

Prelude to Piety: Nicholas Ferrar's Grand Tour

[He] doth truly travell, who whither soever he directeth his journey, travelleth for the greater benefit of his wit, for the commodity of his studies, and the dexterity of his life.

Thomas Coryat¹

To describe Nicholas Ferrar's Grand Tour as a 'prelude to piety' is, of course, to view it retrospectively knowing that Little Gidding lay in his future. Vital elements of that later enterprise did indeed reflect particularly significant experiences from his Grand Tour, as I shall seek in this paper to demonstrate. Nevertheless I think it worth reminding ourselves at the outset that the young man who set off for the Continent in 1613 was securely established as a Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge and, so far as we know, expected to resume that place on his return. His immediate purpose in going was to restore his health. No doubt too, like most contemporary travellers, he expected to acquire the sort of broader knowledge and personal polish that Thomas Coryat extolled. We have little explicit evidence of spiritual benefits he might have anticipated as well, but it is hard to imagine he expected none. Nicholas nonetheless, however much 'dexterity' of life he gained in his travels, could hardly have foreseen at the time what in future he would draw from those experiences as he created for his family's household a distinctive pattern of piety.

The seven years immediately following his return in 1617 in fact suggested a 'dexterity' that had turned his travels into a prelude to politics and place rather than to prayer and piety. How much that new readiness to apply his talents to worldly affairs owed to the stimulus of his time abroad and how much to family pressures after his return is unclear. What is clear, however, is that during those years he exchanged the collegiate world of Cambridge for the London world of the Virginia Company and ultimately, in 1624, of Parliament. That his close colleague during those years, Sir Edwin Sandys, could have been 'amazed' at news of Nicholas's subsequent ordination as deacon in 1626 suggests how thoroughly he had till then immersed himself

in this worldly role.² What caused a change of course dramatic enough to have ‘amazed’ Sandys and probably to have accompanied a reassessment of his experiences abroad?

Nicholas sought ordination only after the collapse of the Virginia Company and the near-bankruptcy of his elder brother, John Ferrar, had left him and his family in 1625 with not only a country property at Little Gidding but also a conviction that their reverses were a call from God to live a different sort of life. Such a conviction would not in itself have been an unusual response, particularly for a pious family, but the Ferrars pursued it with exceptional and enduring fervour. Whether individual members of the family reached that conclusion for themselves or required persuasion from Nicholas one can only speculate. There is certainly the possibility, as Maycock suggests, that Nicholas for his own part felt a special need to repent of such actions as his parliamentary role in the impeachment of Lord Treasurer Cranfield.³ Whatever the route by which the family reached its collective decision, its effect at that critical juncture was to give Nicholas charge not only of restructuring the family’s finances but also of providing a new and more godly pattern for their life together.

While there is general agreement that the shape of the pattern he devised bore some imprint of his earlier travels, documentation of that view comes down all too often to the probable rather than to the certain. It is important also to keep in mind that while these ideas and institutions that Nicholas encountered abroad played a significant role, they were by no means the only factors and they were inevitably intertwined with the pervasive influences of his English homeland. Nicholas could in fact have learned of at least some of them from friends and books without ever leaving England. Nevertheless, he did travel and those travels did leave their mark on his later life, however imperfectly recorded. Unlike his contemporaries Coryat and Moryson, Nicholas never wrote up an account of his travels. Indeed, he left no published original writings at all. His biographies depend instead primarily on his brother John’s recollections set down some fifteen or more years after Nicholas’s death in 1637.⁴ The major source of our information about his travels, therefore, is itself retrospective. John furthermore had never been one for scrupulous attention to accuracy, and in this instance his selective memory was strongly coloured by the reverence in which he held his brother, a hagiographic haze that subsequent biographers have generally retained.

Unfortunately the Ferrar Papers at Magdalene College, Cambridge, offer only slim material against which to check or supplement John’s version of his brother’s travels. Nicholas was a conscientious correspondent, but only one of his letters from Italy, and that a copy in his father’s hand, survives. As we shall see later, however, that letter directly contradicts John’s later version of a particular episode,⁵ and thus illustrates the kind of selectivity John’s attitudes imposed. Evidence of other letters comes only from notes by a great-nephew, the Reverend Thomas Ferrar, in the early eighteenth century. The

latter allow us to plot with more assurance the chronology of Nicholas's travels. They supply, however, few additional clues as to what he actually saw and, more importantly, how he responded to it. Fortunately, the foreign works Nicholas later chose to translate during his years at Little Gidding do provide significant insights into what had impressed him during his travels and I shall discuss these at a later point. Before attempting such an analysis, however, I shall first try to reconstruct the path of his Grand Tour as clearly as the sources allow.

His doctor had told him during the winter of 1612–13 that if he did not leave England as soon as possible he would undoubtedly succumb to the agues that had increasingly afflicted him in Cambridge.⁶ He was at that point turning twenty and had held his college fellowship for at least a couple of years. In the face of so dire a warning, Nicholas prepared to travel. He of course needed and received the support of his father and brother. As merchants they had ample experience of such matters and could supply not only information but also money and contacts, especially in the Baltic cities of Germany.⁷

His Cambridge connections could also contribute. His tutor, Augustine Lindsell reassured the parent Ferrars that Nicholas was so well-grounded in his Protestant faith that he could safely travel alone and did not need the company of an older companion or tutor.⁸ He could seek advice in planning the Italian portion of his time abroad from two Fellows of Clare, Robert Byng and Thomas Winston, who had studied at Padua. Many Englishmen spent time there,⁹ but Winston had done more than simply dabble academically. He had been in Padua long enough to receive an M.D. in 1608 before returning to Cambridge in that year. Further assistance came to Nicholas from the new Master of Clare, Robert Scot, who arranged for him to cross to the Continent in the entourage of the Princess Elizabeth, newly-married to the Elector Palatine and about to travel with him to Heidelberg.

Besides friends and family there was impersonal advice available in various books for travellers including English translations of brief sixteenth-century Latin works by Albertus Meierus and Justus Lipsius published in 1589 and 1592.¹⁰ Sir Robert Dallington and Sir Thomas Palmer expanded on these short outlines to provide an exhaustive list of topics ranging from the geography of a region, the situation and resources and institutions of its towns, its crops, crafts, and trade as well as its politics, laws, revenues, and defences and the religion, diet, clothing, and customs of the inhabitants.¹¹ For Italy there was Schott's *Itinerarium Italiae*, on which that earlier traveller Thomas Coryat had drawn extensively. Our sources never specify that Nicholas actually read any such books. What they describe of his actions, however, does suggest that he might well have done so for he sought out just this sort of information in the places he visited, particularly in northern Europe.¹² He had, for example, the thorough protective grounding in sound, *i.e.* Protestant, religious principles that Dallington recommended, and he chose

Leipzig, where Dallington declared the purest German was spoken, for his longest stay in Germany.¹³

As conscientious a tourist as he had been a student, Nicholas thus equipped himself with funds and contacts and probably some sort of checklist or method to guide his exploration of the places he was to visit. He doubtless also informed himself about the state of the larger European political and religious world. He would know that in the Netherlands and Germany he would encounter varying degrees of religious toleration but also increasing tension and confessional confrontation. Englishmen debated with growing acrimony their own appropriate role in this worsening situation. A Protestant traveller would, of course, need to be prudent in Italy or Spain, but Nicholas had never been one for polemics, however sure he might be of his own position.

His preparations complete, Nicholas departed from London with the Princess and the Palsgrave and their party on 10 April 1613, sailed from Margate on the 25th and landed in Flushing on the 29th.¹⁴ His violent seasickness on the North Sea crossing apparently cured him, as Dr Butler had predicted it would, for once back on dry land he found himself free of his ague and restored to health.¹⁵

Two days later Nicholas wrote to his brother John, remarking in a practical vein that he had found Zeeland very expensive and feared Holland was likely to prove the same. More important for the course of his future travels, he had decided, he told his brother, not to continue with the Princess's party to Heidelberg but to leave them at Utrecht, return to Leyden and then go on to Hamburg.¹⁶ So early a date for such an announcement suggests that if Nicholas had ever had an interest in securing a court post at Heidelberg, he had abandoned it almost immediately on arrival.¹⁷

Nicholas employed what was rather a brief time in the Netherlands in ways that Dallington and Palmer would surely have approved. His companions remarked on what an assiduous observer he was, always carrying his Dutch-English dictionary with him and keen to learn the language as well as see the country and meet the people.

