan Thynne, 27 July 1602, *viii. f. 18*.

Good mother, think not that it proceeds of any carelessness of your favour, or forgetfulness of the duty I now owe you, if henceforth I omit writing unto you, for many letters of mine can well testify, that most earnestly I have desired your favour, with promise to perform any kindness that might deserve it, and God who knows the heart, best knows that my desire in that respect is as great as ever. But so much am I discouraged to find that no entreaty of mine can prevail to the obtaining of it, that I am determined henceforth, to cease troubling you, believing that my letters do but urge the memory of one who is nothing pleasing unto you, but yet not despairing in God's goodness, I will betake me to my prayers to Him, with this hope, that He who hath wrought some as great miracles as this, will in time incline your heart to pity and

pardon your son, and me for his sake, until which time, and ever I beseech the Almighty to show you more mercy when you crave it. And so with my best wellwishings, and loving salutations, I end my last farewell, wishing you may long fare well

Your loving and obedient daughter
Maria Thynne

[*p.s.*] Since the writing hereof, there came a letter of yours to my view, sent from yourself to my cousin Clarke, which now the messenger's haste will not give me leave to answer.

Compton Bassett this 27th of July 1602

42 Joan Thynne to Lucy Audley, 8 August 1602, *vii. f.237*.

Madam think not much that I did not presently answer your letter for it is no small time that I have endured of discomfoting grief, my son was not long mine but wrongfully detained from me before he had either years or expedience to judge what was fit in so weighty a cause. I confess your daughter's birth far above my son's deserts or degree but since you were pleased not to scorn my son to be yours, methinks you should not have scorned to have acknowledged me to be his mother, in respecting me as was my due, for believe it Madam I held nothing more clearly mine than I did him I knew God had given me, and I hoped to my comfort, and if it prove otherwise I must lay the fault on your Ladyship, and take it for a heavy cross in this world. I blush not to acknowledge that I looked to have been sought unto, either at the first, or long since at least, therefore blame me not if I cannot at the first conquer my own patience which hath been too much urged, by losing him that once I loved more than myself. But Madam I know not whom it should be you mean of your nearest in blood that should wrong you to me by misreports, for my part it is long since I have had any speech or conference with any of your kindred, only Mr Ferdinand Clark excepted, which I cannot deny, but his nearness to your Ladyship hath made both Mr Thynne and myself hold the more suspicion of, and if it be he you mean I know he is able to answer for himself, and so he shall for me. But this I protest in my hearing he hath ever executed the office of a true friend and respectful kinsman towards you and yours in the highest degree, still carrying an honourable regard towards your honoured self. Your Ladyship saith you never gave breath to the thought that might sound my disgrace, good madam I hope you could not, I have only that to be joyful of, and I pray God make me thankful for it, that my greatest enemies could never touch my credit in disgraceful manner, nor I hope never shall. Now for Mr Thynne's calling of your honour in question, I cannot deny but I have heard it, but that myself was either author or demonstrator of any such reports I utterly deny. I am not so ready to wrong inferior persons, much less an honourable Lady of your place and reputation, and so conceive of me, for so you shall ever find me. For your daughter, I

cannot yet account of her, as you may of my son, for that I have not had the trial of the one, as you have had of the other, but if he be not respected of you, I cannot pity his wrong, since he hath hazarded for your love, and yours, the loss of theirs that he was born to honour perpetually. But this I confess, I have more reason to respect your honour, than your friendship towards me yet, but what may hereafter follow I know not, I have never been counted so uncivil, as to reject true friendship, being freely afforded, nor will I be so light of belief, that one letter without trial, shall have power wholly to oversway all my intentions, and this in haste fearing to rob your honour of your better employed time, I rest,

Your Ladyship's as trial shall approve
Joan Thynne

Caus Castle this 8th of August.

43 Maria Thynne to Joan Thynne, 11 December 1602, *viii. f.20*.

My good mother, I assure you it is not any desire I have to offend you with my importunities, which maketh me so often trouble you with the testaments of my grieved mind, but as long as I have any hope to better your conceit of me, give me leave I beseech you without offence, to crave your favour and good opinion, not only for myself, but also for Mr Thynne, who is now the better part of myself. Chiefly for him do I desire pardon, for though I must confess your favour would give a great increase to my happiness, yet because I have been the only occasion of his faultiness, I cannot but bestow all my entreaties in his behalf, vowing if it please God to grant any continuance to my life, it shall be wholly employed to give you just cause to say (what for the performance of my duty towards you, and the large measure of my love towards him) that you have a respective daughter, and he a loving wife; with this resolution, and the remembrance of my very kindest salutations to you my dear mother, I take my leave, leaving you to be protected by the Highest

Your very loving and obedient daughter
Maria Thynne

Compton Bassett this 11th of December, 1602

44 Joan Thynne to John Thynne, 5 March 1603, *v. ff.122-3*.

Good Mr Thynne, your kind letter by Newbury [Nowboryo] doth bind me eternally your debtor. Yet in the truest sincerity of a well deserving friend I dare boldly say myself to be second to none you have so infinitely and for so many kindnesses tied me to thankfulness. I have told George and John Halliwell (Halywell) what your pleasure is, but I fear the books are not so ready as I could wish, yet now he may have leisure for Jane is gone, the Monday after you went from Caus, and so shall Joan Nash shortly, and as many as are unnecessary.

You write to know the price of beefs here, which is very dear, and dearer they are like to be by report at Easter, and so are sheep. For I pay now after eight pound the [score] and three pounds for a cow which is but reasonable fat, and therefore if you please you may buy some for Easter against which time they will be exceeding dear here.

The prices of corn and malt you shall receive here-inclosed. I am now enforced to buy all my corn, and all other provisions which is and will be very chargeable unto you. But what spare may be made assure yourself I will do my best. But by that time all debts are discharged [f. 122b] I fear there will not be much left of the hundred and thirty-one pounds which I received. But what is possible to spare, I protest I will do my best in it.

But for the discharging of Basset (Basit), as yet I can not spare him, neither do I know who to put in his room. And for George Halliwell (Halywell), I will neither meddle, nor set him in any office unless I see him more carefuller than he is. And therefore I must desire you to let Basset (Baset) stay for a time, unless you have a better to set in his place. The foot boy is not well, but rather worse since his coming home and now he is at Morris's (Moriesis) again. The medicine for your eye is with the knife you shall receive by this bearer. I am heartily sorry that you should either grieve or be melancholy for any cause. I hope you will have more care of yourself for the good of me and your poor children, humbly desiring you above all things to have respect unto your health, and not to defer the time of taking physic, and let your greatest care be for the preservation of your health, in whose well-doing consists my only joy and comfort. And therefore sweet Mr Thynne, if you love or make account of me have a special regard of it.

The contents of your two letters shall be performed as near as I may, for my own part assuring you that I will make what spare I can but the bags do empty too fast I fear for your [f. 123] liking. I pray you take it not ill that I opened your letter. I protest the fear of the sudden to hear that there was a messenger come from Longleat, at that time of night after my first sleep, did so amaze me, and the haste that he made to have them sent after you, was the cause that I opened Standish's (Standishis) letter, fearing all had not been well there. But from henceforth, you shall not have any such cause of discontent, and therefore I crave pardon at this time. And for my love to you, it was, is, and ever shall be. And so, good Mr Thynne, rest assured.

I would desire you at your going to Mr Horner's [Hornors] to remember my kind salutes unto him and to that good lady his wife, and to speak unto her to entertain a gentlewoman if she do want one which I know is both serviceable and of good carriage, whose answer I pray you let me know so soon as you can. And so with my best and dearest love to your good self, I rest

ever your assured loving wife
Joan Thynne

Caus Castle, the 5th of March

45 Joan Thynne to John Thynne (Longleat), 17 April 1603, *xl. f.6.*

Good Mr Thynne (Thynn), let me entreat you to hear from you so speedily as you may, protesting that I do think the time exceeding long since I heard from you, hoping that now you will effect that which your friends have long desired, assuring myself if you be willing you may use as good means as Mr Fox and others do which are much your inferiors, and therefore if ever now or never. Yet I refer it to your best wisdom, desiring you in all love to send some provision unto Bath, to my good sister and especial friend Mistress Broughton, with whom I wish myself to be when she is with you or you with her. And so in haste with my daily prayers unto God for your good health, I rest with my dearest love to your good self. Caus Castle the 17th April

Your everloving wife
Joan Thynne

[*p.s.*] Your two daughters remember their duties unto you. I pray let my sister's horses be sent for to Longleat to be kept for her, for she would do much more for you, hoping you will invite her.

46 Maria Thynne to Joan Thynne, 14 May 1603, *viii. f.22.*

To you my dearly loved mother are these lines sent from her that hath vowed to make herself as worthy as her best service can make her, of so kind a mother as yourself: all my desire is that you should not wrong me so much as to hold the sincerity of my affection suspected, especially since there is not any politic respects to cause dissimulation, for I crave nothing but your good opinion, which I will be as thankful for, as they be, whose nearness in blood makes your own: but because the best proof comes by trial, try me as you please, and if you find my words and actions differ, let me be punished with the loss of my credit both with you and the world, which God best knows would be no small grief unto me. Now, for your letter, though I were unwilling to leave so great a comfort, so long laboured for, and so hardly obtained, yet knowing obedience to be the best sacrifice, I made a redelivery thereof to Mr Daunte, who I found was well pleased to see that yourself being a woman, did doubt of secrecy in your own sex, though I have troubled with a tedious discourse, yet should I not leave talking to you, if earnest occasions did not force an end, wherefore I must now with a multitude of well wishings for this time take my leave, leaving you to be protected by the Highest

Your very loving and obedient daughter
Maria Thynne

Fonthill this 14th of May 1603

47 Maria Thynne to Thomas Thynne, [c. 1604–06],¹ *viii. f.1.*

That I so often trouble you, assure yourself it is but the effects of a very much disquieted mind, for I cannot grieve a little to find that I, who have been

a willing companion and partaker in your hard fortunes, should now be made so great a stranger to your proceedings in your better estate. But I see my hopes to find it otherwise than it is were built upon a very weak foundation, when they were grounded but upon my conceit of your good opinion and love towards me. Well Mr Thynne (Thyne), believe I am both sorry and ashamed that any creature should see that you hold such a contempt of my poor wits, that being your wife, you should not think me of discretion to order (according to your appointment) your affairs in your absence, but if you be persuaded that it is most for your credit to leave me like an innocent fool here, I will the more contentedly bear the disgrace. Others (excepting your counsellors) can wonder (as they well may) that my advice and consent (being in right to be mistress there) should in no cause be taken, no not so much as in choosing of servants. But if this course best please, or that you will be better pleased to have my liking pleased in nothing, the truth is that the care is already taken if I never come there. And for my own part, I wish you should send someone hither to discharge the business here, that you better trust, etc. If you intend not to see me before your going to London, then I pray you spare your man Williams (Wylliams), that he may know how to dispatch some business I have in London. I pray take some present order for a bed to be here for the maids, for theirs is to be carried without fail this week, and so God send you well

Your loving wife, howsoever
Maria Thynne

¹ After John Thynne's death, 21 November 1604, as Thomas has apparently inherited Longleat, and probably some of the retainers too, if 'your man Williams' is Reynold Williams, see 16, 21, 23, 27n.

48 Maria Thynne to Thomas Thynne, [After August 1604],¹ *viii. f.2.*

Mine own sweet Thomken, I have no longer ago than the very last night written such a large volume in praise of thy kindness to me, thy dogs, thy hawks, the hare and the foxes, and also in commendation of thy great care of thy businesses in the country, that I think I need not amplify any more on that text, for I have crowned thee for an admirable good husband with poetical laurel, and admired the inexpressible singularity of thy love in the cogitations of *piamater*,² I can say no more but that in way of gratuity, the dogs shall without interruption expel their excremental corruption in the best room (which is thy bed) whensoever full feeding makes their bellies ache, and for my own part since you have in all your letters given me authority to care enough, I will promise to be inferior to none of my Deverill neighbours in playing the good housewife, though they strive till they stink. Now if for my better encouragement and in requital thou will at my earnest entreaty but for this time spare Digory (Diggrye), I shall be so much bound, that nothing but a strong purgation can loose me. For if you will believe me in sober sadness, my cousin Stantore³ hath upon speech with me, made it appear that he hath digested many uncivil and unbecoming words from three of your servants.

He doth not desire you to remit Digory's (Diggries) fault, but to dispense with his appearance for his sake this time, because it concerns him in his profit, and when you come into the country my cousin will come and thoroughly satisfy all matters in controversy between you. I will not entreat too earnestly because I know thou art choleric with me ever in these cases, but though thou doth many times call me fool for yielding to the enticing of fair words, yet if you mark it, I have never yet craved anything of such great importance as hath ever been prejudicial to your reputation or profit. If so (as it is too true it is so) name me any man that hath a wife of that rare temper. No, in good faith this age will not help you to an equal, I mean for a wife. Alas I sit at home and let thy dogs eat part with me, and wear clothes that have worn out their [ap]prenticeship a year and half sithence;⁴ when my sisters will be in London at their pleasure, I am talking of foxes and ruder beasts at home. Well, do but make haste home and make much of thy Mall when thou dost come home. I will not be melancholy,⁵ but with good courage spend my life and waste my spirits in any course to please thee, except fighting, and in this business satisfy my request as you think I deserve, and do not be angry with me for importuning you, but ask all the husbands in London, or ask the question in the Lower House, what requests they grant their wives, and then good husband think upon your fool at home as there is cause.

Thine

Maria Thynne

I will say nothing of any business, for I have this last night written you a whole sheet of paper and given you knowledge, according to your appointments, of all your affairs. If your leisure will not serve, good sweet, cause Exall⁶ to write in his own name but this and this is my mistress' pleasure and it shall serve the turn, for I know your trouble in matters of more weight there is great, and I like not his writing in your name for it is as though thou were angry. God in heaven send thee well and speedily home.

¹ After August 1604, as address says *sir*; Thomas knighted Whitehall, 20 August, Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 135. This letter is probably to him in London from Longleat. He was M.P. for Hindon in the 1601 and 1604 parliaments. *V.C.H. Wilts*, v, p. 125.

² MS *piamature*. Meaning 'tender mother'. *O.E.D.* Presumably she was pregnant, and not pleased about it, but expressing it in hyperbole, possibly to confuse the messenger. Burnett, *Longleat*, p. 47, misses the point.

³ Probably Thomas Stantor of Stockton: *V.C.H., Wilts.*, xi, pp. 215-6.

⁴ Burnett, *Longleat*, in his brief account, pp. 42, 47, has 'weave clothes' which is incorrect, as are other details.

⁵ MS *mallenhollye*, a pun, as she was called Mall.

⁶ A trusted servant; who was a Marvin retainer, will of James Marvin, proved Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 21 Nov. 1611.

49 Maria Thynne to Joan Thynne, [? 1605],¹ *viii. f. 10.*

Good Lady: out of my care to your health let me entreat you to temper your choler, especially considering you cannot comfort yourself with hope that Mr

Thynne will grieve much at it. For my part (respecting your alliance with him) I will not without leave tell you that if you gave any fee to a counsellor to indite your letter, it was bestowed to little purpose. For there should have been consideration that Mr Thynne looks in to waste and spoil on your jointure, as to a tenant for term of life, and so your scribe can prove no necessary consequence for you to write disgracefully or contemptuously in business which concerns you not.

