Tenor of Our Times

Volume 4 Article 1

Spring 2015

Full Issue

TENOR OF OUR TIMES

Volume IV, Spring 2015

COVER

Gustave Doré, *Battle of Hattin*, ca. 1850

TENOR OF OUR TIMES

Volume IV, Spring 2015

Harding University
Searcy, Arkansas

Tenor of Our Times is published annually in the spring by the Department of History and Political Science at Harding University, Searcy, Arkansas in conjunction with the Eta Phi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. We are grateful to the contributors, editors, readers, and friends who made this publication possible.

CONTENTS

John Frizzell is a junior majoring in History and Leadership and Ministry. He takes great joy in studying Ancient History and drinking coffee. He is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, Omicron Delta Kappa, Alpha Chi, and the American Studies Institute. He is involved in the children's improvisational theatre troupe The Pied Pipers and intends to pursue graduate degrees in either education or history with the end goal of teaching history.

THE CONVERSION OF THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH: THE TRANSITION FROM SACRED PEACE TO HOLY WAR

By John L. Frizzell

"One soul cannot be under obligation of two, God and Caesar. . . . But how will a Christian war, indeed how will he serve even in peace without a sword, which the Lord has taken away? . . . The Lord, in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier."[1]

Throughout history, Christianity has been marked by varying degrees of separation from society, beginning with its inception in the early first century CE and proceeding to the modern era. At times this separation has been large, and at times this separation has been largely nonexistent. Yet at no time in history has Christianity been more one with temporal society than during the middle ages. During the time from the establishment of the early Church to the Crusades, the Church underwent a metamorphosis of its beliefs on war. At its beginning, the Church was stridently against all militancy, yet nearly a thousand years later during the Crusades, the Church did not merely approve of war, but instituted the Crusades and guaranteed salvation to all Christians who died questing against the infidels. This militarization of the Church occurred as a direct result of the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity.

Prior to the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity, the Church was an entirely peaceful organization, exemplified by its teachings, its lack of participation in the military, and its consistently meek acceptance of persecution. The crucial divergence of Christian teachings from those of Roman and Greek moralists was the Christians' abhorrence of war and espousal of nonviolent living.[2] A study of the gospels venerated by the early Christians does much to explain the peaceful nature of the early Church. For example, in Christ's Sermon on the Mount, one of his longest recorded sermons in the gospels, he proclaims "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they

[1] Tertullian, *On Idolatry* 19, quoted in Everett Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak*, 3rd ed. (Abilene, Texas: Abilene Christian University Press, 1999), 216.

[2] Robert M. Grant, *Augustus to Constantine*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970), 273.

shall be called sons of God" (Matt. 5:9). Christ is also recorded stating later during his trial, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world" (John 18:36). Furthermore, one of the Christ's most emphatic passages is his order to the apostle Peter as Peter attempts to defend Christ from his captors: "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matt. 26:52). Tertullian, an early Church Father of the third century, employed this command to Peter as a rationale for Christian abstention from the Roman Army.[3] Tertullian held the belief that Jesus, in ordering Peter to sheath his sword, ordered all Christians to a peaceful life; for what great audacity would it be for any later Christian to presume himself permitted to take up the sword when Peter himself was not?[4] These few passages serve as a representative of the whole body of text and illustrate clearly the reason for peaceful Christian lives: it was how they believed God wanted them to live.

If the peacemakers were to be called sons of God and followers of Christ were not expected to fight for him because he was not of this world, then Tertullian's statement regarding the unbelting of every soldier rings with greater clarity and aligns well with much of the gospel teachings. In fact, Tertullian's claim that Christians had no business in the army was well supported by a number of other Early Christian writers including Justin Martyr, Origen, and Hippolytus of Rome. Hippolytus went so far as to suggest that "if a catechumen or a baptized Christian wishes to become a soldier, let him be cast out. For he has despised God."[5] The very existence of Hippolytus' condemnation of Christian soldiers points to the presence of Christians in the Roman Army preceding the conversion of the Empire; however, given the severity of the extant Christian texts relating to the disavowal of war, it is fair to conclude that Christian participation in battle was the exception rather than the rule. However, this paradigm began to shift with the conversion of Emperor Constantine.