He could certainly have met people in religious venues more diverse than any he could readily or even safely have entered at home. Interestingly, the only groups John mentioned his visiting were the Jewish synagogue, an exotic for an Englishman of that time, and the separatist sects of 'Brownists' and 'Anabaptists'. John's singling out these latter for mention many years later suggests that Nicholas attached significance to such contacts with sectarian gathered churches. He remained always a loyal and liturgical Anglican, but his later emphasis at Little Gidding on both oral and written commitments to various projects¹⁸ certainly had much in common with the testimonial practices by which such groups developed their sense of community. Even the dominant Reformed Church, which Nicholas probably also visited,¹⁹ maintained a distinction between 'members', who could partake of

communion, and 'adherents', who had not qualified with a public account of their faith.²⁰ At the same time, though Nicholas never showed any interest in doctrinal disputation, he could hardly have remained unaware of the mounting tension between Calvinists and Arminians that was to culminate five years later in the Synod of Dort.

There were also significant numbers of Catholics in the United Provinces, though they had to worship less openly than the others and Nicholas's biographers certainly never mentioned his seeking them out.²¹ If, however, he did encounter them, he would have found among them also voluntary groups of committed lay men and women. These *Klopjes* and *Klopbroeders*, who lived in celibate communities although without formal vows, assisted at services, catechized children and adults, and visited parishioners. In Haarlem the women also ran a sewing school for girls that was so successful that the Protestant regents sent their own daughters there.²² Such societies of committed members, both Catholic and Protestant, could have put before Nicholas examples of a visibly effective way to combine a collective devotional life with service to society, of a life that was in the world but not of it.

Nicholas's investigation of secular matters certainly produced echoes of the methods for travellers proposed by Dallington and Palmer. Nicholas examined the layout of cities, the nature of government and laws, regional differences among the provinces and their people, provisions for defence, and trade and commerce. Another aspect of civic life that seems to have drawn his particular attention was poor relief, in particular a type of almshouse 'where young children of both sexes are brought up to learn handicrafts'.²³ These workshops provided for orphans a kind of group apprenticeship of the sort that a more prosperous family might arrange individually for its children. Nicholas also looked at other almshouses set up to employ the disabled and enable them to support themselves without begging.²⁴ Perhaps Nicholas's initial interest in almshouses was largely dutiful, part of what he thought he ought, as a well-informed traveller and concerned Christian, to take an interest in. On the other hand these particular projects involved not just alms but education of a practical sort appropriate to humbler folk, an interest which Nicholas would continue to pursue on his travels and later incorporate in a distinctive way at Little Gidding. He left no sign then or later, however, of interest in systematic plans for universal and practical education like those put forward by Comenius or Dury or William Petty and much discussed in the 1640s and 50s.

There was no mention here or subsequently of any book- or print-buying, though Nicholas was supposed to have brought home many of the prints the family later used in making those biblical harmonies or concordances for which Little Gidding was noted, as well as many of the 'worldly' books such as *Orlando* that on his deathbed he commanded his brother to burn.²⁵ Certainly the collection of prints remaining at Magdalene includes works by many Netherlandish artists, which in turn suggests an acquaintance with this

body of work likely to owe at least something to this period of his travels.²⁶ Catholic books would obviously have been easier to buy abroad than in England, and we know from Nicholas's later references and translations that he possessed a number of these, at least some of which he probably purchased on his travels. Whether he acquired particular works of Lessius, de Sales, Valdes, Cornaro or Carbone then or later, however, we cannot be sure.²⁷

After perhaps a fortnight or so in Holland he reached Hamburg by late May, having visited Bremen and Stade on the way.²⁸ Nicholas there had introductions to many friends and business associates of his father and brother, among them John's brother-in-law and partner, Thomas Sheppard, whose later bankruptcy was to have profound consequences for the Ferrars.²⁹ As in Holland, he set about studying the language, the history, and the institutions, civil and religious, as well as the trade and commerce of the place. He also visited nearby Lübeck.³⁰ If, however, that study of religious institutions included attendance at Lutheran churches, there was no mention of it here or anywhere else in Germany. What significance to attach to this omission is difficult to judge; did it represent Nicholas's attitude to Lutheranism or John's selective memory?³¹ Another more prosaic unknown was how long Nicholas actually stayed in Hamburg. In his letter to John of 29 May he reported himself still awaiting company for the journey to Leipzig.³² If he actually did all he was said to have done in Hamburg, he probably waited at least a week if not longer.

In Leipzig he planned to stay for six weeks to two months, his first lengthy stop on the journey. There, with greater leisure, he could acquire more thoroughly that knowledge of the geography and culture of a place recommended to the conscientious traveller. In the academic world of the university he met members of the faculty and engaged tutors with whom to continue his study of German language, history and institutions. He also studied the techniques of 'artificial memory'.³³ He was said to have so impressed the professors that he found himself visited and lionized to the point that he had to withdraw at intervals to villages outside the city to get the peace and quiet he needed for his studies. He might also have investigated Wittenberg, another eminent and not too distant university town.³⁴ He made time as well for some sightseeing with visits to neighbouring courts and cities, Dresden being one of the most notable.

Though he was here clearly moving within a more familiar university ambience, he also continued his investigations of more practical kinds of education such as he had pursued earlier in the Netherlands. Here, however, instead of almshouses for the orphaned and disabled he sought out master craftsmen who excelled in the wide variety of 'mechanical arts' for which Germany was noted. He then persuaded masters of these several crafts, by turns a painter, a weaver, a dyer, a smith, an architect, to take him on for a brief 'apprenticeship'. In that way he picked up not only something of the skills involved but enough technical language to enable him to discuss the

work in process and so acquire a fuller understanding.³⁵ Such experiences would doubtless have added another dimension to his vision of pedagogy, another pointer to his ongoing interest in that enterprise.

The next stages of his journey took him from Leipzig to Venice, which he had reached by 18 November.³⁶ If he went first from Leipzig to Prague, as Peckard's *Memoir* stated,³⁷ he could from Prague have proceeded west and south to Nuremberg,³⁸ then further west to Speyer, up the Rhine to Strassburg, then finally east through Ulm to Augsburg. That itinerary would have taken him to all of the cities his biographers declared he had visited. Since Augsburg was the traditional starting point for the journey south across the Brenner, it probably was the last stop on his tour of Imperial cities.³⁹

Our sources give no hint of Nicholas's response to these cities, whether, for example, he investigated the same sort of aspects of their history, governance, religion, commerce and education as were said to have interested him in Hamburg and Leipzig. He, of course, would have had only a limited time in each of these places, but with his now-fluent German he could more easily have established contacts. It seems unlikely that he suddenly lost interest in the resources and culture of new places when he had so assiduously investigated them earlier. What he also could hardly have missed, even in brief visits, was the increasing confessional confrontation in an Empire divided between the Protestant Union and the Catholic League. Toleration might well have felt rather different in the United Provinces from toleration in a bi-confessional city like Augsburg.

Once in Italy, after only a brief stay in Venice, Nicholas moved to the university city of Padua. At that venerable seat of learning he found the numbers of Englishmen and indeed students in general had been considerably reduced by the epidemic of plague in Germany.⁴⁰ He was restless, despite his extensive previous journey, and confessed to John early in 1614 that he still had a yen to travel, this time to Vienna, a place which his biographers certainly claimed he had visited. February and March would not have been ideal times to travel north but at least the danger of plague would have drastically diminished.⁴¹ He evidently went somewhere and for an extended time because his next letter of 1 April reported that he had returned to Venice just three or four days previously and intended to go on to Padua the next day.⁴²

Back in Padua, particularly if he felt that he had now 'done' Germany, he could apply himself 'intensely to the study of physic'⁴³ at what was the pre-eminent university in Europe for that subject. As in Leipzig, Nicholas hired tutors, cultivated members of the medical faculty as well as others in the university, and generally impressed the scholarly community with his learning and acumen. Whether he ever formally matriculated we do not know.