Indeed, if you or your heirs have an expectation in reversion of Longleat house or garden, there were reason your speak should pass currant² without offence or exception. But the case being as it is, methinks you should not unkindly intermeddle, more than Mr Thynne doth with all your lands of inheritance.

I confess (without shame) it is true my garden is too ruinous, and yet to make you more merrier³ you shall be of my counsel, that my intent is, before it be better, to make it worse. For, finding that great expense can never alter it from being like a porridge pot, nor never by report was like other, I intend to plough it up and sow all variety of fruit at a fit season. I beseech you laugh, and so will I at your captiousness.

Now, whereas you write your ground put to basest uses, is better manured than my garden, surely if it were a grandmother of my own and equal to myself by birth, I should answer that odious comparison with telling you I believe so corpulent a Lady cannot but do much yourself towards the soiling of land, and I think that hath been, and will be all the good you intend to leave behind you at Corsley.⁴

You say Mr Thynne is stark blind in his own faults, but truly I take it there wanted spectacles on somebody's nose when they could not see a more becoming civil course (that is your phrase) to be practised amongst friends of equal worth. You talk too much of malice and revenge. Your will to show malice may be as great as please you, but your power to revenge is a bugbear that one that knows his own strength no better than Mr Thynne doth, will never be afraid of. How far your bounteous liberality hath extended towards him in former times I know not, but I have called my memory to a strict account, and cannot find any obligation of debts recorded there that hath not been substantially cancelled. For your well wishings (which are all the benefits I am accessory to) hath ever been requited with the like both in quantity and quality. So, all things considered, let the insufficiency of sense you speak of rest due on your own part, being a reproach allotted by you to the unthankful.

To conclude good Lady, having vowed to fulfil the Scripture in this point of running from father and mother for my husband, surely I will forsake all [*MS damaged*] if they afford me more love than they are willing he should partake of. And therefore Madam if your intent be to yield him no due respect, I pray know my desire is in that as in other worse fortunes, to be a partner with him in your displeasure. If but I do wish you should remember your own children's estimation and credit, for if Mr Thynne deserve but slender account, they must expect rate after rate he being the best flower in their garland.

And so He that made you, save you, and I will rest your daughter and assured friend if you please.

Maria Thynne

- ¹ Although placed before letters of 1601, this is after 1604 when Thomas and Maria moved into Longleat; probably about 1605 when Joan and Thomas conducted a bitter lawsuit over the estates and goods; both wrote to Lord Keeper Egerton about it, Joan complaining bitterly of Thomas's marriage without his parents' consent and without 'any portion of money or land'. T. P. box XXXVII.
- ² ? pun intended, probably one of the Speke family assisted Joan; Anne Speke m. John Horner, Joan's friend. Harbin, *M. P.s for Somerset*, Som. Arch. Soc., 1939, p. 145.
- ³ 'I will make struck through'.
- ⁴ The dower lands, in the possession of Dorothy Raleigh. Joan did not ever live there, after all. *V. C. H. Wilts.* viii, p. 14.

50 Thomas Hughes to Joan Thynne (Cloford),¹ 26 September 1605, *vii. f.332*.

My very good Lady. I received the draft of lease and certain questions together with your letter of the 20th of this September. The resolutions of your questions you shall find margined and subscribed in the same papers wherein you wrote your questions. And for the draft of the lease, it appeareth that the serjeant gave right instructions to his clerk for the penning thereof, but the clerk did not fully attain unto it, for the draft is somewhat perplexed, and not so pursuant to your title, and authority to make leases, as it ought to be. In respect whereof I have considerably drawn the form or pattern of a lease according to Serjeant Tanfield's advice, which may be a precedent for all your leases; whereunto I have added two covenants, the one for reparations, the other for waste. As to your case of woods and underwoods, assure yourself (madam) that if you except them in your leases, no tenant will buy of you: for that clearly cutteth off from the tenancy the benefit of housebote, haybote, and firebote² without the which your tenants can not be. For which cause I have omitted that exception out of your lease and have made a special covenant that they shall cut no woods nor underwoods but for necessary housebote, hedgebote and firebote to be spent upon their tenements only and not elsewhere; which sufficiently bindeth them from waste. And though they do fell timber trees and do employ the same for reparation of their tenements, yet is that no waste that may turn to your or their prejudice.

It seemeth by Mr Southworth (Sowthworth)³ who is of counsel with your tenants that they would have a covenant from your Ladyship to save them harmless from all former encumbrances done by yourself, and to suffer them quietly to enjoy their bargains against your Ladyship and all claiming under you. Which if you please you may safely do. Thus signifying to your Ladyship as heretofore I have done that you would, not only being good lady but also my landlady, I take leave with my wonted wish of your health and prosperity, praying my dutiful commendations and my wife's to be remembered to yourself and my good Lady Montgomery (Mountgumerie)⁴ and Mr Horner

(Honor) with all their counsels this 26 September 1605.

Your good Lady's to command
Thomas Hughes⁵

¹ 3 Miles from Mells, Horner's seat.

² Rights to take wood for these purposes customarily allowed tenants though not specified in the lease. Haybote refers to hedges.

³ Thomas Southworth, bencher of Gray's Inn (1614), lived Wells, Somerset, recorder there from about 1613, and M.P. Wells.

⁴ ? Susan wife of Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery.

⁵ Gray's Inn bencher, born in Cheshire, moved to Wells, recorder of Bath. Knighted 1619, died 1634. Information for this and note 3 kindly supplied by Dr. W. Prest.

51 Maria Thynne to Thomas Thynne (Cannon Row), [? 1607],¹ *viii. f. 4*.

My fair Thomken (Tomken), I have nothing to say but how doth thou, and that I hope to see thee well shortly, as thou lovest me be exceeding careful of coming in to any shops, for there is the greatest danger. I have since thy going learned an approved medicine for the plague if it be used in time. Take dragon water² a good draught, and mingle therewith so much treacle or mettridott³ in quantity as an ordinary walnut, and add to this so much redding⁴ pounded as a great hazel nut [*marginal note*]: such redding as is given pigs for the murrain.

Stir all this together and drink it, if you do but never so little suspect yourself. I know thou wilt laugh to hear me preach physick so long beforehand, but consider medicine comes too late when the disease is past cure, good sweet, be not without something to take in an instant. In good faith I assure you this hath been tried by many, if you could endure to eat in a morning but three or four leaves of rue put into some raisins of the sun,⁵ you would find it with God's help a good preservative against infection. Good Thomken (Tomken) remember we are bound in conscience to maintain life as long as is possible, and though God's power can work miracles, yet we cannot build upon it that because He can, He will, for then He would not say He made herb[s] for the use of man. I much fear Brownwints liberty may breed danger. I can say no more being in exceeding haste, but that I will be a careful officer in your absence, and even so God in Heaven preserve thy health as long as I live, and continue thy love to me, as I may have cause to love thee no less than I do, which is yet as my own soul

Thine

Maria Thynne

[*p. s.*] Here is not so much as half an [iota] of business to acquaint you withal.

¹ *History of 1607* perhaps, as there was severe plague in London that year, C. Creighton, *A History of Epidemics in Britain*, Cambridge, 1891, p. 494. Parliament was sitting. W. Notestein, *The House of Commons 1604-1610*, Yale, 1971.

² Plant dragonwort.

³ Contemporary medical textbooks mention mithridatum, e.g. Thomas Phayre, *The Regiment of Life, whereunto is added a Treatise of the Pestilence* . . . , 1596, section Q.3, where it is an alternative to treacle, as here; cf *ibid.*, J.3, 'dissolve and drink'. Or she may have meant melilot, a leguminous plant used for plasters, poultices etc.: *O.E.D.*; see also Thomas Newton, *Approved Medicines and Cordiall Receiptes with the Natures, Qualities, and Operations of Sundry Simples* 1580, sections 16, 60-61.

⁴ *O.E.D.* redding (or reddle) red ochre. cf. Thos Hardy *The Return of the Native* (Macmillan Papermac) p. 16, '... a reddleman . . . to supply farmers with redding for their sheep'.

⁵ Sun-dried grapes.

52 Maria Thynne to Thomas Thynne (Cannon Row), [n.d.],¹ viii. f.6.

My best beloved Thomken, and my best little Sirrah, know that I have not, nor will not forget how you made my modest blood flush up into my bashful cheek² at your first letter, thou threatened sound payment, and I sound repayment, so as when we meet, there will be pay, and repay, which will pass and repass, *allgiges vltes fregnan tolles*,³ thou knowest my mind, though thou dost not understand me. Well now laying on side my high colour,⁴ know in sober sadness that I am at Longleat, ready and unready to receive thee, and here will attend thy coming. Remember that your last day's journey will be the longer by five or six miles, and therefore determine accordingly. Your horses are taken up, and I will take thee up when thou comest home for staying so long from me. I know your chiefest business is now but with your Kempsford tenants, and for them the next term will best serve. I write to you this week by our neighbour Sir Geoffrey the clothier,⁵ then had you intelligence of all your affairs and my hope is that you will come down so soon that I will not trouble you with the knowledge of much business now, though I assure you there be more than many things to be determined of. Sudlow⁶ hath seen the estreats but knows not what to do till you come home, Hals keeps back the tenants rent towards reparations of the house at Monksham,⁷ but his own half year's rent Woodlands⁸ hath lately received, besides thirty pounds of me; money walks away apace here, for Woodlands hath had sixty pounds of me since you went. I hear no tiding of Cable (Cabble),⁹ but I warrant he will not be long hence for his money, if you were come down. Usher will not repay the two hundred and forty pounds till he have his own bill again, therefore keep it safe, or send it safe down, for there is all I have for to testify the delivery of it to him; all my comfort is that Cogswell¹⁰ sayeth he is an honest man. In good faith Thomken the uttermost farthing that will be scraped up together will but make up one hundred and fifty pounds towards paying of Cable (Cabble), and now I assure thee there is no one penny to be received that I know of till Christmas, and then but Raddock's (Radoks) twenty pound neither. This do I tell thee all the ill news in every letter some, that thy anger may be past before thou comest to me. I had almost forgotten to tell thee it is the mare which Williams (Wylliams) rode up which hath cast her foal; the horses in the park get in to the copse for which Carr scolds, I have caused the bailey to place them somewhere else till your pleasure be known; they dare not put them into Bush's (Bushes) ground for fear of stealing.

My Lady¹¹ hath written to me touching a pair of folks which her Ladyship thinketh very fit for our service, and in that respect hath made the first offer of them to us, when thou goest next to Clerkenwell, I pray thee view them and I will promise not to be jealous though one of them is a she, if they be as my Lady writes I would we had taken them in the room of some we have already, for then [f.6b] boys and grooms would be better looked to, for his part, and housewifery better for her part. Halliwell I hear is weary of his office, and then do I not know who to place in it, Mr Morgan is more than half spoiled with the dog boy and the other boys so as I desire nothing more than to have

one to cudgel them to their work, all my desire is thou shouldst see these cattle, and if you like not, leave. I hear Woodlands will stay but till the audience, the reason in good faith I know not, unless it be my receiving the rents. If that be it, I will offend his worship no more. Even so, being as melancholy as a red herring, and as mad as a pilchard and as proud as a piece of Aragon ling, I salute thy best beloved self with the return of thine own wish in thy last letter, and so once more fare ever well, my best and sweetest Thomken, and many thousand times more than these 1 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 00 for thy kind wanton letters

Thine and only all thine

Maria

- ¹ ? 1607 – The Audleys were at Clerkenwell before 1608, while by January 1610 Lord Audley wrote from the Strand: *C.S.P.D. 1604–10*, pp. 439, 583; *H.M.C. Salisbury (Cecil)*, x, p. 353; xvi, pp. 52, 384; xx, p. 112. But could be 1605, or 1609–10, since Longleat rent receipts bear Maria's signature in those years.
- ² cf. *Romeo & Juliet*, II, 5, 'Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks'.
- ³ Possibly a deliberately ambiguous distortion: *allgiges* could be either *adgreges* 'you will add together', or *colliges* 'you will collect', for *fregnan* she may have meant *frequam* as a contraction of frequentiam 'frequently', *tolles* 'you will rise up' – to make a vividly sexual comment, hidden from prying eyes by the Latin, in answer to Thomas's 'kind wanton letter' which does not appear to survive.
- ⁴ MS *choller*, three way pun on colour, collar, and cholera.
- ⁵ Geoffrey Hawkins of Bishopstrow, son of the rich clothier of the same name who died 1604, P.R.O. Prob 11/103; W.R.O. 132.4. *V.C.H. Wilts*, viii, pp. 10, 54. The *sir* she may have bestowed in jest.
- ⁶ George Sudlow, a Thynne retainer.
- ⁷ Manor, formerly part of Witham Friary, Somerset.
- ⁸ Probably Richard Woodland of Corsham. *Wilts. Vis. Ped.* p. 176. Richard Woodlands signed rent receipts at Longleat, 1603, 1604, 1605, T.P. Box XIV.
- ⁹ Richard Cable gent, who paid fine, T.P. Box XIV, f.92, and wrote to John Thynne, T.P., vii, 227; or it may be William Cable, tenant in Warminster c. 1609, T.P. book 68A, f.7, probably family of William Cable of Upton Scudamore who leased lands near Chapmanslade, *V.C.H. Wilts.* viii, p. 86.
- ¹⁰ Edward Cogswell of Westbury Leigh, important tenant, T.P. Book 72A, f.2, 152 (1610). See 30n, 63, 65.
- ¹¹ Lucy Audley.

53 Joan Thynne to Thomas Thynne (Longleat), 11 April 1607. *viii. f.26.*

Good son, the cause of my slackness in not writing to you since I received your last letter by Fisher, was one time sickness, another while a want of a convenient messenger and chiefly, a match motioned to be had between Mr Whitney's son and your sister Dorothy not brought to any head till now for that I could not write to you what I would, but now I have thought good hereby to advertise you thereof and that I have a good liking thereto the rather because it is to a gentleman of a very ancient and worshipful house, and an aliesman¹ to your Lady which to be solemnised and done might renew a mutual love in every side to the comfort of many and besides his estate so great and his proffers so reasonable and well, (with which particular of his land I have here enclosed sent you to take deliberate advisement of) I cannot but think her fortunes very happy, and the match very worthy; and may you think good now for her advancement therein, and the augmentation of

honourable friends' loves, to show your kindness so far to her, to grant her and myself your presence forthwith here, the better to forward this business and to favour it what you may with your love. Both your sister shall be bound to yield you her continual thankfulness, and myself to acknowledge your love to her. Your sisters both remember their loves unto you. And so hoping you will let me be assured of your coming hither to Caus very shortly whither to myself you shall be still most heartily welcome, with God's blessing and mine to you and yours, I rest

Your assured loving mother
Joan Thynne

Caus Castle this 11th of April 1607

[p.s.] Mr Whitney's great-grandfather married the daughter of the Lord Audley, from whence this worshipful gent[leman] is descended.² Advertising you further that I credibly understand, that all the lands whereof Mr Whitney is now seised (Clifford lordship only excepted) was Whitney's lands before the conquest of England; and that ever sithence it hath and doth continue in the name and blood of the Whitneys, but although himself be but an esquire, yet there were eighteen knights of his name before the Conquest which were lords and owners of the same lands which are now his.