Emperor Constantine the Great reigned from 306-337 CE; Eusebius, a great chronicler of the church and a contemporary of Constantine, remembered Constantine as "standing . . . alone and pre-eminent among the Roman emperors as a worshiper of God; alone as the bold proclaimer to all

[3] Grant, *Augustus to Constantine*, 273.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition* 16.19, quoted in Everett Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak*, 3rd ed. (Abilene, Texas: Abilene Christian University Press, 1999), 216.

men of the doctrine of Christ; having alone rendered honor, as none before him had ever done, to his Church."[6] Constantine was, indeed, an emperor of firsts. He was the first Emperor to give Christianity favorable legal standing in the Roman Empire, as evidenced by his Edict of Milan.[7] He was also the first emperor to espouse the Christian faith, shown by his baptism at the end of his life, although the sincerity of his devotion is rather debated by scholars.[8] And finally, he was the first emperor to lead the Roman army into battle under the Christian cross.[9] Though Constantine was the first Christian emperor and declared Christianity a legal religion in the Edict of Milan, Rome was not yet converted. It was not until later in the fourth century that Christianity became the official prescribed religion of Rome by the words of an edict issued by Emperor Theodosius in 380 stating:

> It is our desire that all the various nation which are subject to our clemency and moderation, should continue to the profession of that religion which was delivered to the Romans by the divine Apostle Peter, According to the apostolic teaching and the doctrine of the Gospel, let us believe in the one deity of the father, Son and Holy Spirit, in equal majesty and in a holy Trinity. We authorize the followers of this law to assume the title Catholic Christians; but as for the others, since in our judgment they are foolish madmen, we decree that they shall be branded with the ignominious name of heretics, and shall not presume to give their conventicles the name of churches.[10]

Theodosius, with this edict, effectively made the Roman state Christian and outlawed all other religions, labeling them as heretical. With the Empire's adoption of Christianity as the religion of the state, a mingling of values could no longer be avoided; the church was now tied to an Empire that had made itself great by war. At this moment in history, Christianity began to intertwine and slowly merge itself with temporal society. As the power of the Church grew, so the lines between proper and improper

---

[6] Eusebius. *Life of Constantine*, LXXV. ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 22, 2014).

[7] "Edict of Milan", ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 22, 2014).

[8] Eusebius. *Life of Constantine*, LXII.

[9] Ibid. XXXI.

[10] *The Codex Theodosianus: On Religion*, XVI.1.2, ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 22, 2014).

Christian behavior in war began to blur. This blurring, though it first began with Constantine and Theodosius, proceeded through the Barbarian invasions, encompassed Pope Leo the Great, led to Pope Gregory the Great, continued on through Charlemagne to Pope Gregory VII, and finally to Pope Urban II and the crusades, where the blurring of the lines completed its work. What remained was a fully militarized Christianity, each soldier of God with a cross emblazoned upon his tunic and a blood slaked sword in his hand.[11]

But the growth of the Church's power was a slow process, and even after Rome's adoption of Christianity it would be centuries before the Church would truly be militarized. Indeed, from the late fourth century to the end of the fifth century, certain Barbarian tribes continually harassed the now Christian Roman Empire until 476 CE when the Roman Empire finally fell to the Germanic chieftain Odovacar.[12] During this period of harassment, Pope Leo I made great strides in increasing the power of the papacy, the greatest of which was his dramatic face-off with Attila the Hun. In 455 CE, Prosper, a Christian chronicler, recorded the event with a brief account written a mere three years after its occurrence saying:

> To the emperor and the senate and Roman people none of all the proposed plans to oppose the enemy seemed so practicable as to send legates to the most savage king and beg for peace. Our most blessed Pope Leo – trusting in the help of God, who never fails the righteous in their trials – undertook the task, accompanied by Avienus, a man of consular rank, and the prefect Trygetius. And the outcome was what his faith had foreseen; for when the king had received the embassy, he was so impressed by the presence of the high priest that he ordered his army to give up warfare and, after he had promised peace, he departed beyond the Danube.[13]

Leo I, acting as an agent of the empire, successfully treated with Attila, warlord of the Huns. This is a pivotal turning point in Church History; up until Leo I, no church official had ever represented the Roman Empire and

---

[11] Alfred Duggan, *The Story of the Crusades*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), 22.

[12] R.H.C. Davis, *A History of Medieval Europe: From Constantine to Saint Louis*, ed. R.I. Moore, 3rd ed. (London: Pearson Education Ltd., 2006), 25-26.