Again, as in Leipzig, he found himself inundated with visitors, especially his fellow Englishmen eager to speak their native tongue, and had to take refuge in villages outside the city from time to time for the sake of peace and quiet.⁴⁴ He did, however, make one very close friend, a young Englishman

named Garton, whom Nicholas rescued from his remorse and despair at having killed a man in a duel in England and having been forced to take refuge in Venice.⁴⁵ When Nicholas later travelled to Rome alone, Garton was the only one who knew his itinerary and had instructions to inform the family in case of disaster.

Before Garton had come on the scene, however, Nicholas had encountered the Paduan doctors not only as a visiting scholar but also as a patient. He experienced a near-fatal bout of illness in Padua in October 1614. His only surviving letter from Italy recounted this story quite differently from his brother's and subsequent biographers' versions.⁴⁶ He began with a lengthy lament over not hearing from John in two months. His consequent worry over the family's health, he declared, had been worse for him than 'my Last dubell sycknes . . . my old infermetie of Augeu'. It had confined him to his chamber for twenty-six days and he had been bled four different times for a total of two and a half pounds of blood. He was by then well enough to joke about it, telling John he could be sure after that treatment that 'yt was not wylld Bludd that maid me com abrode otherwise I should have now a greater desyer to Returne home'.

The later biographies, however, transformed this matter-of-fact account in Nicholas's letter into a moment of high drama in which no blood was let. Instead Nicholas successfully resisted the treatment prescribed by the Paduan doctors as well as their attempts to capitalize on his weakness and convert him to Catholicism.⁴⁷ After the fever had broken of its own accord and Nicholas was recovering, those papist physicians acknowledged that blood-letting would certainly have proved fatal had it been carried out.⁴⁸ Thus John, some forty years later, turned Nicholas's illness into an opportunity to vindicate not only his brother's medical knowledge but, more importantly, his Protestantism.

Nicholas spent 1615 in Italy, perfecting his Italian and visiting many of its notable cities. His April journey to Rome took on, again in his brother's recollection, rather a cloak-and-dagger atmosphere, with Nicholas this time successfully outwitting the Jesuits rather than the Paduan doctors. Though he was roughed up by a Swiss Guard when he failed to kneel as a papal Holy Week procession passed, no other difficulties arose to interfere with his sightseeing and his experience of Holy Week and Easter in the venerable city. Nor were there any negative comments on his subsequent visits to the shrine of the Virgin at Loreto and to Malta, where one of the Knights befriended him and even presented him with a small version of the cross that was the order's insignia.⁴⁹

The remainder of his trip from early 1616 until he returned to London in 1617 was chiefly remarkable for another serious bout of illness, this time in Marseilles, and various episodes of derring-do on the way to Madrid and from Madrid to San Sebastian. He cut short his stay in Spain and omitted France altogether in order to hasten home, having experienced what he

deemed a revelation that his family needed him. When he finally made port in Dover and hastened to the family's London home in St Sithes Lane, his parents welcomed him warmly, though his father had not at first recognized the young sword-carrying gallant who suddenly appeared and knelt before him in the garden. It could have been no later than the end of July, 1617, rather than 1618, the usual date given.⁵⁰

As I have suggested earlier, the retrospective portraits of Nicholas as traveller in Italy differed considerably from those of him in Holland and Germany. Though he was said to have visited many cities in Italy and indeed spent far more of his time there than in the north, he was nowhere described as investigating the sort of geographical, cultural, and civic aspects of life to which he was said to have devoted his attention in the north. Instead John emphasized, not to say distorted, situations such as Nicholas's illness in Padua into confrontations in which he outwitted the papists or resisted their efforts to convert him. Such an emphasis suggests that John saw his task as defending his brother from charges of popish sympathies in the wake of the unwelcome publicity Little Gidding had received during and after Nicholas's lifetime.

Earlier John and Nicholas's friend, Sir Edwin Sandys, had sought to protect himself from such suspicions by emphasizing in his *Speculum Europae* the power and deviousness of the papacy. He had nevertheless also singled out for praise the good provision in Italy of hospitals and 'houses of pietie' for the elderly, the ill and disabled, foundlings, and converted prostitutes, as well as the numerous 'spirituall fraternities & companies' for lay people.⁵¹ Such institutions reflected the intense concern within reformed Catholicism for educational and social service combined with a shared devotional life. If Sandys in 1597 was aware of such movements, it is hard to credit that they escaped the notice or failed to evoke the sympathy of a man like Nicholas, especially when he had already shown interest in such matters during the earlier, Protestant stages of his travels.

Though John never made the connection, other evidence does demonstrate that Nicholas indeed knew of such charitable Italian institutions created to care for and to educate children. One of the works he had by 1634 translated but was refused permission to publish was Ludovico Carbone's *Dello Ammaestramento de' Figliuoli nella Dottrina Christiana*, which Nicholas rendered as 'Of the Christian Education of Children'.⁵² The original work was published in Venice in 1596 and contained a detailed account of the 'Schools of Christian Doctrine' in which Carbone was an active teacher. These schools represented a major educational effort if Carbone was correct in claiming that there were in Venice some five hundred teachers, mostly lay men and women, teaching over 6,000 boys and girls in at least 30 and probably more single-sex schools. Similar schools and the confraternities that ran them existed also in Milan, Bologna, Florence and Rome. The schools met only on Sundays and religious holidays and chiefly attracted

children of the lower and sometimes middling ranks, despite Carbone's efforts to persuade better-off parents to send their children also. Along with religious instruction based on traditional doctrinal formularies such as the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Ten Commandments and the Seven Sacraments, the schools taught reading and writing as part of a concerted attack on ignorance both spiritual and literary. Their work was certainly akin to what Nicholas could have seen in the Netherlands. Carbone indeed saw himself engaged in a mission to the 'pagans' at home comparable to that of the friars who brought Christianity to the Indians in the New World. He and other advocates of the schools promised social as well as spiritual benefits to society as a whole as well as to individuals, in the form of wise and merciful magistrates and ministers and obedient and industrious citizens.

Carbone's was a book Nicholas would not likely have encountered elsewhere than in Italy, probably either in Venice itself or nearby Padua. If he attached sufficient importance to it to want to translate and publish it in England, he would presumably also have wanted to see for himself these schools in operation. At the same time he would probably also have wanted to look at those other schools run by new religious groups in the forefront of the Catholic Reformation: Barnabites, Jesuits, Oratorians, Ursuline nuns. Certainly this translation of Carbone testifies to the attention Nicholas paid to education in Italy, as it also supports Mayor's characterization of Nicholas as 'so incomparable a teacher' and his claim that he owed some of that pedagogical skill to his travels abroad.⁵³

Later at Little Gidding Nicholas adapted Carbone's pattern to make it more solidly scriptural and therefore suitably Protestant.⁵⁴ His Sunday programme for the village children aimed to encourage them to memorize the Psalter by offering them a penny for each psalm they could recite on a Sunday morning plus a dinner after the main morning service had finished.⁵⁵ There is no mention of instruction in reading and writing as part of this programme. Perhaps this was not deemed necessary; the gift of a psalter to any child wanting to take part suggests that some primary education was already available in the villages roundabout.⁵⁶ The success of this initial programme led the village parents to ask Nicholas to extend it to instruction in the catechism. Unlike Carbone, however, he firmly rejected that idea on the grounds that such teaching was the appointed task of parents, godparents, and ministers.⁵⁷ Perhaps he had similarly vetoed the addition of reading and writing to the programme. He could be very punctilious about the importance of observing one's place and appropriate role. A movement to provide special schools for poor children that combined religious and literacy instruction would only appear in England at the end of the century with the founding of the 'Charity Schools' in which, appropriately enough, Nicholas's nephew, Dr John Mapletoft, was active.⁵⁸

Little Gidding was certainly not a formal religious order any more than a family is a 'voluntary society'. Nicholas wanted, however, to make it a

committed community bonded by a 'web of friendship'⁵⁹ into a 'communion of saints'. Basil Blackstone perceptively described Nicholas as 'a seeker after the perfect community',⁶⁰ a characterization that I believe accurately encapsulates his vision of Little Gidding. It also points to aspects of his travels that were particularly significant in shaping that vision, notably the committed communities and their educational missions that Nicholas had seen in Holland and in Italy.