¹ i.e. allied by kinship.

² The Whitney family held estates in the parish of Whitney in Herefordshire from the Conquest, and received the Castle and Lordship of Clifford from Henry IV in 1402. Soon after 1479 Sir Robert Whitney married Constance, daughter of James, Lord Audley. It is not clear if the match proposed was to a son of Eustace Whitney, sheriff of Radnorshire 1595, d. 1608, or of George or William Whitney, uncles of Eustace. William Whitney, esquire, was sheriff of Herefordshire 8 June 1587: P.R.O., *Lists & Indexes*, ix, p. 61. See Morgan G. Watkins, *Collections Towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford In Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Huntington*, Hereford, 1897, pp. 77–83.

54 John Davies to Maria Thynne (Longleat), 3 June 1607,¹ *viii. f. 84*.

My noble Lady, this bearer your agent hath been patient in expecting his despatch; but his delay grew not by my negligence (for divers time I omitted the King's business to solicit yours) but by the curiosity of that party which is in England, who sent over so many doubtful cautions as that the instruments must needs be new drawn and engrossed here. Besides our Chief Justice was known² of the Hastings in this matter. But now at last all is done; and as it is transmitted unto you. I do wish heartily I could come myself to interpret those new provisos with an added, not that I think they need any interpretation, but because I would fain have an errand into England. I hope to visit with an occasion within this month that shall transport me into that fortunate island, and then I shall not omit to offer my service to you and Sir Thomas. I heard lately from your worthy sister Blount,³ and can advertise you assuredly of her health and wellbeing. I was not a little sorry that I had no opportunity of doing Lady Audley some service when her Ladyship was in Ireland, and I am more sorry that her Ladyship is so distasted with this kingdom as I hear she is. If she had but seen this town (upon the credit of my poor judgement, I speak it) she

would have liked it better than London itself: for the loving conversation of much good company in as civil a fashion as any in Christendom. I beseech your Ladyship to recommend my humble service to her Ladyship. And I desire likewise to be remembered very lovingly unto Mervin Audley, for whom I will provide a goshawk if my friends fail me not, but the early departure of this bearer hath prevented me. Thus with my respective and affectionate salutations to Sir Thomas and your Ladyship, I leave you both with God, in haste this first day of the term. Dublin, 3 June 1607

Your Ladyship's to honour and serve you most willingly

John Davies (Davys)

¹ Sir John Davies, attorney in Ireland, later married Maria's sister Eleanor, 3 March 1609: *Chamberlain Letters*, ed. N. McClure, Philadelphia, 1939, i, p. 288. Maria's father Lord Audley served in Ireland. The business Davies undertook for Maria is not explained.

² MS none. Sir James Lev, Chief Justice of K. B., Ireland, was commissioner for the Great Seal at Dublin: *D.N.B.* He was a Wiltshire lawyer, and had been a friend and adviser to John Thynne: A. D. Wall, 'Faction in Local Politics 1580-1620' *W.A.M.*, 72/73 (1980), p. 124.

³ Maria's sister Anne, married to Edward Blount. Burke's *Dormant and Extinct Peerages*, 1883, p. 535.

55 James Marvin to Maria Thynne (Longleat), 19 August 1607, *vii. f.335*.

Good Lady, I came this last night from the Court which is very great, and many number were there all in effect of the council, unless it be the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer, the Earl of Nottingham and the Lord Knollis (Knowles). The queen doth every day ride in the coach with the King to Clarendon Park¹ and there they both do take their horses to hunt. And tomorrow sennite His Majesty with all these followers do remove; the King to Throcklestone Mr Philpot's² (Fylpottes) and Andover, the Queen to Wherwell the Lord de La Warr (Laware)³ and from thence to Basing. I do not think that any of the Lords or others will be at any such leisure as to see Longleat or Fonthill at this time, and yet have I desired some of the Earls to come to Fonthill; only my Lord Chancellor [has] been. The Lord of Northampton and the Earl of Worcester, whose daughter Mr Thomas Arundel hath married, may hap to dine tomorrow or the next day at Wardour, and so kill a brace or two of stags. And then they will that night to Hindon, and the next day at Sarum, so they kenneth. The great Ladies that are now at the Court are the Lady of Suffolk, The Countess of Bedford, and yesterday there came the Countess of Hertford. My Lord Wotton hath his young wife also with him at Sarum. This much for courtly news.

And now I thank ye for the loan of your malt, and tomorrow Mr Carter shall come for it. I pray you command your brother to see it despatched this night or tomorrow in the morning, and then shall he bring my beer to see the difference, so shall I also see the house of my lord (Mervin).⁴ Now lastly, I shall be sorry that you should so much mistake my meaning, as that I seek to press either you or your husband to accept of Bush's service, more than yourselves should willingly like of, for I know by report of his infirmities, and how unfit a man by reason thereof he were to be in your house. But the only

cause that moved me to write to you was that Bush himself told me that Carr was departed from his service, and that Bush upon his suit to you had so far prevailed, as that you were well pleased to accept of his service. And that he thought that my letters addressed to you might the better work with Sir Thomas Thynne (Thin) to allow of him. Therefore for that matter I refer to your own choice and yet, were it not for the French disease⁵ whereof he is to yield an audit where he hath [left] it, or upon whom he hath bestowed it, you can not have a more sufficient woodman [f.335b] in your park, nor a readier servitor at your board. And thus with my best wishes to you, and all yours, and with my most loving salutations I commit [you] and them to the protection of the only Almighty.

Your ever most assured friend and
loving grandfather
James Marvin (Mervin)

Fonthill this Wednesday morning the 19th August 1607

[*p.s.*] Yesterday Doctor Tucker⁶ did preach before the King; who made so notable a sermon, so learned and so full of devotion touching the revelation as the King at his coming down the pulpit gave him his hand to kiss, saying that he never heard a better nor a more learned sermon. The like Sir Thomas Gorges reported that His Majesty did also at his doing commend it. Sir Thomas Gorges, your brother, myself, and one Sir Reynold⁷ Donne (Dn'e) the Dean of the Arches, but now a Master of the Requests, well dined with Master Doctor Tucker, and there this Sir Reynold Donne (Dn'n) fell in talk of your marriage, and of his examination of your husband touching his contract and present marriage with you, and how much that match was impugned as well by your father-in-law as by sundry other great personages. And that nevertheless when he had privately examined your husband, who upon his oath confessed the marriage, that he shortly after pronounced this contract in allowing the marriage, saying withal, that he did think he should be very well welcome to you both, if he should come so long before. Whereupon I told him, that in regard of his kind and judicial dealing in that cause, that if he could find any reason to go from the Court, that he should come to me and kill a buck and that from henceforth I would be his guide to Longleat. But for all this, I think he can not be spared for petitions exhibited to the King.

¹ Also known as Clarendon Wood, *V.C.H. Wills*. i. p. 58. There is very little information elsewhere about this Progress, J. Nichols, *The Progresses . . . of King James I* (1828), ii, p. 145 and n. 5; H.M.C. *Salisbury (Cecil)*, XIX, pp. viii, 220.

² George Philpot, held the manor of Throcklestone (Thrupton) and Mainsbridge. *V.C.H. Hants.*, iii, pp. 407, 484.

³ Thomas West, Baron De La Warr, of Wherewell, Hants. *D.N.B.*; *V.C.H. Hants.*, iv, pp. 411–12.

⁴ MS. *my* '?', so probably her brother, Mervin Audley. *so . . . my*' – interlined and indistinct.

⁵ Syphilis.

⁶ William Tucker, or Tooker, D.D., of Salisbury. *D.N.B.*

⁷ *recte* Daniel. As Dean of the Arches, Donne, (or Dun) had judged disputed marriages, and ratified Maria's in 1601. He was considered an authority on marriage law. *D.N.B.*

56 Henry Townshend to Joan Thynne, 20 February 1608, *vii. ff.337-8*.

Madam, I have received your Ladyship's letter, by your servant Halliwell (Hallywell), and do not a little marvel of your Ladyship's forgetfulness of the contents thereof; and where you allege that I claim to be Lord of the manor of Stretton; if I had it given me, I have deserved it towards you and yours. And have been hindered by the clamour of my Lord of Stafford and his mother treble the value of that manor [two words smudged, interlined] of my preferment. But how true this is that I claim your manor, the great leet last and the small courts ever sithence have been and shall be kept in your name. And touching the parsonage we had no talk thereof for there is a lease in person, and another in reversion, that will live longer than we two. And I told you that you might keep as many sheep upon the Commons as you would for me, without any impediment. And that there should no wood be sold of the lands but to your use; for [nought] you can do, of any note: For enclosing of commons or woods sithence, you think I have no discretion of self to do it without the assistance of your man Halliwell (Hallywell); I do not mean in haste to go about that service, and procure me more envy for your son's sake, who can afford me no thanks but I think that both you and he (if it be true as I hear) if things go forward as I hear be in hand, will be glad to call upon your poor friends, for all the lands of Stretton and Caus in Shropshire.¹

But you concluded with me at the bedside, that in consideration to pay you twenty pounds yearly every half year and to receive all the rents, waifs, strays and heriots and greenwax and other forfeitures and I to pay all out-rents, court, divers stewards and bailiff's fees, and the like, and that I should have it as long as you and I should live together. And I do receive but seventeen pounds in certainty yearly of the tenants. And the same was repeated at breakfast at your departure before Sir George Hayward. And you told me, and so sent me word by Cowper and Phillipps. And wishe[d] it were drawn in writing. And that you did owe me a good turn to the value of twenty pounds yearly for the good of mine. And now I perceive your tutors do otherwise advise you, and to lose your friends and discredit yourself. And for my part I do mean to perform my promise, and doubt not upon better advisement you will do the like, or else God forbid that fair words and promises and smooth letters should so be performed.

It is good for you to foresee for the discharging of the arrearages in the Exchequer, for new processes are now come down. And the liberties seised for not serving in the Exchequer for that manor, which from henceforth I will foresee, and you are according to your promise to discharge the same for that you have reserved all the arrearage in your own hands heretofore due to your own use. It is given out here, that your son Thynne will have all the church lands at Stretton, for which I pay rent for, and that angereth him that I should have the possession of the same rent, and had given commission to his man of Caus to enter and make a survey, [f.338] alleging that it is not within your conveyancing as I think it is not for it is concealed lands. And he sent his man word that he should come thither at his peril. And so with my commendations

from me and my wife I bid you hearily farewell from Cound the 20 January 1607.

Your loving brother
H. Townshend (Townshend)

¹ Followed by three words struck through.

57 Thomas Purslow to Joan Thynne, 4 March 1608,¹ *vii. f.339*.

Madam, my duty to your Worship remembered, whereas you write to me about that honest man Glover, at which I did not a little marvel considering his lewd dealing towards me and my son, persevering in his lewdness still and his bad speeches, which is not unknown to Mr Newbury (Newboroughe) and others your followers, and your letter was that he might continue in his house till Easter which is now past and as I hear he reporteth that he will stay there till your Worship return, which I pray God may be safely, shortly; at which time he hopeth to have a house of your Ladyship, truly there are too² many already in the C[omp]ound³ that it is much thought of, which I refer to your Worship's consideration, hoping your Ladyship will not suborn such a lewd companion against me; he hath caused me and my son to spend above twenty nobles already. And as touching the hawking, still I think there will be nothing done before your Worship return. I have written a note for your Worship to move Sir Thomas for the records. This praying to God for your Worship's safe return with long life to the pleasure of God, I commit your Ladyship to the commission of the Almighty.

Hogstow this 4th of March
Your Ladyship's servant to command
Thomas Purslow (Purslowe)

Mr Burley hath scrvd me and my son for his tith of corn.

Imprimis: to search the court rolls of the forest to prove Burley's ancestors amerced for their cattles in the forest of Hogstow

Item: for John Lord Poulton or others de Poulton for the like

Item: for Tibiton alias Tipton for the like⁴

Item: for Rawlinge alias Ravlyne for the like

Item: for Hinton for the like

Item: for Thomas Cropton alias Crupon for the like

Item: for Jervis Bowyer for the like

Item: for Thomas Rider and Hugh Darkin for the like And for the account of the same years if they be there to prove the ameracements paid if the ameracements be paid

Item: for an exemplification for the purchases of Hope and Poulton granted by Peter Corbett, Lord of Caus to Richard the son of Robert of Hope

[*marginal note*]: and to look if there be any account of the 38 Henry VI, Anno 11 Henry VII, Anno 17 Richard II, Anno 8 Richard II, Anno 10

Henry VIII, Anno 6 Henry VIII, Anno 21 Henry VIII, 22 Henry VIII, 25 Henry VIII, Anno 26 Henry VIII.

I showed this note to my cousin George Halliwell (Halywell) so he knoweth how to search for them.

[*Endorsed*]: Mr Thomas Purslow's letter to my Lady April 1608.

¹ Dated 4 March, but endorsed April 1608, and written after Easter.

² MS. *two*.

³ There were a number of houses within the walls at Caus, *V.C.H. Shropshire*, viii, p. 310.

⁴ A Henry Tipton had claimed unlimited rights of common, *T.S.A.S.*, 3d ser., vi, p. 113.

58 Joan Thynne to [Thomas Thynne], 4 October 1608, *viii. f.28*.

Good son, letters are come to myself (as to others freeholders of the lands which were the Duke of Buckingham's) from the lords and others of His Majesty's most honourable privy council. Whereof the effect is, that we must appear before their Honours the 20th day of this present to show our estates and titles how we hold the same lands. And the better to have the same made known to their lordships we must repair to Mr Tipper¹ at his house in Holborn, who is appointed to their lordships for that purpose. The case is:

The case for the castle, manor and borough of Caus with Wallop, the manor of Minsterley, Minsterley Park, and Aston Rogers and the forest of Hogstow:

Easter term, 5 Henry VIII, *r[otulo]* 1458: Edward Duke of Buckingham suffered a common recovery of the premises (*inter alia*). By virtue whereof the said recoverors were seised of the premises to them and their heirs to the use of the said Duke and his heirs.

13 May, 13 Henry VIII: The said Duke by judgement at the common law was attainted of high treason, for treason by him committed 24 April, 4 Henry VIII. By which attainder the premises were not forfeited to the King because the King had no estate therein, but the estate in fee simple thereof was and still remained in the recoverors and their heirs, notwithstanding that attainder.

After, King Henry VIII, by letters patent dated 20 Sept, the 14th year of his reign, granted the premises (*inter alia*) to Henry Lord Stafford and Ursula his wife and to the heirs of their bodies, which grant is void because the king had no estate therein at the time of his grant, for the estate thereof in fee simple then was in the recoverors and their heirs.

After, by parliament holden at Westminster last day of July, 15 Henry VIII, it was enacted that the said Duke should stand and be convicted and attainted of high treason and should forfeit unto the King and his heirs for ever all honours, castles, manors, etc. whereof the said Duke or any other person or persons to his use were seised in fee simple, fee tail, or any estate of inheritance the 24th day of April in the fourth year of his reign, or any time sithence, or in the which the said Duke or any other seised to his use had then or any time sithence lawful cause of entry.