[13] Prosper, "Leo I and Attila," ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 20, 2014).

treated with an enemy of the state. This moment serves as an important touchstone in the growth of the militarization of the Church. Even though Leo I met with Attila as an agent of peace, he did so invested with the power of Rome.

Throughout this period of barbarian invasion, but prior to the fall of the Roman Empire, Rome suffered from increased lawlessness and great disorder. As a result of these invasions, central government in the West began a decline that would lead to the eventual fall of Rome.[14] To maintain order in the land, the power vacuum needed to be filled. Accordingly, Justinian, the Emperor of the East, issued an edict in 554 CE ceding authority to Pope Leo I and other bishops and church leaders, to "elect officials for each province who shall be qualified and able to administer its government," exclusively entrusting the Pope with the duty of overseeing "the purchase and sale of produce and in the payment and receipt of money, only those weights and measurements shall be used which we have established and put under the control of the pope and the senate."[15] At this point the church officially began to take over secular duties of the Roman government.

Only a few decades later, Pope Gregory I, whose papacy lasted from 590 CE – 604 CE, enlarged these secular duties. Gregory had been born into an aristocratic family and was well educated; he even served as the prefect of Rome in 573, which afforded him with the opportunity to learn the important details of the municipal administration, details he would put to use during his time as Pope.[16] During the time from the Fall of Rome to the Papacy of Gregory I, the West had become increasingly fragmented, broken into several different and smaller empires. Due to this fragmentation, a power vacuum existed that was even greater than in the time of Pope Leo I. Gregory, out of necessity, took over several functions of the civil government such as appointing governors of Italian cities and administering properties bequeathed to the Roman church.[17] These properties were located in Italy, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, and even North Africa, and because they had been

[14] Everett Ferguson, *Church History: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation*, vol. 1 of *The Rise and Growth of the Church in Its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2013), 299.

[15] Oliver J. Thatcher and Edgar Holmes McNeal, "The Emperor Gives the Pope Authority in Certain Secular Matters," No. 36, *A Sourcebook for Medieval History*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 87.

[16] Ferguson, *Church History: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation*, 319.

[17] Ibid., 320.

entrusted to the church at Rome, they were called "the patrimony of Peter."[18] Pope Gregory I essentially found himself as the head of his own empire, complete with its own land from the patrimony of Peter and its own aristocracy, consisting of lesser church officials and his appointed governors of Italian cities. Yet at this point, the Roman church still operated peaceably; it possessed temporal power, but chose to exercise it by decidedly non-militant means.

Because the papacy was endowed with lands from the patrimony of Peter but did not possess the means to defend its wealth from kingdoms and nobles who might want to take these lands for themselves, the papacy often found it necessary to request the aid of nearby Christian kingdoms, most notably the Franks. The requested intervention of the Franks in the early seventh century came at a very opportune time for those in power in Francia. The Merovingian dynasty, which had led the Frank since Francia's founding, was fading away and was ready to be replaced by the Carolingian line. However, the Carolingians needed the help of the Church in order to become official kings of Francia. As such, the Carolingians agreed to defend the Roman church under the condition that the Pope, on behalf of God, declared the Carolingian line the God-ordained kings of Francia. This agreement led to the marriage of the church to the Franks in which the Frankish kings relied upon the Church for their legitimacy and the Church, in turn, relied upon the Frankish kings for protection from those seeking to steal its lands. Of these Frankish Kings, none was greater than Charlemagne. By coronating Charlemagne, the church showed that as great as Charlemagne was, the church was greater, for the church had given Charlemagne his authority and Charlemagne, thereby, owed allegiance to the church. In the centuries prior to Charlemagne, any unity which Rome claimed to possess was theoretical; the church had established unity within itself, but there was no unity in the political world.[19] Charlemagne's empire, however, brought together all the Christian nations of the West under one banner.[20]

During this marriage of the church with Francia, the occasion arose in the mid ninth century for the Pope to issue a certain promise to the army of the Franks, an army that served to protect the papacy. This promise was the first concrete evidence that the papacy had begun to approve of war in the

[18] Ferguson, *Church History: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation*, 320.
[19] Ibid.
[20] George Burton Adams, *Civilization During the Middle Ages*, rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), 164.

service of God. This promise, given by Pope Leo IV to the Frankish Army stated, "We hope that none of you will be slain, but we wish you to know that the kingdom of heaven will be given as a reward for those who shall be killed in this war."[21] This notion of holy war was not idiosyncratic of Pope Leo IV, for a few decades later in 878 CE, Pope John VIII issued a similar statement to the Frankish Army stating that he "confidently" assured them that "those who, out of love to the Christian religion, shall die in battle fighting bravely against pagan or unbelievers, shall receive eternal life."[22] Pope Leo IV and Pope John VIII officially instituted the concept of warring for Christ, or holy war. From this point on, a Christian crusade became a real possibility in synchronization with the ideals of a papacy that was growing increasingly militant.