That vision of community would have received reinforcement from the example of another of the Catholic writers whose work Nicholas probably first encountered during his Grand Tour and later chose to translate. This was the Spaniard Juan de Valdes (1500–1541), one of that group of reform-minded Catholics, the *spirituali*, who often found themselves accused of heresy. His book, *The Hundred and Ten Considerations* emphasized the importance of an individual's direct experience of God as the basis of true faith and the path to Christian 'perfection'.⁶¹ He also stressed the importance of religious instruction and produced catechetical dialogues for this purpose.⁶² He did more than merely write about these vital characteristics of a Christian community; he actually created such a group in the 1530s by gathering round him in Naples a band of followers dedicated to exploring this pattern of the Christian life.⁶³ It is hardly surprising therefore that Nicholas found him, as he found Carbone, a very congenial figure despite the doctrinal 'stumbling blocks' that both he and George Herbert acknowledged were present in Valdes's work.⁶⁴

Nicholas, of course, did not have to wait until he reached the Continent to discover the significance and appeal of community or its connection to education. He had enjoyed prior experience of other communities, first the Rev. Robert Brooks's school at Enbourne, followed by Clare College, Cambridge, in which he had been a happy and successful student and fellow. Isaac Walton had evidently noted this connection for he described Nicholas and his family at Gidding as 'like a little college'.⁶⁵ Such a comparison also underlines the fact that Nicholas would have set off on his Grand Tour with a background that prepared him to value community and to see education as one of its primary activities and purposes.

Nicholas's perfect community, according to Blackstone, existed to provide its members with opportunities for the 'pursuit of sanctity' both individually and collectively.⁶⁶ I think it important to emphasize, however, that the pursuit of sanctity did not consist wholly in that inward-looking retreat from the world that has generally been attributed to Little Gidding. Nicholas included in his 'web of friendship' not just the immediate Ferrar household but other family and friends such as the Mapletofts in Essex, Arthur Woodnoth in London, John Cosin, Robert Mapletoft, and Richard Crashaw in Cambridge, George Herbert in Bemerton, and Timothy Thruscross in Yorkshire. He wrote eloquently of the openness, understanding and mutual support that should characterize such friendship. What this meant for individual relationships he

showed in his counsel to Joshua Mapletoft during a desperate illness and to Arthur Woodnoth agonizing over his work for Sir John Danvers.⁶⁷ At the same time he was very conscious that his was ‘an adge that needs patterns’,⁶⁸ and he wanted those within his web to undertake collective activities that would provide such patterns. And he wanted ‘the world’ to take notice of, and hopefully learn from, those patterns.

The world certainly took notice of that ‘devout Psalmody’ which, along with ‘Temperance’, Joshua Mapletoft identified in a letter to Nicholas as ‘the particular tessera of our family’.⁶⁹ Both of these were at once a means of education and a bond of community that provided the Little Gidding circle with opportunities for the ‘pursuit of sanctity’. Psalmody can be clearly connected to Nicholas’s Grand Tour, for we are told that on his travels Nicholas made it a practice to recite psalms every hour and at appropriate times other offices as well from the Book of Common Prayer, all of which he knew by heart.⁷⁰ He would presumably have found this particularly helpful when he was on the move, though he evidently made it an essential part of all his daily devotions during his time abroad. We do not know whether he continued the practice of hourly psalmody once he had returned to London and immersed himself in the world of business and politics. But when he made it the basis for the family’s devotional life at Little Gidding, it would clearly have been a practice he had tested on his travels.

The conspicuous novelty of the devotional practices of Little Gidding lay, however, not in the use of the psalter but in the regularity of the family’s hourly observances and in their use of a gospel ‘harmony’ in addition to the psalter. The regularity and frequency proved controversial. On the one hand, many of Nicholas’s contemporaries applauded the hourly devotions as expressions of exemplary spiritual fervour. Others, quite unsympathetic, had no hesitation in pronouncing them to be a not-very-thin end of the Romish monastic wedge.⁷¹ The addition of nightly vigils around 1632 only heightened such suspicions, as did the wish of Nicholas’s two eldest nieces to remain virgins, the better to devote themselves to God’s service.

The harmonies or concordances of the gospels, on the other hand, did not raise this spectre of monasticism. They indeed brought Little Gidding to the attention not just of ‘the world’ in general but of the king in particular. Why did these harmonies attract so much attention and what did Nicholas’s Grand Tour have to do with them? The idea of co-ordinating the gospel accounts into a single narrative of the life of Christ was in itself no novelty. It had occupied Christian scholars since Tatian’s *Diatessaron* of the second century AD. The Reformation had produced throughout the sixteenth century a renewed burst of attention to it from both Catholics and Protestants on the continent.⁷² English biblical scholarship, however, showed no comparable interest in such works of synthesis. The sixteenth century saw only two such publications, and those were merely translations of Calvin’s harmony of 1555, which combined only the first three gospels, and of his

earlier commentary of 1553 on the Johannine gospel.⁷³ These two works were subsequently published together in 1610 and constituted a bulky and scholarly tome with much more commentary than gospel text and certainly no pictures. There appeared subsequently in Edinburgh another scholarly volume, which consisted of a series of lectures by Robert Rollocke on the passion, resurrection and ascension of Christ.⁷⁴ Neither of these volumes, with their extensive scholarly apparatus, would have provided a synoptic text that included all four of the gospels presented in a form suitable for family readings.

Even if Nicholas had seen in Cambridge or London copies of these volumes or of various continental harmonies, he would have been more likely to have acquired on the continent than in England a familiarity with the 'harmony' format and a belief in its value as a pedagogical as well as a devotional device. Having come to that conviction, however, he would have found that no English harmony of the sort he envisioned existed in the 1620s. To get such a book, he would have to construct it for himself.

It proved an admirable pedagogical device by which he turned the task into a family project in which all generations could participate and which would be at once instructional and co-operative.⁷⁵ Once Nicholas had laid out the plan and the order of the passages, everyone capable of using scissors and paste could help. As John Ferrar put it, 'the younger sort learned them [the gospel passages] without book, and hourly made repetition of some part of them, that so both their hands and minds might be partakers in what was good and useful'.⁷⁶ Naturally the earliest efforts were uneven in quality. Later volumes, and especially the lavish ones prepared for the king, showed the family's developing skill. The most notable novelty of the harmonies was the introduction of pictures,⁷⁷ the presence of which would surely have pleased a king who was himself a connoisseur and collector of art. Out of the 86 folio pages in the Harvard harmony, the earliest surviving example and probably the one that Charles 'borrowed' and annotated, 52 have pictures, most of them relatively large. Such a format would have attracted not only the king, of course, but the extended Ferrar/Little Gidding family, especially its younger members, and made the passages more pleasant to learn. The format Nicholas chose with its 150 'heads' that could be read through each month ensured that the entire harmony would be repeated twelve times in a year, an obvious aid to memorization.⁷⁸

The ongoing importance of the project to the collective life of the family comes through plainly in John Ferrar's later letter to Isaac Basire in which he asks Basire's help in soliciting orders for additional harmonies, describing them as 'rarities in their kinds and handy-work of women' and adding that 'we should be glad of the employment for our younger and elder people'.⁷⁹ The harmonies, then, constituted another example of a pattern of practical and religious education that probably owed much if not all of its inspiration to Nicholas's experiences abroad. It was certainly well-suited to building

Little Gidding into such a committed community for learning and worship as he hoped would be a model for ‘an Adge that needs patterns’.