By virtue of which act the premises whereof the said recoverors were seised to the use to the said Duke were given unto King Henry VIII and his heirs and from him descended unto the late Queen Elizabeth. The late Queen Elizabeth by letters patent dated 28 July, the 16th year of her reign (after recital of the said void grant in tail made by King Henry VIII unto the Henry Lord Stafford and Ursula his wife) did give, grant and confirm the reversion of the premises to Dorothy Stafford and to her heirs.

[f.28b] Which said grant made unto the said Dorothy was also void because it was made of the reversion upon recital of the former void grant in tail. By reason whereof the King's Majesty that now is by law may presently seize the premises into his hands and recover the mean profits arising since the said Act, 19 Henry VIII.

This is the case which was sent to me enclosed in their letters. The which I have thought good to advertise you of, praying when you are at London to have recourse to this Mr Tipper or otherwise as the cause shall require for your own good as well as mine. Such evidence as I have or can procure of friends to defend this case I have laboured to get, and what shall be wanting when you may hear further of it at your being at London, I pray you supply, for I am beholden to friends for most of ought that I have concerning the premises. So, hoping your care accordingly, with my love unto your good lady and God's blessing to you and yours, I rest

Your assured loving mother
Joan Thynne

[p.a.] Scarlet hath not yet paid Edward Morley (Morlie). I pray you write more straitly unto him, that he may be paid.

Caus Castle this 4th of October 1608.

¹ William Tipper was concerned with Exchequer business and defective titles, B.L. Lansd. MSS. Vol. 166, No. 6; Vol. 15, No. 48.

59 Joan Thynne to Thomas Thynne (Cannon Row), 25 October 1608, *viii. f.30*.

Good son, a motion now being accepted by Sir John Wyndham (Windham) for a match between his son and your sister Dorothy which I hope you cannot dislike, his living being very great and his house of ancient time right worthy and worshipful.¹ I heartily pray you instance this matter and forward it by your countenance and pains what you may. And I shall acknowledge it as a great kindness done to myself and your sister be most thankful unto you for so doing, myself and your sister do wholly reserve the managing of this business to your own best discretion. The which hoping you will regard and further as much as in you lieth, now whilst you are at London where Sir John and his son will be, of whom Sir Robert Young (Yonger) can advertize you. With my best

love unto your good Lady and God's blessing and mine to you and yours, I rest
 Your assured loving mother
 Joan Thynne

Glazeley this 25th of October 1608

¹ Sir John Wyndham of Orchard Wyndham, Somerset, who had nine sons. This must have been one of the older sons, as the ninth was born in 1610. *D.N.B.* s.v. Sir Hugh Wyndham, Sir Wadham Wyndham.

60 Joan Thynne to Roger Owen, [Oct. 1609],¹ *viii. f.32.*

Good Sir I lately received a letter from my sister Knyvet (Knevet) and other my friends in London, who advising upon your friendly motion, have advertised me of their opinion therein, that they do wish that the portion were suitable and proportioned to the person,² that then with a joint consent, there should be a speedy conclusion. Otherwise, though it answereth no way what hath been formerly offered by others, yet if these most reasonable and easy demands be yielded unto by yourself for your brother's preferment, and to give some contentment unto myself and friends who are careful of my daughter's good, we will willingly accept, both for that we reckon chiefly of ever your approved love and kind neighbourhood, as also for that she affects the person of your brother in good measure. But if it seemeth not liking unto you to accept and accomplish these motions of ours for the preferment of the young couple, then we entreat that it may no way be the execution of any of those kindnesses and mutual intercourses of friendship and familiarity which hath formerly been betwixt us and our houses, in the full performing and continuing whereof you shall ever find most ready your assured loving friend.

¹ Draft, altered. See 75.

² A marriage portion, for Dorothy to match with Owen's brother William. Sir Roger Owen of Condever, bought Westbury manor Shropshire. 1601; *D.N.B.*

61 Richard Tannerdyne to Joan Thynne (Caus), 23 November 1609, *vii. f.341.*

Madam, with remembrance of my bounden duty may it please you I have spoken with Mr Archer (Arthare) as I rode towards London but I cannot draw him to yield unto your demand although he is not far from it. Where you demand third part for her jointure, his first offer was sixty pounds, now his last offer is the manor and demesnes of Botley² which is seven score pounds by year with a house thereupon. And the demesnes of the [illegible] of Woodhampton in Little Hereford let by year for six hundred pounds, all very good and in present possession which they shall have presently for their maintenance. And three years end, if they like not to stay with him, then he will furnish their house with sufficient stock of household and cattle fit for young beginners at the first. And where you demand to have assured to them and their heirs a thousand pounds the year, his first offer was eight hundred pounds. He sayeth that all his ancient land that descended unto him is entailed

or else it had been [? forfeit] by the attainder of his grandfather. He is very loath to have his living known what it is, because he saith that if it should be known that he should assure unto his son a thousand pounds by year, then he feareth that he should be called unto some further [charge], which he doth and always hath forborne so much as by any means he could. He wisheth that your Ladyship would send soon to see those lands which he is willing to depart with. And how he thinketh that they will like it better than your Worship do esteem thereof, young Mr Archer (Archare) doth continue in mind to perform with the better all things that he hath promised.

I did not speak with your sister nor deliver letter, but hath sent the same unto your Ladyship again by this bearer. Your daughter is well. I spake with Steven at my coming forth of London, who hath written to you at large. Mr Archer (Archarr) will to London the next term, and then he will speak with your honourable sister himself. [f.341b] Madam, I would not have you to stand so resolute upon so small matters when ye can so much, your Ladyship and Mr Archer be well met: for you be so hard both I do not know which is the better. He and his son hath them most heartily commended unto yourself and Mistress Dorothy. Madam, I have small pleasure at this time to write, considering the great loss I have of her with reason I hoped to have lived with yet many years, but it is the Lord's doing, therefore we should take knowledge by her, that we have here but an uncertain life, and how short a time the Lord knoweth. [Thus] Madam, being weary after my long and tedious journey I take my leave, commending your health unto the [at]tention of the Almighty God, at Stirchley this instant November the 23^d 1609

Your Worship's most bounden
Richard Tannerdyne³

[*Endorsed*]: Mr Tanndine and Mr Archer's letters.

¹ MS in poor condition, stained on R.H. side.

² Botley, Warwickshire, manor held by Andrew Archer, *V.C.H. Warwicks*, v, p. 214. Archer wrote a letter about this projected match for Simon on 31 March 1611, T.P., viii, f. 160. Simon, who married Ann Ferrars in 1614, became a noted antiquary *V.C.H. Warwicks*, iii, pp. 214, 261; v, p. 168. *D.N.B.* s.v. Sir Simon Archer. In Aug. 1609 a match had been proposed with a daughter of 2nd Earl of Essex; Longleat, Devereux MSS, No. 94, f. 317.

³ On 5th Jan. 1610 Stirchley Hall was described as 'late . . . in the tenure of Richard Tannerdyne, gent. now living, and Constance his wife, now deceased'. P.R.O. E134/7 Jas. I/Hil. 19, m. 5.

62 Henry Thynne to Maria Thynne [c. 1609–10],¹ *viii. f.57.*

My most honourable and worthy Lady, you must imagine that very extraordinary occasions hath caused my absence from you the which was so very settled and I ready to attend you and Sir Thomas his business. From Wilton where my desire was greater to do Sir Thomas a kindness [and] then your use of my presence needful, I had much to do to return home, being taken with a sudden faintness the which I have never recovered. If I had known when the horse buyers had been with you I would have been present, so will I at divers other times when I may do you any service. If Salisbury (Salsbury) hath

forfeited his land and that a better chapman will give more, we may threaten the penalty to be laid upon him and thereby win him to desist and give over his right, but in my own occasions I never took forfeiture of any; in this I am Sir Thomas his agent and will be ruled by him wholly. For your Ladyship's kind love in procuring Sir Thomas' place for me I am your debtor, take it effect or no. My brother Charles hath I think written his determination touching his money, I acquainting him with your Ladyship's letter have discharged my part. My mother, my father, my sisters and brothers have received kindly your kind salutations and returns with the assurance of their loves many thanks and recommendations, and I for my own particular offer you my service, assure you of my love, and will rest for ever.

At your command it is

H. Thynne²

[*p.s.*] My brother William desires me to entreat your Ladyship if you be so well stored to spare him five pounds of his Christmas quarter's annuity, I will see it discounted at the time. If you deliver it to this bearer it will do him great pleasure; if your Ladyship cannot spare it conveniently, telling this bearer so much shall suffice.

H. Thynne

¹ This and 63 belong together: Salisbury's forfeit discussed in both. 1609 a likely date – Maria handled much of the estate work that year, and was organising money for Thomas's purchases, see 64 and 65.

² Sir Henry Thynne, uncle of Thomas. (John Thynne's half-brother, as were Charles and William mentioned).

63 Maria Thynne to Thomas Thynne (Cannon Row), [early 1610],¹ *viii. f.8.*

My best Thomken I know thou wilt say (receiving two letters in a day from me) that I have tried the virtue of aspen leaves under my tongue, which makes me prattle so much, but consider that all is business, for of my own natural disposition I assure thee there is not a more silent woman living than myself. But to the purpose: you must understand that I received this day being Sunday my grandfather's letter to Mr Sampford, and did forthwith send Halliwell away with it to him, so as what may be done in reason besides shall not be neglected.

Smith of Deverill² sent to me for money to discharge the King's rent, he saith the rent of Deverill will not discharge it, but I have appointed him to bring in the rent and let the other alone, for that I understand by you, yourself would discharge it whereby you might the better be allowed your father's fee and your own, if I have not done in it as I should, then learn not to place a fool in an office.

Salisbury (Salsbury) hath been here with his fine and hath offered five pound to my Uncle Thomas more than is due so he will not take the forfeiture of his bond, but whatsoever become of it he will not give one penny more. My uncle desires to know your pleasure speedily for he feareth lest upon their

going to my uncle Harry he will receive their money and give a release and so lose the five pound too, because he made the bargain. All the means hath been made that may be to get him leave the mills, and take his bond again, but Shore³ will not. The law shall take it from them ere they will leave it now. I pray let us know whether you will take the forfeiture or no. for if [f.8b] you do not, the sooner we have the money the better.

Curtis (Curtyse)⁴ of Deverill was here with his master but not a word of Chute till I began. He saith you have let it for a year to one that husbands it very ill, so as he cannot enter upon it to his profit, and to keep his money till the time be expired, that he cannot neither: he will not give one penny more than three hundred and seventy pounds and for anything I see he is now very careless of it, for those respects aforesaid, I never heard that you had so much bidden for it by any other. Let me know what you will do, for on Saturday next I shall know whether ever he will deal in it again, but if he do, he will look the tenant now in it shall be his tenant.

Your trunk is sent, and therewith a letter from me, also sixty pounds which Marchant (Cogswell's son) is to pay from me, and this I think will be all Woodlands', and I shall help you too till Allhallow tide, if Salisbury's (Salsburys) shall be received, then shall you presently have that too, with as much else as may be gathered. Remember, I pray thee, to pay as many debts as is possible, and then wilt thou let idle expenses alone till hereafter. I heard thee talk of cutting down some part of the copse in Longleat park, my uncle Thomas saith if he might advise you, there should be as much as may have utterance be sold, and this is his advice, to have the sale cried in the markets, and none to be cut but as there shall come first a chapman to buy it, and then when the bargain is made (the wood standing) let his acre that [he] hath bought be appointed out, letting the rest stand till more chapmen come, by which means you shall be sure to have [f.9] no spoil nor waste, for what will not be sold shall grow. Your pleasure must be known in this for Allhallowtide is the best time. He thinketh if you please there will be little left by Midsummer.

I think I have given thine eyes a surfeit with a letter by this time, wherefore I will end now, wishing thy life, happiness and contentment may never end, till thy love to me hath end

Thine
Maria Th{ynne}

[p.s.] In any wise sweet, let somebody receive my other letter of the carrier for it is all business too.

¹ Probably 1610, as Maria managed estate business, and some of these names appear in lists she made in 1610: e.g. '200 pounds returned by Ned Smyth's hands'. T.P. book 72A, f.2. Edward Smith of Deverill Longbridge d. c. 1622, W.R.O., Arch. Sar. wills. Below, she writes 'Smyth the clothier', possibly to differentiate between two Smiths.

² See n. 1.

³ ? Shaw. There was a family of Shaws at Maiden Bradley.

⁴ ? William Curtis of Kingston Deverill, cf W.R.O. will of John Curtis, 1600. In 1615, William Curtis paid over £85, half-year's rent for a farm. T.P. Box XIV, misc. f.486.

64 Lucy Audley to Maria Thynne, [early 1610],¹ *viii. f.59.*

Well Mall, I am exceeding glad that the iron is stricken being hot, for there is a time for all things, and sorry should I have been in both your behalves, if it had now been omitted; and truth it is I know it so great a grace to Longleat as if another had enjoyed it I should have rained tears upon Warminster whenever I had looked upon it. I was more confident that you would have dealt in it, as supposing that you know me a loving mother, and not a cunning shifter, to put a trick upon my son Thynne and yourself for serving any turn, and the truth is enough on that.

Bargains with me doth so usually take my word for matters of good worth, as I forget to think what should be done according to the ordinary course of dealing with others; I protest upon my faith, my son Davies (Davys) had no more but my word for his wife's marriage portion. But now to the purpose, if 300 pounds be not ready provided but two now and let my son Thynne pay the other hundred pounds a week after, and this let him know, that the tenth day of this month he will expect the money to be ready at Deverill, and thither will he come to give bond, which I think may suffice with my poor credit until my cousin Hill (Hyll) come down, and for farther proceeding, believe upon my credit and faith that we intend to sell Warminster, Boreham, and Bishopstrow² and that we both desire nothing so much next our own welfare as to see it joined to Longleat, which I know will add much and very much grace to that seat. Now farther touching Nando,³ upon my credit he hath no farther interest in Bishopstrow than you have in it, saving that if Mervin die without heirs it will fall upon him. There was never man yet abused in his trust by me, your brother will sooner you as I said when my cousin Hill comes down doubt you not, in the mean season fear not his bond. And to deal plainly, I rest so confident upon the King and the Council's assurance by word, as I dare in a manner assure you that if you be not so straitlaced (both of you) the land mentioned shall undoubtedly be yours. [Even] so adieu, and commend me in all love and kindness to my son Thynne (Thyn) and yourself. Your good brother desireth the like, who was in truth towards the concluding of a bargain at Warminster for money, but your letter caused a return.

Your loving mother

Lucy Audley

[*p.s.*] If at cousin Hill's (Hylls) coming down, you approve of what is intended, then this money must go in course of payment and no less paid if other ways than aforesaid.

¹ cf. **65**. These belong together, and concern Thomas's purchase of Warminster manor from Mervin Audley about Easter 1610. T.P. Box X1, f.55 confirms the price of £3.650.