Two centuries later, this militancy finally began to manifest itself boldly. In 1074 CE, Pope Gregory VII, drawing on the precedent for holy war set by Pope John VIII and Pope Leo IV, issued a letter to "all who are willing to defend the Christian faith" reporting that "a pagan race had overcome the Christians and with horrible cruelty had devastated almost everything almost to the walls of Constantinople, and were now governing the conquered lands with tyrannical violence, and that they had slain many thousands of Christians as if they were but sheep."[23] Gregory went on in his letter to cite I John 3:16 as a rationale for a crusade, quoting that because "Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. . . we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers." Gregory interpreted this passage to mean that Christians ought to war against the infidels as a means of laying down their lives for their brethren suffering at the infidel's hands. This interpretation was directly in opposition to the behavior of the early Church who, when persecuted, went willingly to prison and even to death itself.

Pope Gregory VII's crusade was delayed when he became embroiled in a power struggle with Henry IV, the Holy Roman Emperor. However, instead of simply fading away, the call to arms was reiterated by Pope Urban II, who held the papacy shortly after Pope Gregory VII. Pope Urban II issued a speech at the Council of Clermont in 1095 CE echoing the sentiments

---

[21] Pope Leo IV, "Forgiveness of Sins for Those Who Dies in Battle With the Heathen," ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 11, 2014).

[22] Pope John VIII, "Indulgence for Fighting the Heathen, 878," ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 11, 2014).

[23] Gregory VII, "Call for a 'Crusade,'" ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 13, 2014).

formerly expressed by Pope Gregory VII stating, "an accursed race. . . has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage and fire" and urging the people to "undertake this journey for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven."[24] Pope Urban II ordered that all who answered the call of the crusade were to "wear the sign of the cross of the Lord on his forehead or on his breast."[25] And so began the first of the Crusades, with a horde of men bearing the cross of Christ upon their chests and brows, armed with the guarantee of eternal life, and fortified by the Pope with the assurance of the justice of their cause in the eyes of God.

This first crusade battled its way deep into the Infidel lands and reached all the way to the walls of Jerusalem. After besieging the city, the crusaders captured it for the Christian cause. Though centuries before Tertullian had claimed Christ had "unbelted every soldier," the Church of the Crusades had discovered in itself a love of war.[26] The sword that the Church had previously discarded in favor of peaceful living, it now picked up and discovered that, much like the formerly pagan Roman armies, it enjoyed wielding it. In fact, in the aftermath of the siege of Jerusalem, the Christian crusaders engaged in burning the bodies of the Muslims, searching for gold coins that many Muslims chose to swallow instead of surrender to the invading Christians.[27] This action echoed the actions of a pagan Roman army that had, a thousand years previously, sacked the city of Jerusalem and eviscerated the bodies of the Jews that had occupied the city in a search for the gold many Jews had chosen to swallow before attempting to escape the invaders.[28]

Though the two events are a thousand years apart, the similarity between them offers a unique opportunity to view exactly how militant the Church had become. The behavior of the two armies shows the completed metamorphosis of the Christian opinion of war; the behavior of a Christian army, emblazoned with the cross of Christ and marching in the name of God was identical to the behavior of an entirely pagan army that, a thousand years

---

[24] Robert the Monk, "Urban II: Speech at Council of Clermont, 1095," ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 13, 2014).

[25] Ibid.

[26] Tertullian, *On Idolatry* 19, quoted in Everett Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak*, 3rd ed. (Abilene, Texas: Abilene Christian University Press, 1999), 216.

[27] Fulcher of Chartres, *Gesta Francorum Jerusalem Expugnantium*, XXVIII, ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval*, (accessed November 13, 2014).