Although some chose to see popish influences lurking within the psalmody at Little Gidding, it remained nonetheless firmly rooted in the Protestant ground of scripture and the Book of Common Prayer. Temperance, that other ‘tessaron’ of the family, Nicholas had already adopted in Cambridge in the attempt to combat the agues that eventually sent him abroad in search of a cure. On his travels, therefore, he was already predisposed to an interest in this topic. The very year he crossed to the continent, 1613, saw the publication in Louvain of a work on temperance entitled *Hygiasticon*. It set forth a dietary regimen first proposed in the sixteenth-century writings of Ludovico Cornaro, a Venetian nobleman, and subsequently developed and systematized by Leonard Lessius, a Belgian Jesuit. Lessius had in fact bound Cornaro’s earlier work with his own in *Hygiasticon* so that Nicholas might well have discovered both works together on his travels.⁸⁰ When Nicholas in turn published his own English translation of Lessius some twenty-one years later, he too bound with it a translation of Cornaro which was not, however, his own but one done by George Herbert and sent to Little Gidding in 1632.⁸¹

Nicholas’s *Hygiasticon*, in its preface, described the efforts of a group, unmistakably the Ferrars, to carry out the version of temperance described in the book. If we put this account alongside the records of ‘The Little Academy’, the family discussion group initially established by old Mrs Ferrar for the benefit of her granddaughters, we can see the graduated steps by which Nicholas used this project to develop the kind of committed community he sought. In 1631 Mrs Ferrar, the family matriarch, had suggested that the Little Academy use its knowledge and narrative skills to provide a more Christian and less worldly Christmas celebration by replacing the usual card-playing, visiting, and feasting with edifying yet entertaining stories of the sort they had shared in earlier sessions. Then the following year, during Advent and after they had received Herbert’s translation of Cornaro, the Academy discussed at length the merits and meaning of temperance, and all gave their oral and written approval for implementing the full programme of measured intake during Christmastide. This time their ‘storying’ had to compensate for not just games and visits but short commons.⁸²

Nicholas for his part appealed to those in his ‘web of friendship’ to broaden the circle of participants. Although he had not been a recorded contributor to the Little Academy discussions, he was obviously involved, for his letters show him fully aware of their proceedings. He described the plan and the family’s commitment to Arthur Woodnoth, Joshua Mapletoft and Joshua’s brother Robert in Cambridge, and possibly to others whose letters do not survive, and earnestly, even enthusiastically, solicited their participation. Woodnoth and the Mapletofts we know accepted, and in their correspondence and visits to Little Gidding much serious discussion ensued about

how to adapt the basic programme to their particular circumstances and how to respond to the sometimes negative reactions of friends and neighbours.⁸³ Temperance thus became a project that drew together the extended family with its web of friendship in a community of service, as psalmody had brought them together in a community of worship. Both projects attracted attention to Little Gidding. Unlike the publicity the harmonies unintentionally obtained for psalmody, however, that for temperance was deliberately promoted by Nicholas's translation and publication of *Hygiasticon* in 1634 with its account of the family's adoption of its plan. The goal of this service was to teach by example, to preach not merely by words but by actions which would be, in Nicholas's niece Mary Collet's hopeful words, 'that Real kind of Instruction [which] hath in all Ages beene the most forcible, [and] in this the most Necessarie. Where there are many Masters but few guides. A Dearth of Patterns in an exuberance of Rules.'⁸⁴

This ambitious effort, though it succeeded in drawing a measure of attention from the wider world, exacted a considerable cost to the group's solidarity.⁸⁵ It provided nevertheless the most explicit evidence of the extent to which Little Gidding and its 'web of friendship' was a more outward-looking community than it is usually thought to have been. Its 'patterns' represented instructional aims and hopes that reached out, modestly to be sure but significantly, toward the world rather than simply turning away from it. It is that unifying sense of mission, as much as any individual component of the Little Gidding pattern, that reflects Nicholas's continental experiences and justifies calling his Grand Tour a prelude to its distinctive piety.

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Notes

- 1 *Coryat's Crudities* (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1905), II, 74.
- 2 B. Blackstone, *The Ferrar Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), p. 26. (Hereafter cited as Blackstone, *Papers*.)
- 3 A. L. Maycock, *Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1980; first published London, 1938), pp. 103–4. (Hereafter cited as Maycock, *NF*.) Maycock cites no specific sources for this allegation. I think it quite likely that Nicholas saw the family's financial debacle as a judgment on himself for his readiness to get involved in, indeed to relish, such worldly pursuits. The acquisition of Little Gidding, however, was not, as Maycock claims, simply part of a longstanding plan of Nicholas's to retreat from the world. It was instead the key element in the settlement Nicholas worked out with his brother's creditors. It salvaged the family's finances sufficiently to enable them to live at Gidding, for which divine deliverance Nicholas composed a prayer of thanks which the family recited at the end of every month. Blackstone, *Papers*, pp. 238–42, prints the prayer. See also John's account in a

- letter to his son (undated but probably in the 1650s) of the acquisition of Gidding; *Ibid.*, p. 301.
- 4 See Lynette R. Muir and John A. White, eds, *Materials for the Life of Nicholas Ferrar* (Leeds: Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society Ltd, 1996), pp. 3–23, ‘The Biography’, for the complicated history of these various biographies. (Hereafter cited as Muir and White, *Materials*.)
- 5 See below, p. 8, on the decision not to bleed Nicholas during his illness in Padua.
- 6 Maycock, *NF*, pp. 25–30, recounts this story and supplies information about the doctor, one William Butler, another Clare man and a notable Cambridge character, who was some fifty-five years older than Nicholas.
- 7 J. E. B. Mayor, ed., *Nicholas Ferrar: Two Lives by His Brother John and by Dr. Jebb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1855), pp. 183–4. (Hereafter cited as Mayor, *Two Lives*.) His brother John had spent time in Hamburg the year before as well as in an earlier apprenticeship and evidently provided Nicholas with a variety of stories and advice. Indeed, as it turned out, John had travelled to Hamburg from the Netherlands with the same carter who subsequently carried Nicholas. Though Mayor identifies this brother as Richard, who was in Hamburg in 1616, John, who was there only a year before Nicholas and had supplied him with other travel advice, is a likelier candidate. Peckard also included the story; P[eter] Peckard, *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar* (Cambridge: J. Archdeacon, 1790), pp. 46–7. (Hereafter cited as Peckard, *Memoirs*.) John had also told his brother that one should never travel without £20 in one’s purse, counsel for which Nicholas quickly sent his thanks soon after arriving in Holland. David R. Ransome, ed., *The Ferrar Papers 1590–1790* (Wakefield, England: Microform Academic Publishers, 1992), Reel XI. Document No. 2212. Side 16 [undated]. I shall hereafter cite this microfilm edition as *FP* and identify specific documents using the numbering found in Dr Ransome’s ‘Finding List’, with the Reel Number in Roman numerals followed by the document number as given in columns 1 and 12: e.g. FP.XI.2212.s.16. for the present item. I have benefited enormously not only from my husband’s detailed knowledge of the Ferrar Papers but more generally from our ongoing discussions of the family’s complex character and dynamic.
- 8 Peckard, *Memoirs*, p. 40.
- 9 Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1998) includes an appendix of all those recorded at the university up to about 1600. (Hereafter cited as Woolfson, *Padua & Tudors*.) Byng, who matriculated in 1597, appears there, but Winston, who came later, does not. On Winston see Maycock, *NF*, pp. 23–4. While Nicholas was away, Winston moved from Cambridge to London, becoming in 1615 a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Professor of Physic at Gresham College in London. He became active for several years in the Virginia Company where he would no doubt have met Nicholas after his return. Arthur Woodnoth many years later contacted Winston for advice about Nicholas’s illness in the last year of his life; FP.V.1052 (27 April 1637).
- 10 [Albertus Meierus], *Certaine briefe, and speciall Instructions for Gentlemen, merchants, students, souldiers, marriners, &c. Employed in services abrode, or anie way occasioned to converse in the kingdomes, and gouvernementes of forren Princes*, translated by Philip Jones (London: John Wolfe, 1589), and [Sir John Stradling],