² See *V.C.H. Wilts.*, viii, pp. 6–7, 10.

³ Ferdinando, Mervin Audley's younger brother, knighted 2 June, 1610. Burke's *Dormant and Extinct Peerages*, 1883, p. 535; Shaw, *Knights of England*, i, pp. 157–8.

65 Thomas Thynne to Maria Thynne (Longleat) [c. May 1610], *xl. f.8.*

Good Sweet, I have received thy letter by Smith the clothier. I [have] bought the Manor of Warminster of my brother Audley (Awdelay) but at so

unreasonably high a rate as no man would come near it, otherwise I think he would not have let [me] have it. The price is 3650 pounds but sithence no hope of breaking off upon the days of payment, for he will not do me that kindness which I assure myself I should entreat of a mere stranger. His days are: In hand 1660 pounds with the 600 pounds he oweth me, for the which he will give me no consideration for the time he hath had it; at Michaelmas next 1000 pounds, and at Our Lady day 1611, 990 pounds in full payment; which I shall not be able to perform without too much wronging of myself. Now my days of payment which I am contented to strain myself unto is: now owing me in his hands 675 pounds which is 15 pounds for the consideration of my 600 pounds now due to me; more to be paid: in hand 925 pounds, the first of October next 500 pounds, at Christmas next 500 pounds, Our Lady day 1611 500 pounds and at Michaelmas 1611 550 pounds, in full payment; which will go very hard with me considering I must pay Sir Thomas Vavasour (Vaveser) his money so speedily.¹

I would have you in any wise send for Curtis and let him tell my shepherds that they reform themselves and look better to my sheep leases or else let Curtis turn them away and get me new shepherds, for I will not endure their knavery any longer. My brother Audley (Audelay) hath turned me off for half a year's day for part of the money, neither would give me any allowance in any sort for my 600 pounds. Also, Mr Rogers cometh upon me with his land at Frome for that Sir Edmund² and he cannot agree which I am very sorry for because it is a very hard bargain; and if my brother Audley (Audelaye) better bethink himself I shall not be able to go through with them all. I mean shortly to be at home with thee and then fare thee well.

Thine

Thomas Thynne

[*p.s.*] I have not received any money as yet from Cogswell (Cogeswell). Neither have I received the threescore pounds from your kind brother Audley (Audelay). Your brother Ferdinando is to be a Knight of the Bath.³

¹ For purchase of East Woodlands, £2,450, 1610. T.P. Box XI, f.55.

² Probably Sir Edmund Ludlow, of Maiden Bradley.

³ See 64, n. 3.

66 Joan Thynne to Thomas Thynne (Longleat), 25 August 1611, *viii. f.34*.

Good son, forasmuch as the day of payment of your sister Dorothy's money draweth near,¹ which is upon the first day of October next (she accomplishing her full age of 21 years upon the 16th day of April last) and you not yet come hither to me according to your promise, when I might have signified so much in person to you, I thought good having the fit opportunity to acquaint you therewith; because I would not any unkindness be taken for not giving you notice thereof; desiring that at the time aforesaid the money may be ready for her to be put forth for her best profit as I have already taken a course to do, unless yourself think good to keep it six months longer and pay her interest for

the same as she is willing so to let you have it if you please. Either of which shall best like you I desire to know with speed, to the end I may take order for the receiving thereof if you will pay it, or send to take your new bond for the same with the use thereof, as is requisite if you desire to keep it. This bearer your kinsman craving to be accepted in your favour, if you may vouchsafe him your countenance the rather at my request he will acknowledge himself much bound unto you for the same. Your son,² God be thanked, is in good health. So with God's blessing and mine to you and yours, I rest

Your very loving mother
Joan Thynne

Caus Castle this 25th August, 1611

¹ Money due from her father's estate, under agreement of 1605.

² Maria and Thomas' infant third son, Thomas. Maria died in childbed in 1611.

67 Joan Thynne to [Thomas Thynne], 24 September 1611, *viii. f.36*.

Good son, these bearers by authority from your sister are coming unto you to receive her money which I hope you will care to make them payment of. I marvel much that you would not perform your promise in coming to me nor yet send me some answer of my late sent letters. I conceive your great businesses which you have there daily stay your coming, but yet methinks you might have sent some messenger with answer unto them as I would have done to you if you had writ[ten] to me touching matters of like importance. With much ado I entreated Mr Chelmick¹ (Chelmecke) to stay his trial and persuaded Mr Gough because of your request, and promise to come unto me. But seeing you come not I am ill thought of, and you much condemned. I pray you in regard of your worth make some speedy end with them, that the mouths of clamorous people in this country may be stopped and your own reputation carefully preserved. Your little son, God be thanked, is in good health, and your sister Dorothy kindly remembereth her best love unto you. And so with God's blessing to you and yours, I rest

Your very loving mother
Joan Thynne

Caus Castle this 24th of September 1611

¹ A relation by marriage of John Thynne. S.P.L. MS. 2792: *Vis. Shropshire 1623*, i, pp. 110–111. Thomas Thynne also signed this pedigree.

68 Joan Thynne to Thomas Thynne (Longleat), [Oct–Nov 1611],¹ *viii. f.37*.

Good son, your letter was expected long before I heard from you, which made me doubtful what course your sister should take for her money seeing you came not according to your promise, which gave both her and myself much discontentment; whereupon she hath made her attorneys to receive the money to her use. Yet nevertheless, if you will, have the whole sum all together for three weeks or a month longer if you please, giving her what she

and you shall agree upon at your and her next meeting, giving her attorneys good security for the whole thousand pounds, to be paid unto her at London or otherwise where she shall appoint. But to break the sum she is very unwilling, and therefore good son have a brotherly care for her good, for that she is very willing you should have it afore a stranger. For the loan of your house I heartily thank you and do take it very kindly from you, wishing I had known your mind before, for then I would not have troubled my sister Knyvet (Kneveit) as I did, but now God willing, if it will please God to send me any reasonable health I will see both you and yours to my great comfort. For your son here, he is in good health and is much altered for the better I praise God. I thank you for your sister Christian, praying you that she may have the continuance of your love unto her. And thus praying you to bear with my scribbling letter, being not well at this time, being very well satisfied by your letter which I pray God ever to keep and bless both you and yours, remembering my best love unto you, I rest now and ever your assured loving mother.

Joan Thynne

¹ Probably written from London, where she died 3 March 1612.

APPENDIX

69 Richard Young to Sir John Thynne (Longleat) 29 July 1575, *iv. f. 79.*

At London the 29 of July 1575.

. . . [*First ¾ page not relevant – concerns purchase of beds and boards for Sir John*]

I have spoken with Sir Rowland Hayward [Haward] whom I do find desirous to match with your son, as I assure you I do think he will do more for his daughter than you do desire of him, for she is his darling, and the mother is so desirous of the match that she hath sent for me divers times desiring me to request you not to be too strait with her [f.79b] husband, for she saieth you may rule him as you will with reason, and she hath been in hand with her husband for the matter, and he told her that you did demand all the chiefest things that he hath. Whereupon I told her you did demand it no otherwise but after their decease and to have it assured to your son and her daughter and their heirs of their bodies. Further she was in hand with me to know if you would have your son to keep house of himself, that she might see their government in her lifetime, I saying I thought you would be glad to have it so, for that should be to your comfort as well as hers saying your desire is to have them in Shropshire and would be glad to see them placed in Caus Castle, and that you would strain yourself in helping to repair the same, the which my Lady did like well of, for she is desirous to have the matter ended. And fain she would have a sight of your son that her husband should not know of it, and she gave me her daughter's age, the which I thought good to send you. She was baptised the twenty-eighth day of August 1558 so that she shall be seventeen years old at August next. I showed my Lady the letter you sent to me and so I did Sir Rowland who I did perceive did like well of it. And where my Lady was desirous to have seen your son, I declared to her that your mind was first to conclude with Sir Rowland. That being done, your¹ son and her daughter to have conference together, and as God shall dispose their hearts and minds together so to unite and knit the knot together with your consents in the fear of God. And unless the two parties could the one so like of the other and they themselves to be as joyful [f.80] as the father, there should be no displeasure but to part in great friendship on both sides. For as I did perceive as reason is, they would have their daughter to like. So I said you were of the same mind for your son yielding a good reason to the not liking, and this² with many other words we departed, she desiring me to help to end the matter.

I assure you the young gentlewoman is very wise and virtuously brought up. I talked with her and demanded of her how she did like of you and your son; of

you she answered she had heard and she saw in you to be a grave and wise man, wherefore she did like the better of your son, for she thought he could not digress from your bringing him up as she hath heard you have done. But to answer me of liking of your son in marriage, she said she would not nor could say nothing, for she had not spoken with him, and at our speaking, she said, it is possible he shall not like me, and in the other side I may say the same of him, but I do put my trust in God and in my good father that God will put into my father's heart to choose me such a one as God will direct my heart not to dislike. But in the end she told me that she never heard of none yet that she had any affiance³ to so much as to your son, for the good report she had of you and of him for that he was no roister.⁴ This I have troubled you with a long letter, desiring you to write to Sir Rowland, for I do not doubt but you shall agree; this I rest to trouble your worship, desiring God to assist you with His holy spirit with much increase of worship

Your servant to command
Richard Young.

¹ Inserted above 3 words struck through.

² Meaning *thus*, appears throughout.

³ Presumably meaning interest in marriage.

⁴ *O.E.D.* reveller, riotous fellow.

70 Countess of Derby to Dorothy Thynne, the elder,¹ 3 March 1577, *iv. f. 147*.

Although of late I find you very dainty of your lines and as I suppose more forgetful of your friends my cursed stomach would fain persuade me to cry quittance with you, saving that I will not yield you so much advantage as to make it appear I cannot conquer the worst motion in me, neither indeed I be found so barren a friend where I have professed so much goodwill, as to be silent when I find it more than needful to warn you of much evil pretended against you. I hear, good madam of two daughter in laws you have hereabout much contrary in disposition, as I learn, the more to your credit and t'other shame. Your husband's own daughter in truth I find by divers doth greatly affect you and uttereth as good speeches of your government and well using her and the rest as may be. I love her much the better and for your sake will not forget to thank her. Marry, the Alderman's daughter² dissembleth not her kind. She is altogether bent to disgrace you and belie you, and as I believe doth greatly injure you and your house. She hath reported that you will not allow her meat, drink or any other thing needful, and that by your means she is restrained in such a miserable sort as I shame to rehearse: you nickname her unto her face, and scorn and mock her behind her back. She saith; with many other despiteful reproaches which for the vainness thereof I am weary to recite. But in fine she concluded that was naught in you but pride, malice, and mischief. She railleth, her beldame rageth, her father doeth solemnly countenance it out, but swears he will be even with you. Therefore if you love your own quiet and credit, take heed of such venomous vermin, and now you

be warned, be armed. Suffer not such moths quietly to harbour in your gown till they fret a hole in your nearer garment. I shall be sorry to find you careless in your own causes. All this speech your kind daughter passed to one Doyle's wife, whose husband depends greatly on the Alderman and in that respect is very fearful to be named. She told it to my Lady Norris who favours you much and so came I by it; you may not for the respect I have said name Doyle's wife. And so, willing thee much better company than those that so doth cumber thee, I leave with my blessing unto my godson whom I love a little the worse for his name. The Court, March the third

Your fast and unfeigned
Margaret Derby

[*Endorsed*]: The countess of Derby to my wife 1576 by John Thynne senior.

¹ John Thynne's stepmother, cf. 4.

² Joan Thynne.

71 Elizabeth Warren to John Thynne (Longleat), 18 February 1592, *vi. f.18*.

I have sent you the true note of money that I have laid out for yourself, my sister, and your son Thomas since the 17th of May 1589, until this present 1591 which is in a gross sum fifty-five pounds, nine shillings and sixpence, whereof you shall have the particulars when we reckon together. Besides I am forthwith to make him a doublet and pair of hose which is no part of this reckoning

18 February.

Your loving sister
Elizabeth Warren

72 Thomas Higgins to Richard Halliwell, 6 May 1595, *vi. f.308*.

I am sorry to hear that Mr Thynne (Thinne) taketh so heavily this late ill hap, whereunto the inexperienced youth of his son hath fallen, if it would please him only to consider every circumstance that was used by them for the effecting thereof, it will prove at the issue rather a matter of constraint, whereunto he was enforced, than matter of choice, which affection persuaded. For confirmation whereof, the present sorrow he conceiveth for former disobedience, and his vowed resolution hereafter in all conformity wholly to submit himself to his parents' direction, together with a voluntary renunciation of all their pretended friendship, doth make me believe that this action was wholly theirs.¹ Wherefore, seeing he is now thus disposed and that (as I think) whatsoever is already done (by duty, law and conscience), may easily be dissolved, I beseech you let no means pass that may mitigate the form of his father's indignation, lest at their meetings too rigorous an entreaty may wound to death an afflicted spirit, remembering the meekness that St Paul requireth in a father towards his child, though of erst disobedient. I know what you may conceive and whereinto you might have fallen, by his

marvellous secrecy in concealing this from you when you journeyed together thither where now ye are. But you are wise, and not ignorant of the force of such wily charmers which can tie the tongue of the most chattering bird and stop the ears of the lightest hearing beast with these sugared enchantments. Yourself is a chief staff, whereon he stays his hope. And some comfort in your next letter touching these present affairs will not a little refresh and ease the disquieted mind of good Mrs Thynne howsoever at this instant she seemeth towards him to dissemble her love. All things here concerning it is hushed and nothing for ought I deem suspect by any and therefore any report thereof from hence not to be feared. He thinketh before it be long he is like to receive something from them. To return it without reading may breed suspicion in the bearer if not acquainted therewith and so cause it to be known. To accept were to approve it. Therefore it were good to sound Mr Thynne's mind what were best to be done herein. The reports of Caus are pleasing and thereby I hope that all your troubles thereabouts are now near an end. I pray you use my humble commendations to Mr Thynne for whose health and good success I heartily pray. And this commending myself unto yourself, and yourself to God, I bid farewell in haste this 6 May

Your everloving cousin and most assured friend to my poor power
Thomas Higgins

[*p.s.*] I hear that Matthew Lloyd (Lloid) is toward Sir James M[arvin], if any further practices be intended by like reason of acquaintance he may happily prove an informant.

¹ The Marvins, cf. 17–20. Thomas's care in concealing the secret marriage suggests that Higgins (and Joan Thynne) were mistaken, cf. 55.

**73 Samuel Bowdler to Thomas Thynne (Compton Chamberlain).
28 March 1602, viii. ff. 139–40.**

Sweet Sir, it is so strange to me that I have not seen you in Wilts, nor you seen your mother in Shropshire in this long space, that I am almost amazed. For I protest I have been writing and coming to you above twenty times sithence I saw you last, but have been too tediously crossed by accidents to make repetition, which at our meeting you shall know.