[28] Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews* 5.13.4.

previously, had marched, emblazoned with the mark of Rome and in the name of the Emperor, to conquer Jerusalem. The similarity between these two instances is shocking. In the first century CE, the Christians stridently eschewed war and strove to live as peaceful a life as possible. Yet by the end of the eleventh century, it is clear that the Church no longer viewed war as sinful, but instead held the belief that war could, in fact, be holy. The conversion of the Roman Empire tolled the death knell for the pacifism of the Church, and set it on a trajectory that would lead it down the path to militancy. The culmination of this path to militancy was the capture of Jerusalem when the crusaders, as though to consummate the relationship between the Church and war, burned the bodies of the slain infidels. In this moment, the Church revealed the horrible truth that its armies were no different from the pagan armies that had gone before her. The Church, after centuries of non-violence, picked up the sword and brought it to bear upon its enemies.

Joe Aaron Gafford II is a junior majoring in History and minoring in Bible and English. He is from Grenada, Mississippi. This May he will be marrying Stefani Dobbs. He is a member of the Harding Social Club Omega Phi and is also a member of Phi Alpha Theta and Omicron Delta Kappa. In May 2016 he will complete his undergraduate studies at Harding, whereupon he plans to attend Harding's graduate program in the College of Education to pursue a Master of Arts in Teaching with licensure. Afterward, he will begin teaching high school history, hoping to eventually return to graduate school for a Master's and Ph.D. in History and teach at the university level.

THE LIFE AND CONVERSION OF AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

By Joe Aaron Gafford II

On November 13, 354 AD, one of the most influential men in all of Christianity was born— *Aurelius Augustinus Hipponensis* or Augustine of Hippo. Augustine was crucial for the development of the Catholic Church in the fourth century. He served as the Bishop of Hippo and was one of the most prolific writers of his time. Many of his works survived and continue to be extremely significant among Christians today. Though today he is remembered for being a Church Father, throughout his life, Augustine did not live by many of the principles within Christianity and participated in sects considered to be heretical to the Catholic Church. The road to Augustine's conversion is long and filled with various influences for and against Christianity. Augustine was a philosopher before he professed any genuine belief in Christ, and his thinking eventually led him to pursue Christianity. However, he found it to be entirely too simplistic and unintelligent. Initially, Augustine was one of Christianity's strongest critics, but after studying with other Christian intellectuals, Augustine accepted Christ, was baptized, and today is remembered as one of Christianity's strongest advocates. However, this conversion was not accomplished in a single moment. It occurred overtime through the slow development of Augustine's thought. It began with his early life in Thagaste, continued with his education at Madauros. Augustine was then was introduced to Platonic thought and eventually converted to Manicheanism. Finally, after his encounter with Christian academics, he had his ultimate conversion to Christianity.

In the two centuries prior to the life of Augustine, Christians throughout the Roman Empire were persecuted greatly because of their lack of participation in the ritual worship of Roman gods. Due to their refusal to participate, many natural disasters and famines were blamed on them for incurring the gods' wrath.[1] This Roman persecution was a pratice that had begun with Jews; however, the second century marks a time of great change in the thinking of many as Christianity began to spread unexpectedly throughout the Roman Empire. First, individuals in the second century became attracted to the intimate God that Christianity provided; this personal

[1] Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity: AD 150-750* (New York: *Norton*, 1989), 51.

relationship was very different from the distant pantheon they previously worshiped. Second, they were drawn to the idea of the inner perfection that accompanied becoming a Christian. Third, individuals' views of evil changed drastically, as error ceased to be merely mistake, but in fact, demonic forces acting against them in spiritual warfare. Fourth, Christianity provided individuals who felt disconnected from their surroundings with a group that served as a unified religious community. Ultimately, there was something lacking in Roman communities and Christianity filled that need. Over time this became influential and, by 250, it brought more protection to be a Christian than to be a *civis romanus*.[2] From 260 to 302, the Christian Church was tolerated entirely; however, in 302, Roman Emperor Diocletian initiated what would later be known as the "Great Persecution." This persecution served as the final and most severe persecution of Christians by the Roman Empire. During this time, Christians "found themselves officially outcasts in the society with which they had so strenuously identified themselves." [3] However, immediately following Diocletian was the usurping Emperor, Constantine, who won a victory over his rival and credited the Christian God.[4]

This recognition of the Christian God served as an official act by Roman officials condoning Christianity. Primarily, Constantine's conversion manifested itself with the recognition of the Christian God, the end of the persecution of Christians, and most importantly, special privileges provided to the Christian clergy.[5] The emperors following Constantine, with the exception of Julian the Apostate, continued in the Christian faith. Though Constantine was a Christian, most of his subjects were still pagan and were not required to become Christians; rather, Christians were "merely a respected minority."[6] Over time this privileged minority attracted the wealthy and talented citizens; it was the influx of these citizens, around 370, that mark the beginning of true Christianization of Europe.[7] In the midst of this influx and the beginning of the rapid spread of Christianity, Augustine was born.