- A Direction for Trauailers. Taken out of Iustus Lipsius, and enlarged for the behoofe of the right honorable Lord, the yong Earle of Bedford, being now ready to trauell* (London: R.B. for Cut[h]bert Burbie, 1592). That voluminous commentator Fynes Moryson, though he travelled in the 1590s and assembled information of the sort and on the scale outlined by Meierus, did not publish his *Itinerary Containing His Ten Years Travell* . . . (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1908), till 1617, by which time Nicholas had returned home. (Hereafter cited as Moryson, *Itinerary*.)
- 11 [Sir Robert Dallington], *A Method for Travell. Shewed By Taking the View of France. As it stooode in the yeare of our Lorde 1598* (London: Thomas Creede, [1605]) and *The Survey of the Great Dukes State of Tuscany* (n.p., n.d.) (the former hereafter cited as Dallington, *Method*) and Sir Thomas Palmer, *An Essay of the Meanes how to make our Travailes, into forraine Countries, the more profitable and honourable* (London: by H. L. for Mathew Lowne, 1606).
 - 12 He could also have found this kind of advice in Sir Edwin Sandys's *Relation of the State of Religion* . . . , but we do not know whether Nicholas saw a copy or met Sandys prior to his departure. The Virginia Company connection makes it at least possible. Certainly the two became close friends and colleagues after Nicholas's return. [Sir Edwin Sandys], *A Relation of the State of Religion; and with what Hopes and Pollices it hath been framed, and is maintained in the severall states of these westerne parts of the world*. (London: Printed for Simon Waterford . . . , 1605), [pages unnumbered]. (Hereafter cited as Sandys, *Relation*.) This earliest version was subsequently withdrawn and disclaimed by Sandys as pirated without his permission.
 - 13 Dallington, *Method*, [p. 5]. Fynes Moryson spent a winter in Leipzig perfecting his spoken German because that was the place, he declared, where the purest German was spoken; *Itinerary*, I, 25.
 - 14 Maycock, *NF*, pp. 39–41; also FPL37 (10 April 1613), which is a farewell letter from NF to his family. These dates would appear to have been Old Style. The first indication we have that NF has switched to the Continental New Style occurs in a later summary by the Rev. Thomas Ferrar (1663–1739), Nicholas's great-nephew, of a letter dated 21 May 'Stylo Novo'; FPXI.2212.15
 - 15 Butler seems to have seen the voyage as a rather drastic homeopathic remedy. Jebb's account in Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 180–2, specifically mentions the seasick cure.
 - 16 FPXI.2212, s.16. This again is not the actual letter but Thomas Ferrar's later summary, which was cited subsequently by Peckard. All the biographies include comment that this choice meant Nicholas rejected the possibility of employment as the Princess's secretary.
 - 17 Maycock, *NF*, pp. 35–41.
 - 18 Little Academy participants were said to have bound themselves by covenant, and John Ferrar pleaded for 'bonds of mutual Promise, of mutual encouragement, and of mutual Assistance' in reviving the Little Academy in October 1632; E. Cruwys Sharland, ed., *The Story Books of Little Gidding* (London: Seeley and Company, 1899), pp. 2 and 156. (Hereafter cited as Sharland, *Story Books*.) Nicholas, in a letter to Arthur Woodnoth at the time the Academy was first getting underway, complained that he was having difficulty getting participants 'to sett Downe there Ends and desyres'; FRIV. 765 (15 Feb 1631). Joshua Mapletoft a week later enclosed in a letter to Nicholas his wife's 'subscription'; FRIV.766. The nightly

- vigils too required formal assent from those wishing to take part; Muir and White, *Materials*, p. 92. Participation in the temperance dietary regime of Christmas 1632 was to be ratified in writing after oral consent had been given in a Little Academy discussion; A. M. Williams, *Conversations at Little Gidding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 177 and 179. (Hereafter cited as Williams, *Conversations*.) Nicholas also pressed Arthur Woodnoth to join in these efforts and make weekly resolutions for the purpose; FP.V.879 (17 Dec 1632). Such formal, and especially written, avowals evidently appealed to Nicholas as a particularly effective and congenial pedagogical method.
- 19 Only one biographer, and not John, mentioned any such visits. That biographer, Jebb, claimed that Nicholas ‘acquainted himself exactly with the doctrine and discipline of their church’ as well as visiting the separatists and the synagogue; Mayor, *Two Lives*, p. 182.
 - 20 A. T. Van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 233, 243–4, 262–7. (Hereafter cited as Van Deursen, *Plain Lives*.) Those who were not ‘members’ but attended services were called ‘adherents of the reformed religion’. Though there was no legally established church like the Church of England to which everyone was assumed automatically to belong, anyone was entitled to marry in the church, have their children baptized, and be buried in the church or churchyard. Preachers sought to bring as many as possible to choose full membership but church councils remained rigorous about whom they admitted. For a more general discussion of such inner circles within parish churches, see Euan Cameron, ‘The “Godly Community” in the Theory and Practice of the European Reformation’, in *Voluntary Religion*, W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood, eds (n.p., Basil Blackwell for the Ecclesiastical History Society, 1986), pp. 131–53.
 - 21 R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal: 1540–1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 84–8.
 - 22 van Deursen, *Plain Lives*, pp. 283–5, 301. The Haarlem curriculum included verses and prayers as well as ‘pious, educational games’. There are of course suggestive resemblances here to the Little Academy and especially to the maiden sisters, Mary and Anna Collet, but no documented connection. There were other groups of Catholic women, both lay and religious, who taught girls and ministered to the sick and the poor, including Ursuline nuns and members of the Order of the Visitation as well as the lay women who ran the Venetian *Casa delle Zitelle*. See below, p. 9.
 - 23 Peckard, *Memoirs*, pp. 42–4. Nicholas sought detailed information about these and generously rewarded those attendants who supplied it to him. What Nicholas saw would presumably have resembled the one which the city of Rotterdam established in 1614 by granting to one Daniel de Meijer a sixteen-year contract to set up a weaving shop into which he would receive twenty orphans each year. Though the children worked their first four years without pay, only an already well-established and prosperous craftsman was reckoned able to bear the initial cost in wasted materials as well as maintenance for the children. Theoretically the master should eventually benefit from the increased skill and productivity of these apprentices, always assuming that he was actually exerting himself to train them more than minimally; van Deursen, *Plain Lives*, pp. 127–9. Fynes Moryson also looked at almshouses in Amsterdam; *Itinerary*, I, 93.