I received letters of the 10th of this month from my cousin Higgins (Higgons), within which were yours to your mother; they came to my hands 20th March. They were rejected at my first coming, but before departure received, and read in my own sight. I besought answer (if they require any) in writing which was utterly denied. But she spoke thus: though he have dealt monstrous unnatural and unkindly with me, I will not be found a monster toward him, not that a letter or two shall be said to draw me.¹ But I will see further into him, and his carriage, before he shall win me. And denieth utterly your coming to Caus Castle to see her: saying she may not, she is forbidden. But my poor opinion is, you cannot spend a journey better. If you cannot speak with her (as I can hardly believe but you shall by some

private means), yet you approaching as near to her as you can (which happily is expected) will no doubt move her very much. Therefore I hope you will come shortly, which if you do, I would be glad to understand in writing by the bearer, when, where, and how I may give you meeting before you come so near as Stirchley, because every servant there knoweth you; or whether you will come under the title of Mr Clarke into some inn in Shrewsbury and send to my chamber for me, or whether you will be pleased to [a]light at my chamber in Shrewsbury in a street there called Mardol,² where we will be private [f. 139b] if you will have patience with our poverty, which I think is the safest way. For my cousin Higgins' (Higgens) house in Shrewsbury will be too public. I forbear to write of many matters, some of moment and some of trifles as dogs havers³ till meeting.

Upon your father's prohibiting your brother at his departure not to write or receive letters from you, nor come near you, it did rejoice me much to hear your brother upon his knees desire his pardon, for that you were brothers and never gave offence to each other; therefore he hoped there was no cause, but you might live and love as brothers. And besought him for God's sake, not to enjoin him to any such matter, for he would obey his commands in anything but in that. He still urged your brother, in speeches very unfitting⁴ [marginal note]: not to be repeated or at least not to be put in writing; but your brother denied him to the end, with love I doubt not but you will desire and requite towards your brother. God send a speedy end, and a good, betwixt your father and you, for effecting whereof I hope you will omit no friends, nor means, nor no opportunity that may minister matter of an end and good agreement, that the world may have occasion ever to speak well, rather of your taking, than offering, hard measure. [*Margin*]: The best time to deal with him will be before his going to London, now nothing is yet done, and God knoweth what he will attempt at London; and once done things cannot be without difficulty and expenses of great sums undone. Besides I think it an easier time to work him now than when he is with your mother, for they strive who shall make the matter more strange. He may now happily yield the more, thinking your mother will not be drawn. He sayeth, that if he would, she will not, and seemeth to like the better of her for so doing.

My ragged hand is known so far and near, that you may do me a favour in burning my letters when they be once read, lest they come to the view of some that should not see them. So praying for your happiness as for my own heart I take leave

Shrewsbury 28 March 1602

Your affectionate poor cousin
Samuel Bowdler

[*margin, bottom of sheet*]: Yet I do not see how you can attend both at one time, *videlicet*, the winning of your father in Wilts, and seeing your mother in Shropshire in this short time. But if you cannot do both, be sure to do the one, *videlicet*, whether⁵ you shall deem most necessary in your own judgement and by the advice of best friends.

[f. 140] Mr Newbury (Newbery) told me you would have been before this, which hindered my coming to you as I thought, and then your father's going sithence, and also it was given out that your mother should be sent for to the Bath before Easter, but your father never meant it.⁶

Sir, I hope to keep credit for paying the forty-one pounds odd money Shrewsbury the first of April according to the bond, and to have up the bond. But I borrow the money, upon my faithful promise to repay it in London within few days of the beginning of the [ter] me,⁷ against which time I beseech you fail not of your part under the moiety. Together with some four pounds thirteen shillings and eightpence which my cousin Lingen (Lyngen) and myself disbursed in naperly before Christmas.

I have a token in store for you, which I will deliver you with my hands, *videlicet* a copy of the conveyance twixt Sir John Thynne and Sir Rowland Hayward (Heyward), which I came to by great fortune. Your father sent to me sithence his going hence to be with him in London two days before the term; I think it be about the stewardship, wherein he is crossed exceedingly.

[*addressed*]: To the worshipful Thomas Thynne the younger at Compton or elsewhere haste haste haste.

¹ Cf. 31, 33, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 49, re attempts at reconciliation over Thomas and Maria's marriage.

² 'A street called a street is a rarity in Shrewsbury', E. Vale, *Shropshire*, 1949.

³ Word unclear, havers, i.e. foolish talk or nonsense, *or* hairs, cf O.E.D. Hair, meaning 5 and e.g.s. My thanks to Professor Wesley Milgate and others for assistance.

⁴ *In . . . unfitting* underlined.

⁵ ? error for whichever or whatever.

⁶ c.f. 23, 30, 46.

⁷ Hole in MS.

74 George Lord Audley to Thomas Thynne (Longleat), 20 June 1606, *viii. f.24.*

My good son, this bearer your servant Roe hath travelled far to know what service I will command him to his master: and therefore my desire is that in these few lines his master should understand that I love him, being ready to do all offices of love towards him and am only discontented with absence the only kilcow¹ of all good fellowship; yet revived with hope of the Resurrection I doubt not but at length to see him where, though it be in heaven, yet he and I will discourse of former remembrances; and so like a man neither as yet seated in heaven nor as yet well settled upon the earth, but remaining after an unanswered and confused order betwixt both, will notwithstanding in love and devotion towards Sir Thomas Thynne, rest

Ever his most loving, most
assured and best devoted
friend and father

Ge[orge] L[ord] Audley

Broughal² this
20th of June 1606

Commend me to my daughter Mall whom I hope God hath already or will when the hour shall come assist in her greatest travail;³ to whom be all honour, glory and praise for ever and ever.

¹ *O. E. D.* Matter involving loss.

² County Offaly, Eire.

³ In childbirth.

75 Joan Thynne to Roger Owen, draft demands, October 1609, *viii. f.33*.

[Headed] My Lady's Demands of Sir Roger Owen in October 1609.¹

First, my Lady demandeth for her daughter's jointure Boycott² and their heirs male by estimation worth per annum 450 pounds the house and furniture.

Item: One thousand pounds of her daughter's portion to be employed to the use of the young couple, and to rest at their disposal.

Item: She demandeth further, that if Sir Roger shall have issue male, that then he assure two hundred pounds per annum more upon the eldest son begotten by his brother upon the body of her daughter [*added*] and this 200 pounds to come presently to the son surviving after the decease of his father.

Item: She further requireth one thousand pounds portion for every of their daughters if she have above two, or else three thousand if she have but two.

Item: The house in Shrewsbury to be assured on them and their heirs.

Item: Five years' table for them and theirs.

Item: For defect of issue male of the body of Sir Roger, all his lands to be assured upon their issue male.

Item: To have 250 pounds presently per annum for their maintenance together with the one thousand pounds of the portion aforesaid.

That Sir Roger would now presently assure 300 pounds a year to them, and their heirs male besides the above mentioned jointure, for maintenance of them and their children.

[f.33b] Demands

1. For Jointure 350.

2. To assure 300 presently for the maintenance of William and Dorothy: and if William fortune to die, then presently to remain to their heirs male, and likewise Boycott after the decease of Mrs Dackett³ valued at 450 pounds.

[3 And to assure Boycott upon William and Dorothy and to there *struck through*].

3. [*added*] And if they have no heirs male, that then Sir Roger shall pay to every daughter betwixt them three thousand pounds apiece.
4. That if Sir Roger have no heirs male, to assure all his land upon his brother and his heirs male.
5. To give William and Dorothy, and the necessary family, table and horse-water for four years.
6. To let one of the thousand pounds to be employed to the behoof, and at the disposal of William and Dorothy.

¹ See 60. Joan Thynne's negotiations for a match between her daughter Dorothy, and William, the brother of Sir Roger Owen, of Conover, for whom see numerous references in *V.C.H. Shropshire*, viii and frontispiece (photo of Conover Hall). Sir Roger did indeed leave no male issue, the property going to William, *D.N.B.*; but the match with Dorothy did not go forward. Cf. 61 and n. W. And D., used throughout this document, have been extended to William and Dorothy.

² ? should be placed after *heirs male*. For Boycott, see *V.C.H. Shropshire*, viii, p. 272.

³ ? Daker; see *V.C.H. Shropshire*, viii, p. 47.

76 Joan Thynne's will, 28 February 1612 (proved 4 March 1612). (P.R.O. Prob 11/119, ff.179–80).

In the name of God, Amen, the eight and twentieth day of February one thousand six hundred and eleven, and in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord James by the grace of God King of England France and Ireland, defender of the faith etc., the ninth, and of Scotland the five and fortieth, I Joan Thynne of Caus Castle in the county of Shropshire widow, being sick in body but of perfect remembrance (thanks be given to Almighty God) do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following: first I commend my Soul into the merciful hands of Almighty God, my maker and redeemer, and my body to be buried at the discretion of my executrices and overseers hereafter named. And concerning those worldly goods which it hath pleased God to bless me with, I do order and dispose of them in manner and form following. First I give unto the poor of the parish of St Margaret in Westminster the sum of five pounds. Item I give unto the poor of the parish of Deverill in the county of Wiltshire the sum of fifteen pounds sterling. Item I give and bequeath unto my loving son Sir Thomas Thynne knight the sum of ten pounds of lawful money of England. Item I give and bequeath unto my loving son John Thynne the sum of two hundred pounds of lawful money of England. Item I give unto my loving daughters Dorothy Thynne and Christian Thynne the sum of one thousand pounds of lawful money of England, that is to say to either of them five hundred pounds. Item I give unto every one of my household servants one whole year's wages besides the wages which shall be due to them at the time of my decease. Also I give and bequeath unto my waiting gentlewoman Anne Criche the sum of one hundred pounds. Item I give to my nephew Warren Townshend the sum of ten pounds. The residue of my goods, chattels, plate, ready money, and whatsoever else shall be mine at the time of my decease, my debts being paid and my funeral expenses discharged, I give and bequeath wholly unto my said

two daughters Dorothy and Christian, whom I make the sole executrices of this my will. And I desire the right honourable Thomas Lord Knyvet my loving brother and my good cousin Sir William Bowyer knight, and my loving brother Sir George Hayward knight to be the overseers of this my will. And I give to every of my said overseers a ring of gold of the value of five pounds apiece. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal. Joan Thynne. Memorandum that the said Dame Joan Thynne did seal and deliver and publish this as her last will and testament the last day of February, One thousand six hundred and eleven in presence of Elizabeth Knyvet, Mary Bowyer, Elizabeth Hampden, William Bowyer, Edward Doubleday. Memorandum that after my Lady Thynne had sealed and delivered this her will, she signified before us all that her will was to give to Edward Doubleday esquire the sum of forty shillings for a remembrance to be made in a ring of gold for him.

Proved 4th March 1611/12 by Dorothy and Christian Thynne.¹

¹ According to the overseers there was little available to fulfil the legacies. see Introduction.

INDEX OF PERSONS AND PLACES

References in Roman numerals are to the introduction, those in Arabic are to letters not pages.

Surnames appear in modern form with variant spellings in brackets. Married women are shown under their maiden names, with cross references from their married ones.

Place names are modernised, places which are not also parishes are grouped within their parishes with cross references. All places in London are grouped under London. All places are in Wiltshire unless otherwise specified.

- Adams (Admes), ? John, 40 & n.
 Albany, Francis, sheriff of Shropshire, 18 & n.
 Alberbury (Montgom & Salop), Bausley, 16, Little Wollaston, 17 n.
 Allcoxe (? Allcocke), --, 24
 Andover (Hants), 55
 Anne of Denmark, Queen Consort of James I, 55
 Archar (Archare, Archarr), Andrew, 61 & n.,
 Simon, xxx, 61 & n.
 Arches, dean of the, *see* Donne, Sir Daniel
 Ariosto, Lodovico, *Orlando Furioso*, xxv–vi
 Arundel, Thomas, 55
 Aston Rogers (Salop), *see* Worthen
 Attorney general, *see* Coke, Sir Edward
 Audley (Addy, Adely, Audelay, Audelaye, Awdelay), *or* Touchet, Anne wife of Edward Blount, 54 & n.,
 Constance, daughter of James, Lord Audley, 53 n.,
 Eleanor, wife of Sir John Davies, 2ndly wife of Archibald Douglas, xxx, 54 n., 64,
 Ferdinando, 64 & n., 65,
 George, Lord, *later* Earl of Castlehaven, xxvi, xxviii, xxx, 52 n., 54 n.; letter from, 74,
 Lucy, wife of George, *see* Marvin,
 Maria, wife of Thomas Thynne, xxii, xxv–vii, xxix–xxxiii, 17–8, 19 & n., 30 & n., 38, 42, 58–9, 66 & n., 73 n., 74; letters from, 31, 33, 39, 41, 43, 46–9, 51–2, 63; letters to, 54–5, 62, 64–5; sisters of, 20,
 Mervin, *later* Earl of Castlehaven, xxx–xxx1, 54, 55 & n., 64 & n., 65
 Barber, 'Goody', midwife, 14
 Basing (Hants), 55
 Basset (Baset, Bassett, Basit), --, 22–3, 32, 44
 Bath (Som), 45; recorder of, *see* Hughes, Thomas
 Bausley (Montgom), *see* Alberbury
 Beaconsfield (Bucks), Bell Inn at, xxvi
 Beaumont (Bemond), Mr, 34
 Bedford, Countess of, *see* Harington, Lucy
 Berington (Berntongton, Berrinton), Walter, 3 & n., 12
 Bermingham, Richard, xxv n.
 Bishopstrow, xxx1, 52 n., 64
 Blount (Blunte), Anne, *see* Audley, Sir Christopher, 27,
 Edward, 54 n.
 Boreham, *see* Warminster
 Borne, Mistress, and her daughter, 19
 Botfield, *or* Bottevyale, family, xvii,
 John, xvii
 Botley (Warw), *see* Ullenhall
 Bowdler, Samuel, 27 & n., 30; letter from, 73
 Bowyer, Jervis, 57,
 Mary, 76,
 Sir William, xxv, xxix, 76
 Box, Haselbury, xviii
 Boycott (Salop), 75 & n.
 Bradley (Bradlie), --, 24
 Brooke, Henry, 8th Lord Cobham, 27
 Broughal (Eire), 74 & n.
 Broughton (Brotten, Broughten), Hugh, 28 n.,
 Mistress ('sister' to Joan Thynne), 34 & n., 37, 45; *see also* Wroughton
 Brown (Bwrune), Morris, xx, 7 & n.
 Brownwint, --, 51
 Buckingham, Duke of, *see* Stafford, Edward
 Burley, Mr, 57
 Bush, --, 52, 55
 Cable. (Cabble), Richard and William, xxxi, 52 & n.
 Cadwallaugh, William, 16
 Cambridge, Emmanuel College, xviii
 Carey, Henry, Lord Hunsdon, lord chamberlain, xxvii
 Carr, --, 52, 55