Augustine was born in 354 in the town of Thagaste in North Africa. This city had been in existence for over 300 years and was one of the many

---

[2] Brown, *World of Late Antiquity*, 67.
[3] Ibid., 86.
[4] Thomas Smith, *Augustine: His Life and Thought* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973), 4.
[5] Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle* (New Jersey: Princeton, 2012), 33.
[6] Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 34.
[7] Ibid., 528.

Roman settlements surrounding the Mediterranean. Unlike many of the settlements, however, Thagaste was sixty miles inland and was closed in by the Medjerda mountain range.[8] In fact, Augustine had no true concept of an ocean; rather, he could only imagine what it would be like by looking into a glass of water.[9] This area of Africa, Numidia, was once very wealthy, but by the fourth century, the city had fallen into decay. The town of Thagaste was technically a part of the old Numidian kingdom, though it was administered by Carthage. The Roman presence in Thagaste was limited as Rome was more concerned with its barbarian neighbors to the North than its African colonies. As a result, the empire's main presence came in the way of taxes and judges. Due to these wars in the North, Rome heavily taxed Africa. This area of Africa was used for farming and was marked by its many land owners. Many were very small properties, while others were extremely large and manned by slave labor. The smaller farms were greatly harmed by these taxes. The farming culture was an influential part of life for nearly everyone living there, but this was not the case for Augustine. Because of his education, Augustine had great aspirations that led him down a different path. Augustine's father, Patricius, was a "poor citizen of Thagaste," but through his father's hard work, Augustine received many opportunities.[10] As a whole, however, the family was forced to make sacrifices—notably, they were poorly dressed.[11] Though poor, Patricius had a position of authority—he was a Decurion, a town counselor who had tax-collecting duties; however, this duty also bound him and his heirs to the land.[12]

Augustine's mother, Monica, was influential in his life. Augustine, though a very prolific writer, did not write much concerning the early years of his life, but what he did write primarily concerned his mother and her guidance. Monica, unlike her pagan husband, was a devout Catholic. She encouraged Augustine at a young age to have a faith of his own as well as a good education. She was responsible for Augustine's participation in an early Christian ritual. Augustine said that he was, "signed with the sign of His Cross and seasoned with His salt as I came new from the womb of my mother, who had great trust in you."[13] Monica's religious teachings were later

[8] Garry Wills, *Saint Augustine* (New York: Penguin Group, 1999), 1.
[9] Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 20.
[10] Augustine, *Confessions* II, iii, 5.
[11] Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 21.
[12] Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 3.
[13] Augustine, *Confessions* II, xi, 3.

beneficial. This was true both spiritually and politically. Later in life, his initiation as a catechumen (a beginner Christian) brought him privileges long before his actual conversion and baptism. When Augustine was young, he fell sick and nearly died. It was at this moment he was nearly baptized; however, he quickly recovered and his baptism was delayed. In his *Confessions*, Augustine questioned the postponement of his baptism and how it affected his life; though ultimately, Augustine trusted in his mother's decision.[14]

Augustine's family was lower middle class. This provided them with aspirations for the education of their son, but it was not something his family individually could afford. Augustine did not particularly enjoy school, nor did he excel in his studies. In fact, one of the main reasons Augustine put any effort into his studies was because he feared being beaten.[15] This fear of beatings was great enough to cause him to pray to God for refuge. Like most children, Augustine would rather have played than learn. In 366, at age twelve, Augustine moved twenty miles north of Thagaste to the town of Madauros. This town had been the home of the great second century Platonist orator Apuleius and, unlike Thagaste, was dominantly pagan. Here Augustine was exposed to mythology and Virgil. Though he greatly enjoyed Latin literature, Augustine detested the Greek language and literature. Augustine enjoyed Virgil so much that in his *Confessions* he speaks of his weeping when he first read *The Aeneid* and of the suicide of Dido.[16] Through the pagan authors he read and the pagan teachers he had in Madauros, Augustine began to identify more with paganism than the Christianity he grew up with. His turn to pagan lifestyle and literature is something that he regrets and speaks of in his *Confessions*; Augustine laments that he was "sinfully delighted" in these things.[17] However, this lamentation of paganism was far from his mind when he returned to Thagaste after his recent exposure to pagan literature and teaching.