- 24 Rosemary O'Day cites examples of schools in England that taught practical skills and had often begun as schools for orphans; *Education and Society 1500–1800* (London and New York: Longman, 1982), pp. 183–4. Practical training subsequently formed a significant part of education at Little Gidding. Nicholas employed the women of the household in bookbinding and making of concordances, for example, as well as training his nieces in the various skills of household management. He also requested supplies of hemp and flax from his cousin, Arthur Woodnoth, to be used in providing work for the poor of Gidding and of Bourn; FPIV.761 (24 Nov 1630).
- 25 Blackstone, *Papers*, p. 63; also Sharland, *Story Books*, p. 119.
- 26 FPXIII and XIV (pp. 117–54 in Finding List); individual listings give the designer, engraver, publisher, date and subject of each print on the microfilm reel. Maycock, *NF*, p. 210, suggests that Nicholas brought prints back with him for later use but there are certainly later letters from Gidding requesting print purchases: e.g. FPIV.994 (10 April 1635) in which NF requested Arthur Woodnoth to send sets of illustrations by Adrian Collaerts and Martin de Vos for use in making 'Betty's concordance'.
- 27 Walton claimed that he acquired Valdes during his travels, but the reliability of this statement is undermined by the accompanying assertion that Nicholas translated it out of Spanish when the title page of the published work said plainly that it had been done from Italian; 'Life of Herbert' in George Herbert, *The Complete English Works*, ed. Anne Pasternak Slater (London: Everyman, 1995), p. 379 (Hereafter cited as Walton, 'Herbert').
- 28 Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 183–4. Peckard also included the story, *Memoirs*, pp. 46–7.
- 29 FPXI.2212 (NF to JF from Venice 5 Feb 1614[NS]) suggests that Mr Sheppard would be a more reliable source of funds during his time in Italy than whatever other alternative had been first arranged, which would indicate that Nicholas already knew him.
- 30 Moryson, *Itinerary*, I, 6. Moryson made the journey from Hamburg to Lübeck in a day. For Nicholas to have time actually to see Lübeck he would have had to stay over for a day or two and then journey back.
- 31 This absence of any mention of Lutheranism would certainly support Anthony Milton's point that Anglicans generally showed little interest in or sympathy for this other major branch of Protestantism: *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1560–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 384–95.
- 32 If he proposed to travel overland, as Moryson did, he would have spent three days getting to Magdeburg and a further day and a half from Magdeburg to Leipzig; Morison, *Itinerary*, I, 12–13.
- 33 Jebb's account of the stay in Leipzig is the most detailed: Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 185–6; Cf. Blackstone, *Papers*, p. 14 n. 2 and Peckard, who recounts only the university activities, *Memoirs*, pp. 49–51. I assume that 'artificial memory' is the sort of system described by Jonathan Spence in *The Memory House of Matteo Ricci* (New York: Penguin, 1985) and Frances A. Yates in *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966). Since Nicholas by all accounts already had a formidable memory, his subsequent capacity must have been extraordinary.
- 34 Moryson, who spent time in both Leipzig and Wittenberg some twenty years earlier, had thought the university at Leipzig rundown in comparison to Wittenberg

- and attributed this to the students' preference for the latter because it afforded superior accommodations; *Itinerary*, I, 14.
- 35 Mayor, *Two Lives*, p. 185; Muir and White, *Materials*, p. 51.
- 36 FPXI.2212, s. 17. He certainly spent some time in Augsburg, because his letter claimed he had written to his mother three times from there telling her of his intention to head south to Italy. Accounts of his travels mention an episode of quarantine coinciding with the forty days of Lent, but that could hardly refer to this occasion in October, and suggests that he made another transalpine journey, perhaps to Vienna the following February–March; see below, p. 7. Moryson mentions Italian quarantine regulations; *Itinerary*, I, 158.
- 37 pp. 52–4. Such a journey Moryson took in 1592, when the leg from Dresden to Prague took him three days; *Itinerary*, I, 28–9.
- 38 Moryson took that route and made the journey in six days; *Ibid.*, 33.
- 39 John Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604–1667*, revised ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 75, 118, 132. (Hereafter cited as Stoye, *Travellers*.) He describes Nicholas as going from Leipzig to Augsburg and thence to Padua, though without considering the route he took between the two German cities. In reconstructing his route I have assumed that the distances involved meant that Nicholas would have to have visited them as part of a continuous journey from Leipzig to Augsburg in order to fit them in a relatively short time.
- 40 Maurice Lee, *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, 1603–1624* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1972), p. 150. (Hereafter cited as Lee, *Carleton-Chamberlain*.) In this letter from Padua dated 4 Nov 1613 Carleton mentioned Trent and Verona as places where travellers had been subjected to lengthy quarantine and declared that since he had come as Ambassador to Venice (1611) there had never been so few English there and that the overall number of students at the university was small because of the difficulties of coming out of Germany. One Englishman who had arrived and settled in for the winter, however, was John Pory, already a member of the Virginia Company and subsequently to go to the colony as its secretary. Carleton's comment contradicts Powell's chronology of Pory's travels, which has him in Constantinople by late 1613; William S. Powell, *John Pory, 1572–1636: The Life and Letters of a Man of Many Parts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), pp. xiii, 41–2, 74. If he and Nicholas met during this time, however, we have no record of it. We know Nicholas had taken himself to Padua by 14 December when he wrote from there to his brother John, lamenting that he had not heard from anyone in England in five months; FPXI.2212, s. 20. Stoye, *Travellers*, pp. 77–80 and 87–90, also discusses the popularity of Padua/Venice with visiting Englishmen. One who was there at the same time as Nicholas was Sir Edward Herbert, George's older brother, though there is no evidence he and Nicholas were in contact.
- 41 FPXI.2212, s. 20. If he went ahead with this plan, and his biographers claim he visited Vienna, he might have served a Lenten quarantine. He could hardly have done it, however, for the full forty days as alleged or he would not have had time for anything else. The story looks to have conflated two episodes.
- 42 FPXI.2213. Easter fell on 30 March (NS) in 1614.
- 43 Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 189–90. For the medical faculty and course of study as well as the biographies of those Englishmen who studied not only medicine but

- other subjects as well, including those who did so entirely informally and without any official university status, see Woolfson, *Padua and Tudors*.
- 44 Dallington, *Method*, [p. 6] warned against the temptation of spending too much time with one's fellow-countrymen at the expense of practising the new language.
- 45 Peckard, *Memoirs*, pp. 59–60. When exactly Garton appeared on the scene is never specified; Nicholas certainly does not mention him in his letter of November 1614. Garton might have become Nicholas's companion for at least some of the travels in which he had 'traversed all Italy, and become intimately acquainted with every place of consequence'; *Ibid.*, pp. 61–2. Jebb cited Garton as an example of Nicholas's counselling skills: Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 280–1.
- 46 FRI.56 (11 Nov 1614). The letter was addressed to brother John but the version we have is a copy in his father's hand. A letter from Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain from Venice in October 1614 reported a great deal of sickness in the area; Lee, *Carleton-Chamberlain*, p. 170.
- 47 This version appears in Muir and White, *Materials*, p. 52. Mayor's version of John's biography does not include it but Jebb's biography, which Mayor published in the same volume, does have it; *Two Lives*, p. 190.
- 48 Peckard, *Memoirs*, p. 58. Peckard attributed this story to Barnabas Oley, who appended it to his edition of George Herbert's *Country Parson*, and went on to add that Nicholas was supposed at the time to have taken a vow of celibacy and proposed to retire, once he had returned to England, to a religious life. Peckard, however, dismissed that story as having insufficient evidence, which certainly seems an appropriate verdict. Peckard also did not include the subsequent story of Nicholas's encounter with the Swiss Guard in Rome.
- 49 Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 191–3 and Peckard, *Memoirs*, pp. 61–2. Easter fell on 19 April (NS) in 1615.
- 50 *Ibid.*, pp. 73–84 and pp. 197–201. The most convincing evidence for the 1617 date comes from a letter to 'good cosen' dated 11 October and written by John Woodnoth from 'Carmincham' in Cheshire. He was the grandson of Mary Woodnoth Ferrar's much older brother John, and roughly a contemporary of his cousins John and Nicholas Ferrar. He died at the end of 1617. John sent greetings from his wife and himself (and the grandson John was certainly married) to 'your brother John and his wife'. The letter offered congratulations to the 'good cosen' on his safe return to England and apologized for not writing sooner. He blamed his delay on his expectation that the cousin would have come to Cheshire in the summer just past when the king was visiting the county. That visit took place in late August 1617, as part of King James's return journey from Scotland; John Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James I . . .* (New York: Burt Franklin, n.d.), III, 411–12. When John Woodnoth died in December, 1617, both Nicholas Ferrar and his brother William wrote epitaphs for him; see James Doelman, 'An Unnoted Funeral Epitaph by Nicholas Ferrar', *Notes & Queries*, 237 (Dec 1992), 446. Further confirmation of the 1617 date comes from the will of Mary Robinson made on 13 February 1618: P.C.C 88 Mead. If, as seems likely, the Nicholas Ferrar named by Mary Robinson as her executor was the returned Nicholas rather than his now aged father, he would have had to be back in London long enough to have become known to her, for she did not become part of the family until John Ferrar married her niece Bathsheba Owen. That marriage, John's second, did not take place till 1614 when Nicholas was already in Italy.