- Carter, Mr, 55
 Caulet (Carlet, ? Scarlet), --, 28, 58
 Caus (in Westbury, Salop), castle, xix-xx, xxii-xxv, xxxii, 15, 17-19, 20 & n., 21-30, 32, 34-8, 40, 42, 44, 46, 53, 56-8, 61, 66-7, 69, 72-3, 75-6; manor and borough, 58
 Cecil (Cissell), Robert, Earl of Salisbury, secretary of state, xxii, 27, 34 & n.
 Cendret, --, 20
 Chamberlain, Elizabeth, wife of John, *see* Thynne, John, 14 n.
 Chapmanslade, *see* Westbury (Wilts)
 Chelmick (Chelmecke), Mr (? John), 67
 Chester, justice of, *see* Townshend, Henry
 Chute, *see* Collingbourne Ducis
 Clarendon Park, 55
 Clarke (Clark), 'cousin' of Maria Thynne, 41, Ferdinand, 42, Mr, 19 & n.
 Clifford (Heref), *see* Whitney
 Clifford, Margaret, wife of Henry Stanley, 4th Earl of Derby, letter from, 70
 Cloford (Som), 50
 Cobham, Lord, *see* Brooke
 Cogswell (Cogeswell), Edward, xxxi, 30 n., 52 & n., 63, 65
 Coke, Sir Edward, attorney general, 30, 34
 Collingbourne Ducis, Chute, 63 & n.
 Compton Bassett, xxviii, 33, 39, 41, 43
 Compton Chamberlayne, 73
 Comptroller of the household, *see* Knollys, William, Lord
 Condober (Salop), 75 n.
 Corbet (Corbett, Corbyt), --, 37, Harry, 34 & n. Mistress, 34, Peter, 57
 Corsham, 52 n.
 Corsley, 49
 Cound (Salop), 56
 Cowper, --, 56
 Criche, *see* Crouch
 Croft (Crofte), Mr, 19
 Cromwell, Edward, Lord, 27
 Cropton *alias* Crupon, Thomas, 57
 Crouch (Criche), Ann, xxv, 76
 Curtis (Curtyse), John, 63 n., William, xxxi, 63 & n., 65
- Dackett (? Daker), Mrs, 75 & n.
 Danvers, Sir Charles, xxvi, 27, Henry, xxvi
 Darkin, Hugh, 57
 Daunte, Mr, 46
- Dauntsey, xxvi
 Davies (Davis, Davys), --, 23, Eleanor, wife of Sir John, *see* Audley, John, of Tredderwen (Montgom), 16, Sir John, xxx, 64; letter from, 54
 De la Warr, Lord, *see* West, Thomas
 Denbigh, 21
 Derby, Margaret, Countess of, *see* Clifford
 Deuddwr (Deythur) (Montgom), *see* Llandysilio
 Devereux, Robert, 2nd Earl of Essex, xxiii, 27; daughter of, 61 n.
 Deverill (*unidentified*), xxv, 27 n., 48, 64, 76, Kingston, 63 n., Longbridge, 63 & n.
 Digory, 48
 Doll (*unidentified*), niece of Joan Thynne, 14
 Donne (Dun), Sir Daniel (*miscalled* Sir Reynold), dean of the arches, master of requests, xxvi, 55 & n.
 Doubleday, Edward, 76
 Doylie, --, wife of, 70
 Dublin (Eire), 54 & n.
 Dudley, Robert, Earl of Leicester, xxii
 Dun, *see* Donne
- Earnley, Edward, xxi
 Egerton, Sir Thomas, *afterwards* Lord Ellesmere, lord keeper and lord chancellor, xxix, 27, 49 n., 55
 Elizabeth I, Queen, xviii, xxi-ii, xxvii, 16, 27, 58
 Eston, Mr, (? bailiff), 23
 Essex, Earl of, *see* Devereux
 Exall, John, xxviii, 48 & n.
 Exeter (Devon), 15
- Ferrars, Ann, 61 n.
 Fisher, --, 53
 Fitchet (Fichet), George, 29
 Floyd, *see* Lloyd
 Fonhill, xviii, 46, 55
 Fortescue, Sir John, 30
 Fox, Charles, sheriff of Shropshire, 21 & n., Mr, 46
 Francis (Fraunch), William, 23, 37
 Frome (Som), 65
- Gilbert, Sir Humphrey, Newfoundland expedition, 7 n.
 Glazeley (Salop), 59
 Gloucestershire, estates in, xxiii
 Glover, --, 57
 Gorddwr (Gorther), Nether (Montgom & Salop), xx, 27 n., Upper (Montgom & Salop), 16

- Gorges, Thomas, 55
 Gough (Goff), Mr, 28, 67
 Gresham, Christian, wife of Sir John Thynne (d.1580), Sir Richard, lord mayor of London, and Sir Thomas his son, xviii
- Hackney (Middx), King's Hold Manor, later Brooke House, xxvii
 Halliwell (Halywell), 'cousin', 17 & n., 18-20, 30
 George, xxxi, 30, 44, 57
 John, 44
 Mr, 16, 21, 52, 56-7, 63
 Richard, xxxi; letter to, 72
 Hals (? Halls), --, 52
 Hampden, Elizabeth, 76
 Harington, Lucy, wife of Edward Russell, 3rd Earl of Bedford, 55
 Haselbury, *see* Box
 Hastings, family, 54
 Hawkins (Hawken), --, niece of Joan Thynne, 28,
 Geoffrey, senior (d.1604), and Geoffrey, junior, 52 & n.
 Hayward (Haward, Hawarde, Heyward), Catherine, 2nd wife of Sir Rowland, *see* Smith,
 Elizabeth, wife of Richard Warren, 2ndly wife of Thomas Knyvett, xvii, xxi, xxiii-iv, xxvii-viii, 11 n., 12, 14, 20, 28, 30 & n., 34, 36-7, 60-1, 68, 76; letter from, 71.
 Sir George, xxv, 56, 75,
 Joan, first wife of Sir Rowland, *see* Tills-worth,
 Joan, *afterwards* Thynne, introduction, *passim*; letters from, 1-12, 14, 17, 18-30, 32, 34-7, 40, 42, 44-5, 53, 58-60, 66-8, 75; letters to, 13, 15-16, 31, 33, 38-9, 41, 43, 46, 49-50, 56-7, 61; will of, 76,
 Sir Rowland, lord mayor of London, xvii, xix, xx, xxvii, 3 n., 7, 9, 11, 14, 19, 69, 70, 73,
 Susan, wife of Henry Townshend, xvii, 7 & n., 20, 28, 30 n.
- Heneage (Hennege), Mr, 29
 Henry IV, King, 53 n.
 Henry VIII, King, xx, 58
 Hereford (Little) (Heref), Woodhampton, 61
 Herefordshire, sheriff of, *see* Whitney, William
 Hertford, Countess of, *see* Howard, Frances
 Higgins (Hegens, Higen, Higgens, Higgons), ? Thomas, 18-20, 23, 27; letter from, 72; letter to, 17; wife of, 27
- Hill (Hyll), Hugh, xxviii, xxxi-ii, 64
 Hilmarton, Witcomb, xxviii
 Hindon, *see* Knoyle, East
 Hinton, --, 57
 Hogstow, *see* Westbury (Salop)
 Hope (Salop), *see* Worthen
 Hope, Richard and Robert of, 57
 Hopton, Sir Arthur, xxi-ii,
 William, sheriff of Shropshire, xxii
 Horner (Hornar, Hornor), Anne, *see* Speke, Sir John, 5 & n.,
 John, son of Sir John, 44, 49 n., 50 & n.
 Horningsham, Longleat in, *q. v.*
 Howard, Charles, Earl of Nottingham, 55,
 Frances, wife of Henry Pranell, 2ndly wife of Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, (? 30 *illegible*), 55
 Henry, Earl of Northampton, 55
 Hughes, Sir Thomas, recorder of Bath, letter from, 50
 Hunsdon, Lord, *see* Carey, Henry
 Hussey (Hussye), --, 27 & n.
- Imber, parsonage, xxiii, 30
 Ireland, xxx, 12, 54; chief justice of, *see* Ley, James
 James I, King, xxi, 54-5, 58, 64, 73(?)
 Jane, 44
- Kemble (Glos, *formerly* Wilts), 16
 Kempford (Glos), xviii, 10 n., 52
 Keymis, --, 28
 King's Hold Manor, *see* Hackney
 Knollys (Knowles), William, Lord, controller of the household, 27, 55
 Knoyle, East, Hindon, 48 n., 55
 Knoyle, West, *see* Newton
 Knyvett (Kneveit, Knevet, Knevett), Catherine, daughter and coheir of Henry, wife of Richard Rich, and 2ndly wife of Thomas Howard, 1st Earl of Suffolk and 1st Baron Howard de Walden (1561-1626), 55,
 Elizabeth, *see* Hayward,
 Henry, xxvii,
 Thomas, Lord of Escrick, xxi, xxiv-v, xxvii-viii, 28, 30 n., 76
- Leicester, Earl of, *see* Dudley, Robert
 Leigh (Salop), *see* Worthen
 Leigh, Francis, xxiv
 Leighton (Salop), *see* Worthen
 Leighton (Leigton), Edward, 16
 Ley, James, 1st Earl of Marlborough, chief justice of Ireland, 54 & n.

- Lingen (Lingam, Lingham, Lyngen),
 'cousin', 73,
 John, xx, 26 & n., 28,
 Mistress, 25,
 Richard, 34,
 Thomas, xxiii, 28 n.
- Llandysilio (Montgom), Deuddwr
 (Deythur), 16 & n.
- Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain (Montgom),
 Tredderwen (Trethewan), 16 & n.
- Lloyd (Flode, Flloyd, Lloid, Lloide, Loid),
 Charles, sheriff of Montgomeryshire, 29,
 34,
 Edward, 24,
 Matthew, 72,
 Oliver, 29, 34,
 Robert, 16
- London, xviii-ix, xxi-ii, xxv, xxix, xxxi, 3-4,
 8-11, 14, 18, 23, 27-8, 30, 34, 47, 48 & n.,
 54, 58-61, 68 & n., 69, 73;
 Lord mayors of, *see* Gresham, Sir Richard;
 Hayward, Sir Rowland;
 Places in, Cannon Row, xviii, xxi, xxx, 14,
 18, 27, 29-30, 34-7, 40, 51-2, 59, 62;
 Clerkenwell, xxx, 52 & n.; Essex
 House, 27; Gatehouse prison, West-
 minster, 27; Gray's Inn, xxviii, xxxii;
 Holborn, 58; King Street, West-
 minster, xxi; Ludgate, 27; the
 Minories, 28; Philip Lane, 3; Queen-
 hithe, 27; Royal Exchange, xviii; St
 James's Park, 32; St Paul's, 19 n.; St
 Margaret's parish, 75; the Strand,
 52 n.; the Tower, 27, 28 n.; West-
 minster, xxi, 24, 26, 76; Whitehall, 48
- Long, Henry, xxvi
- Longleat (in Horningsham), xvii-xxi, xxiii,
 xxv, xxviii-xxxii, 3 n., 4 & n., 10, 13, 14 &
 n., 21-2, 44, 46, 47 n., 48 n., 49 & n., 52
 & n., 53-5, 64-6, 68, 71, 74; Longleat
 Park, 63-4
- Lord chamberlain, *see* Carey, Henry
- Lord chancellor and lord keeper, *see*
 Egerton, Sir Thomas
- Lord chief justice, *see* Popham, John
- Lord treasurer, *see* Sackville, Thomas
- Ludlow, Sir Edmund, xxi, 65 & n.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò, xxv
- Maiden Bradley, 63, 65 n.
- Mainsbridge (Hants), 55
- Manners, Mr, xxvi,
 Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland, 27
- Marchant *see* Merchant
- Mardol (Salop), *see* Shrewsbury
- Marlborough, Earl of, *see* Ley, James
- Marvin (Marven), family, xxv-vii, 17-8, 72 &
 n.,
 Edmund, 18,
 Sir James, of Fonthill, xviii, xxii, xxv-vi,
 xxviii, 17-8, 19 & n., 48 n., 63, 72;
 letter from, 55,
 John, xxvi, 19, 20 n.,
 Sir John, sheriff of Wiltshire, xviii,
 Lucy, wife of George, Lord Audley,
 xviii-ix, xxv, xxvii-viii, 18-9, 20 n., 38,
 52 & n., 54; letters from, 38, 64; letter
 to, 42
- Maynard, John, xxiv
- Mells (Som), 5 n., 50 n.
- Mendips (Som), xxiv
- Merchant (Marchant, Merchante), Mr, 30 &
 n., 63
- Mere, East Woodlands, xxxi
- Minsterley, *see* Westbury (Salop)
- Monksham (Som), 52 & n.
- Montgomery, 16
- Montgomery (Mountgumerie), Lady, 50 & n.
- Montgomeryshire, sheriffs of, *see* Lloyd,
 Charles; Price, Richard
- More, Sir Jasper, xxi
- Morgan, Mr, 52
- Morley (Morlie), Edward, 58
- Morris (Mories, Mores), Edward, xxv, xxxi,
 18, 44
- Mounteagle, Lord, *see* Parker, William
- 'Nan', 25
- Nash, Joan, 44
- Nether Gorddwr, *see* Gorddwr, Nether
- Newbury (Newbery, Newboroughe, Nor-
 berry, Noubery), Thomas, xxv, xxxi, 28,
 44, 57, 73
- Newfoundland, 7 n.
- Newnton, West Knoyle, xxi
- Newton, *see* Westbury (Salop)
- Newton, Francis, sheriff of Shropshire, 34 &
 n.
- Newtown (Montgom), 40
- Norris, Lady, *see* Williams, Marjorie
- Northampton, Earl of, *see* Howard, Henry
- Nottingham, Earl of, *see* Howard, Charles
- Orchard Wyndham (Som), 59 n.
- Overgorther, *see* Gorddwr, Upper
- Owen, Roger, letters to, 60, 75,
 William, 60 & n., 75 & n.
- Oxford, xxv, 20, 35,
 Corpus Christi College, xxv
- Parker, William, Lord Mounteagle
 (Mounteagle), 27

- Patrick (Partrac), 'John Marvin's boy', 19–20
 Palle (? Paul or Polle), 'brother' of Joan Thynne, 5 & n.
 Pendren (Penderen), Mr (? William Penryn, sheriff of Montgomery, 1603), 34 & n.
 Phillips, —, 56
 Philpots (Fylpottes), George, 55
 Pillsworth, *see* Tillsworth
 Pinnock, —, 21
 Pole, Ursula, wife of Henry, 1st Baron Stafford, 58
 Poole, The, *see* Welshpool
 Popham, John, lord chief justice, 27
 Poulton, *see* Westbury (Salop)
 Poulton, John, Lord, 57
 Prestbury (Glos), 14
 Price (Prise, Pryse), Mr (? Richard, sheriff from Dec. 1602), 40
 Purcell (Pursell), Thomas, 16 & n.
 Purslow (Pourslo), Edward, xxv, Thomas, 32; letter from, 57
- Raben, Geoffrey, 26
 Raddock (Radok), —, 52
 Radnorshire, sheriff of, *see* Whitney, Eustace
 Raleigh (Rawley), Carey (or Carew), 4 n.
 Dorothy, wife of Carey, *see* Wroughton Sir Walter, 27
 Ravenstead (Ravanstade), Mr, 40
 Rawlinge, *alias* Rawlyne, —, 57
 Requests, Master of, *see* Donne, Daniel
 Reynolds, Mr, undersheriff of Shropshire, 21
 Richardson (Richardson), 'the mason', 23–4
 Rider, Thomas, 57
 Robert, Thomas ap, 16
 Roe, Thomas, 74
 Rogers, Mr, 65
Romeo and Juliet, xxvii
 Roscorrock, Charles, xxiv
 Rutland, Earl of, *see* Manners, Roger
- Sackville, Thomas, Lord Buckhurst, Earl of Dorset, lord treasurer, 27, 30, 55
 Salisbury (Sarum), 55 & n.; ecclesiastical court of, xviii
 Salisbury, Earl of, *see* Cecil, Robert
 Salisbury (Salsbury), —, xxxi, 62 & n., 63
 Sampford, Mr, 63
 Sandys, William, 3rd Lord, 27
 Scarlet, —, *see* Caulet
 Secretary, Mr, *see* Cecil, Robert
 Seymour, Edward, Duke of Somerset, lord protector, xvii–viii, xx
 Shakespeare, William, xxvii
 Shore (Shaw), —, 63 & n.
- Shrewsbury (Salop), 18, 73, 75, Mardol, 73
 Shropshire, 30, 69, 73; lands in, xxviii; sheriffs of *see* Albanye, Francis; Fox, Charles; Hopton, William; Newton, Francis; undersheriff of *see* Reynolds
 Smith (Smithe), —, 'the clothier' (? John, of Keevil), 63 n. 65.
 Catherine, wife of Rowland Hayward, xxi, 11 n., 20,
 Edward, of Deverill, Longbridge, xxxi, 63 & n.,
 Sir Thomas (d. 1591), 11 n.,
 Sir Thomas (d. 1625), 27 & n.
 Snage, Mr, 23; *and see* Snygge
 Snygge, Sir George, 23 n.
 Somerset, Duke of, *see* Seymour, Edward
 Somerset, Edward, 4th Earl of Worcester, 27, 55
 Southampton, Earl of, *see* Wriothesley, Henry
 Southworth (Sowthworth), Thomas, 50 & n.
 Speke, Ann, wife of John Horner, 44, 49 n.
 Stafford (Stafarde, Stafered, Stafforde), Mr, 26,
 Dorothy, 58,
 Edward, Duke of Buckingham (exec. 1521), xx, 58,
 Edward, 3rd Baron (1536–1603), son of Henry, 1st Baron (1501–63), xx, xxii–iv, xxvii, 3, 8 n., 16, 19, 21, 30, 34, 36–7, 56,
 Henry, 1st Baron (1501–63), xix–xx, 58,
 Mary, Lady, wife of Edward, 3rd Baron, *see* Stanley,
 Ursula, Lady, *see* Pole
 Stalbridge (Dors), xxviii, 31, 38
 Standish, Roger, 44
 Stanley, Mary, wife of Edward Lord Stafford, xxii
 Stantore, Thomas, 'Cousin', 48 & n.
 Starkey (Starkye), —, niece of Henry Townshend, 15
 Steven, 61
 Stirchley (Salop), 61 & n., 73
 Stretton, Church (Salop), xvii, xix, 23–4, 56
 Sudlow, George, xxxi, 52 & n.
 Suffolk, Countess of, *see* Knyvett, Catherine
 Suker, —, 24
 Symes, —, 23
- Tannerdyne (Tanndine, Tanrdyn), Constance, 61 & n.,
 Richard, letter from, 61
 Tanfield, Lawrence, sergeant-at-law, 50
 Tap, *see* Topp

- Thomas (?), brother of Joan Thynne, 14;
uncle of Maria Thynne, 63
- Thynne (Thenne, Thinne, Thyn, Thyne),
Charles, 25, 62 & n.,
Christian, xxi, xxiv-v, xxix-xxx, 18, 25, 29,
34-7, 46, 53, 68, 76,
- Dorothy (Doll), daughter of Joan and John
(b. 16 Apr. 1590), xxi, xxiv-v,
xxix-xxx, 14 & n., 18 & n., 20, 25,
28-9, 34-7, 46, 53, 59-61, 66-8, 75 &
n., 76,
- Dorothy, wife of Sir John (d. 1580), *see*
Wroughton,
- Elizabeth, wife of John Chamberlain, 14 &
n.,
- Francis, of Kempford (brother of John,
d. 1604), 10, 23,
- Sir Henry, 63; letter from, 62,
- Joan, wife of Sir John (d. 1604), *see* Hay-
ward,
- Sir John (d. 1580), xvii-xx, 7, 9, 10, 11,
20 n., 58 (?), 70, 73; letter to, 69,
- Sir John (d. 1604), xvii-xxii, xxiv-ix, xxxii,
17, 38, 46, 47 n., 54 n., 63, 66 n., 67 n.,
69, 72-3; letters to, 1-12, 14, 18-30,
32, 34-7, 40, 44-5, 71,
- John, son of John and Joan, xxix-xxx,
20-1, 35-7, 73, 76,
- Maria, wife of Sir Thomas, *see* Audley,
- Sir Thomas, son of John and Joan, xxi-ii,
xxiv-vii, xxix-xxxi, xxxiii, 17-8, 19 &
n., 20, 27, 30, 38-9, 41-3, 49 & n.,
54-7, 62 & n., 64, 71, 76; letter from
65; letters to, 47-8, 51-3, 58-9, 63,
66-8, 73-4,
- Thomas, son of Maria and Thomas, 66 &
n., 67-8,
- William, 62 & n.
- Throcklestone (Hants), 55
- Tibiton, *alias* Tipton, —, 57 & n.
- Tillsworth (Pillsworth), Joan, wife of Sir
Rowland Hayward, xvii, 1 & n., 3, 7 &
n., 9, 11 & n., 69-70
- Tipper, William, 58 & n.
- Tipton, *see* Tibiton
- Tisbury, Wardour, 55
- Tooker (Tucker), William, 55 & n.
- Topp (Tap), Alexander, xxiii, 28 & n.
- Touchet, *see* Audley
- Townshend (Thouneshend, Tounsend,
Townshend, Townsend), Bess, 37,
Henry, of Cound, justice of Chester, xx,
xxiii, 7 n., 28-9, 30 n.; letters from, 15,
56,
Susan, wife of Henry, *see* Hayward,
Warren, 76
- Tracy (Tracye), Sir John, 27
- Tredderwen (Trethewan) (Montgom), *see*
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
- Tucker, *see* Tooker
- Ullenhall (Warw), Botley, 61 & n.
- Upton Scudamore, 52 n.
- Usher (Osher), Mr, 16, 52
- Vavasour (Vaveser), Sir Thomas, xxxi, 65
- Vernon (Vernone), Sir Robert, 27
- Wardour, *see* Tisbury
- Warminster, xxviii, xxxi, 52 n., 64 & n., 65,
Boreham, 64
- Warren, Elizabeth, *see* Hayward,
Richard, xxi, xxiii, 11 & n., 20
- Welles, —, 'a minister', xxvi
- Wells (Som), 50 & n.
- Welshpool (The Poole) (Montgom), 24 & n.
- West, Thomas, Lord de la Warr (de Laware),
55
- Westbury (Salop), manor, 60 n.,
Caus in, *q.v.*,
Hogstow, 57; forest, 58,
Minsterley, 58,
Newton, 34 n.,
Poulton, 57,
Whitton, manor, 26 n.
- Westbury (Wilts), Chapmanslade, 52 n.
- Westbury Leigh, 52 n.
- Wharton, Margaret, wife of Edward, 1st
Baron Wotton, 55
- Whatbroke, *see* Whitbroke
- Wherwell (Hants), 55
- Whitbroke (Whatbroke), Hugh, 22 n.,
John, 22 & n., 23
- Whitney (Heref), 53 n.,
Clifford, lordship and castle, 53 n.
- Whitney, Eustace, sheriff of Radnor;
George; Robert; and William, sheriff of
Herefordshire, 53 n.
- Whitton (Salop), *see* Westbury
- Whyte, Rowland, xxvii-viii
- Witcomb, *see* Hilmarton
- Williams (Willams, Wylliams), David,
sergeant-at-law, 30 & n.,
Marjorie, wife of Henry, Baron Norris of
Rycote, 70,
Mistress, 28,
Reynold, 27 n., 47 & n., 52; letter from 16
- Willoughby (Willughby), Elizabeth, of
Knogle, letter from, 13,
Henry, xxi
- Wilton, 62
- Wiltshire, sheriff of, *see* Marvin, Sir John

- Witham Friary (Som), 52 n.
 Wollaston, Little (Salop), *see* Alberbury
 Woodhampton (Heref), *see* Hereford, Little
 Woodlands, East, *see* Mere
 Woodlands, Richard, xxxi, 52 & n., 63
 Worcester, 11
 Worcester, 4th Earl of, *see* Somerset, Edward
 Worthen (Salop), Aston Rogers, 58,
 Hope, 57,
 Leigh, 34 & n.,
 Leighton, 16
 Wotton, Edward, 1st Baron, 55,
 Lady, *see* Wharton, Margaret
 Wright (Write), ---, doctor, 27
 Wriothlesley, Henry, Earl of Southampton, 27
 Wroughton, Dorothy, wife of Sir John
 Thynne, 2ndly wife of Carey Raleigh,
 xviii, xx, 3 n., 4 & n., 7 & n., 9, 10, 49 n.;
 letter to, 70; *see also* Broughton
 Wyndham (Windham), Sir John, and his
 sons, 59 & n.
 Young (Yonger), xix; letter from 69,
 Sir Robert, 59

INDEX OF SUBJECTS

Most subjects are grouped under inclusive headings. The main groups are: animals and birds; clothing; courts of law; crops; food and drink; furniture and domestic articles; law, customs and legal matters; remedies; sicknesses; and trades and occupations.

- Animals and birds: buck, stags, 55; cattle, cows, beefs, 23–4, 28, 36, 44, 57, 61; dogs, 48; fowl, 23; foxes, 48; game, 23; hare, 48; hawks, goshawk, 48, 54; horses, foal, mare, 10–11, 14–5, 23, 27, 32, 46, 52, 55, 62, 75; pigeon, 15; pigs, 51; rabbits, 14–5; sheep, lambs, 15, 28, 44, 56, 65; waifs and strays, 56
- Brewing furnace, xxiv, 21
- Children, xvii, xxi, xxiv–v, xxix–xxx, xxxii, 14 & n., 17, 18 & n., 19–21, 25, 28–9, 34–7, 45, 66–7, 69, 71, 75; *see also* Index of Persons and Places *under* Thynne; Christian, Dorothy, John, and Thomas
- Clothing: xix–xx; buttons, 10; doublet, 71; farthingale, 20; gowns, 14, 21, 25, 29; hose, 20, 21, 71; jerkin, 21; night cap, 10; petticoat, 20; pomegranates, 20 & n.; robes, 25; ruffs, 18 n.; silver, 29; spangles, 29; suit, 35–6; wires, 25
- Cloths: 21; cambric thread, 29; satin, 10; stuff, 25, 36
- Council in the Marches of Wales, xx, xxii, 7
- Court, the royal, xvii, xxi–iv, 27, 29, 55, 70
- Courts of law: xx, xxv, 16, 23, 56; Arches, court of, xxvi, 17 n., 30 n.; assizes, 24, 30, 36; chancery, 36; court leet, 56; court rolls, 57; ecclesiastical, xvii; exchequer, viii, 24 n., 56
- Crops: barley, 32; corn, 22, 32, 36, 44, 57; fruit, 49; grass, 23; hay, 23; hops, 24; malt, 23–4, 32, 44, 55; timber, wood, 50, 56, 63; wheat, 23
- Food and drink: beer, 55; cheeses, 37; grapes, 51 n.; lamprey, 15; raisins, 51; salad oil, 24; sturgeon, 24, 30; sugar, 13; treacle, 51; veal, 15; vinegar, 30; wine, Rhenish, 30
- Furniture and domestic articles: xxiii–v; bed, 47, 69; brush, 14; chest, 10; knives, 18, 20, 44; napery, 73; pillion cloth, 21; pins, 14; saddle, 21; sheets, 18; starch, 18 & n., 29, 34, 36; trunk, 25, 30, 63
- Guns, arquebus, muskets, gunpowder, xxiv, 34, 36
- Juries, xxii, 16, 21, 34, 40
- Justices, 16, 21
- Law, customs, and legal matters: amercements, 57; common lands, 56; estreats, 24 n., 52; firebote, heybote, housebote, 50 & n.; forest rights, 57; greenwax, 24, 56; heriots, 56; jointure, xxiii, 49, 61; leases, xxv, 56; writs, 21, 34, 37; *see also* courts, juries, justices
- Leads (roof), 23
- Marriage and dowry: xvii–xx, xxiv–xxx, 2 n., 17 & n., 18–20, 30 & n., 38, 42, 53 & n., 55 & n., 59, 60 & n., 61 & n., 72 & n., 73 & n., 75 & n.
- Medicine, *see* Remedies
- Mills, millstone, 23–4, 63
- Mining, xxiii–iv
- Musical instruments: lute strings, 29; virginals, xxiv, 29
- Parliament, xxii, 48 n., 51 n., 58; House of Commons, 48; rolls of, 24; statutes, 57–8
- Plots and rebellions: Essex rebellion, xxiii, 27; Gunpowder Plot, xxi
- Pregnancy and birth, xxi, 14 & n., 48 & n., 74 & n.
- Prison, *see* Index of Persons and Places *under* London, Gatehouse
- Privy Council, xxi–ii, 12, 55, 58, 64
- Remedies and medicines: 44, 51; dragon water, 51; herbs, 51; horehound, 21; mellilot, mettridot and mithridatum, 51 & n.; musk rose, 10; physic, 44; readinge, redding, and rue, 51 & n.; tincture of saffron, 28; treacle, 51 & n.; *see also* Index of Persons and Places *under* Wright
- Servants (of the Thynne family): xx, xxv; choosing of, 47–8, 52, 56; cornet boy, 19;

Servants—*contd*

maids, 47; woodman, servitor, 55, 75; *see also* Index of Persons and Places *under*: Bush; Carr; Cendret; Digory; Exall; Halliwell, Mr.; Jane; Nash, Joan; Newbury, Thomas; Roe; Scarlet; Sudlow, George; *see also* Trades and Occupations

Shops, 28, 51

Sheriffs, *see* Index of Persons and Places *under*: Albany, Francis; Fox, Charles; Hopton, William; Marvin, Sir John; Newton, Francis; Whitney, Eustace

Sicknesses: 53; ague, 35; faintness, 62; fits, 36; murrain, 51; plague 51; smallpox, 34–5, 37; syphilis, French disease, 55 & n.

Tenants, xx, 52 & n., 56–7, 63

Trades and occupations: attorney, 68; bailiff, 18 n., 36, 52, 56; carriers, 7, 37, 63; chapman, 62–3; clerk, 50; clerk of the peace, 3 n.; clothier, 50, 52, 65; cook, 19, 20; cornet boy, 19; counsel, 37, 50; doctor, 27; dogboy, 52; footboy, 44; grooms, 52; horse buyers, 62; lawyer, 50 & n.; mason, 23–4; midwife, xxi, 14; painter, 2; plumber, 23; sergeant-at-law, 50; shepherds, 65; solicitor, 16, 34; stewards, 56; teacher, tutor, 20; under-sheriff, 21, 34; woodman, 55; *see also* Servants

Treason, 27, 58, 61

Woods, 50, 56, 65 n.

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