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- 51 Sandys, *Relation*, sections 9 and 25. Moryson also mentions such institutions and societies, including the Venetian house for orphaned girls; *Itinerary*, I, 184, 256.
- 52 The Italian title is given in Paul Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300–1600* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 434. I am indebted to Grendler’s volume, for enabling me first to identify Carbone and then to learn about the Schools of Christian Doctrine. Muir & White, *Materials*, p. xv, give a Latin title for this work which does not follow clearly either the Italian or Nicholas’s English. They do, however, mention that the translation was done at the request of Edmund Duncon and refused publication in 1636. See also Mayor, *Two Lives*, p. 302.
- 53 Mayor, *Two Lives*, p. xvi.
- 54 Grendler, *Schooling*, p. 352, contrasts the Italian instruction with its Lutheran counterpart, remarking that the Italian texts entirely omitted information on the life of Christ and made no attempt to connect the prayers and sacraments to that life. Cf. both Nicholas’s and George Herbert’s comments on Valdes’s lack of emphasis on scripture, which both cited as ‘stumbling blocks’ in Valdes’s work; see below, n. 64.
- 55 Muir and White, *Materials*, describe the programme (pp. 71–3) as do earlier biographers. The family in fact used the same financial incentive, at a higher rate, for their own children.
- 56 It might have happened that the family would include an especially promising village boy in the regular formal instruction provided for the boys of the family and the occasional boarder, but we have no surviving evidence of that possibility.
- 57 Nicholas could be very firm, not to say rigid, about what he considered appropriate roles.
- 58 Mapletoft is said to have had among his papers copies of the Carbone translation, which were deposited at Mr. Bunbury’s at Great Catworth: Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 301–3.
- 59 FPIV.722 (10 May 1630).
- 60 *Papers*, p. 5.
- 61 The term occurs throughout the book as Nicholas translated it. He often wrote in letters of seeking ‘perfection’, for which term there was a scriptural basis but by no means a widespread Protestant usage. Its appeal to Nicholas therefore could well indicate a Valdesian influence.
- 62 Jose C. Nieto and William B. and Carol D. Jones (translators), eds, *Valdes’ Two Catechisms: The ‘Dialogue on Christian Doctrine’ and the ‘Christian Instruction for Children’* (n.p.: Coronado Press, 1981) and Juan de Valdes, ‘Evangelical Catholicism as Represented by Juan de Valdes’, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, ed. Angel M. Mergal, Library of Christian Classics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), XXV, 297–390. Much of the preface to ‘Christian Instruction for Children’ was incorporated into the preface to the Italian translation of Calvin’s Catechism of 1545; Nieto *et al.*, *Two Catechisms*, pp. 22–4. Not surprisingly, Valdes’s book was rapidly placed on the Index.
- 63 Valdes’s followers, most notably Flaminio and Carnesecchi, continued this pattern of informal group life when they joined the household of Cardinal Pole at Viterbo. Pole himself obviously found this pattern congenial and exerted his influence to protect Flaminio from the Inquisition. See Thomas F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole, Prince and Prophet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), especially Chapter 3.

- 64 Nicholas acknowledged the stumbling blocks in his preface to the translation, as did Herbert in his 'objections' published in the same volume.
- 65 Walton, 'Herbert', p. 377.
- 66 *Papers*, p. xiii.
- 67 For Mapletoft see FP.V.949, 957–9, 965, and 988–90, covering the period 6 August 1634 to March 1635. For Woodnoth see FP.IV.703, 712, 714, 719, 731–5, 753–5, and 761, covering January to December 1630.
- 68 Letter from Nicholas to Arthur Woodnoth: FP.IV.722 (10 May 1630); also printed in Blackstone, *Papers*, pp. 255–6. On this point Nicholas echoes his contemporary John Winthrop, who in the very same year exhorted his fellow-passengers aboard the *Arbella* bound for New England, to remember that their settlement would be as a 'City Set upon a Hill'.
- 69 FP.V.913 (10 Oct 1633). Mapletoft had known Nicholas since their days in Cambridge and had become a member of the family by marrying in 1628 Susanna Collet, Nicholas's niece.
- 70 Muir and White, *Materials*, p. 51.
- 71 John Cosin's *Devotions* of 1627, alleged to have been undertaken at the king's own request after the queen had remarked on the lack of such books of hours in the Church of England, would hardly have allayed such suspicions. Cosin was certainly a Laudian as well as a friend of Nicholas and a visitor to Little Gidding, as was also Francis White, who was said to have relayed the king's request to Cosin: Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England, Vol II: From Andrewes to Baxter and Fox*, pp. 93–7.
- 72 A detailed study of these harmonies can be found in Dietrich Wuensch, *Evangelienharmonien im Reformationszeitalter: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Lebens-Jesu-Darstellungen* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1983)
- 73 The first such translation by Eusebius Paget was published in 1584, as was also in that year the translation of the commentary on John by Christopher Fetherstone.
- 74 Robert Rollocke, *Lectures upon the History of the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Beginning at John 18 and 19:6 . . . containing a perfect harmonie of all the foure Evangelists . . .* (Edinburgh, 1616).
- 75 A proper bibliographic study of the numerous harmonies made by the family is a subject beyond the scope of this paper. I hope to deal with the topic at appropriate length as part of a larger work in progress on the Ferrars.
- 76 Mayor, *Two Lives*, p. 115.
- 77 George Henderson, 'Bible Illustration in the Age of Laud', *Studies in English Bible Illustration*, I (London: Pindar Press, 1985), 268. See also C. Leslie Craig, 'The Earliest Little Gidding Concordance', *Harvard Library Bulletin*, I (1947), 311–31.
- 78 Divisions of the text varied in number. The 150-part format had been used by Jean Gerson in the early 15th century. Rev. Robert Brooks, whose school at Enbourne Nicholas attended, was said to have followed Gerson's example of leaving his prominent urban position to set up a school in the country: Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 167–8. Whether he told his students of Gerson's *Monotessarion* and so could have aroused Nicholas's interest in such a work we can only speculate.
- 79 Mayor, *Two Lives*, pp. 360–1. The letter is undated but must be after the 1641 publication of 'this libel' [*The Arminian Nunnery*], which claimed that life at Little Gidding was all prayer and contemplation and no work.

- 80 Lessius's Dedicatory Epistle of July 1613, as Nicholas translated it in 1634, referred to the inclusion of Cornaro in his work. Cornaro, who lived to be nearly 100 (d. 1566), wrote the first of his four discourses on temperance when he was 83. This is the one Herbert translated. Three further discourses, written at ages 86, 91, and 95, were published together posthumously in 1568 as *Discorsi della Vita Sobria*. See George Herbert Palmer, *The English Works of George Herbert* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1905), pp. 332–3 (preface to Cornaro).
- 81 'A Treatise of Temperance and Sobriety, Written by Lud. Cornarus, Translated into English by Mr. George Herbert' in George Herbert, *The Complete English Works*, ed. Anne Pasternak Slater (London: Everyman, 1995), pp. 304–15.
- 82 Cornaro's diet of 12 ounces of solid food and 14 ounces of liquid daily would have provided at most 1300 calories and probably less, a regimen likely to lead ultimately to debility and illness; J. C. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham, *The Englishman's Food: A History of Five Centuries of English Diet* (London: Jonathan Cape, rev. ed., 1957), pp. 300–5.
- 83 For Joshua Mapletoft see, for example FP.V.911–13 (Oct 1633) and 933 (13 Jan 1633/4); for Robert, who saw *Hygiasticon* through the press, FP.V.924 (30 Jan 1633/4); and for Woodnoth FP.V.882, 884, 886, and 891 (Dec 1632–March 1633).
- 84 Williams, *Conversations*, p. 172.
- 85 The breakdown of the Little Academy and the soul-searching that accompanied later efforts to reconstitute it give evidence of this in the discussion which opens 'The Winding Sheet' in Blackstone, *Papers*, pp. 101–12.

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