At age sixteen, Augustine returned to Thagaste and, at this point in his life, he entered the Roman stage of *adulescentia* (adolescence), which would continue until he was thirty years of age when he could hold any public office.[18] In this time period Roman citizens furthered their education by learning rhetoric, but due to insufficient funds, Augustine was unable to

[14] Augustine, *Confessions* I, xi, 17.
[15] Augustine, *Confessions* II, xi, 14.
[16] Ibid., I, xiii, 20.
[17] Ibid., I, xvii, 47.
[18] Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 10.

continue his education. At this point in his life, Augustine encountered the great sin of his life—lust. Upon his returning home, Augustine was of age to marry, but his parents had nothing arranged, so he began to seek out and indulge in sexual activity outside of marriage. This lack of an arranged marriage was something that Augustine later used, at least in part, to blame his parents for his sexual desires.[19] In addition to his sexual ventures, Augustine also participated with a gang and commits acts of vandalism. It was in this idle year spent at home that Augustine fell into many of the sins that would haunt him for the rest of his life. After one year back in Thagaste, Augustine traveled to Carthage and continued his education supported by Romanianus, a friend of his father. While in Carthage, Augustine studied, but much like Madauros, Carthage was much more pagan than his hometown of Thagaste. In Carthage, Augustine continued to attend church; however, it was primarily to pursue his sexual conquests.[20]

One of these conquests was the woman to whom Augustine would remain faithful for the next fifteen years. Augustine later regrets how the relationship was founded more out of lust than for any intention for children or Christian marriage.[21] This woman would, however, bear Augustine a son, Adeodatus, when Augustine was just seventeen years old. Though Augustine never named her in his writings, she was his wife in the Roman sense. This meant that if Augustine found a more appropriate marriage he could leave the first according to Roman law.[22] Following his second class marriage, Augustine experienced his first true religious conversion.

In 373, Augustine, at age nineteen, read *The Hortensius*, a now lost work of Cicero concerning philosophy. This work was extremely influential in the development of Augustine's faith. Augustine wrote:

> Following the normal order of study I had come to a book of one Cicero, whose tongue practically everyone admires, though not his heart. That particular book is called *Hortensius* and contains an exhortation to philosophy. Quite definitely it changed the direction of my mind, altered my prayers to You, O Lord, and gave me a new

[19] Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 38.
[20] James O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 38.
[21] Augustine, *Confessions* IV, ii, 12.
[22] James O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 39.

> purpose and ambition. Suddenly all the vanity I had hoped in I saw as worthless, and with an incredible intensity of desire I longed after immortal wisdom.[23]

From his newly found desire to study philosophy and wisdom, Augustine, due to his Christian upbringing, naturally turned to the Bible to find this wisdom he desired; however, what he found greatly discouraged him. Augustine found the Bible to be nothing compared to the great writing of Cicero, the wisdom that he so fiercely sought was not found in the pages of this Christian book. Augustine also had no love for the cruel and hateful God of the Old Testament. The combination of these factors caused him to turn to Manichaeism, a religion derived from Christianity founded by Mani in 228.

In the time of Augustine, the Manichaeans were a small and mysterious sect with a notorious reputation. In the Manichaean myth, the earth was the battle ground between two kingdoms: the Kingdom of Light and the Kingdom of Darkness. The Manichees followers were those who helped the Kingdom of Light by retrieving pieces of light that were trapped in this corrupt world. For their help retrieving these pieces, they would receive a reward. While these followers were on the earth, they would be influenced by the evil world, corrupted by the Kingdom of Darkness, and as a result, would sin and make mistakes, but ultimately these mistakes were caused by the influence of evil rather than the individual. This idea of internal perfection was one of the most appealing pieces of the Manichean faith to Augustine, but later this lack of guilt on the individual is one of his harshest criticisms.[24] This added layer on Augustine's view of Christianity allowed him to remain internally pure while externally living in sin with his concubine.

Another major influence Manichaeism had on Augustine was its practices in regard to sexual purity. There were two major divisions of the Manichees: the Elect and the Hearers. The Elect had been chosen by Mani and followed a very different set of rules than the Hearers. One such belief of the Manichees was the practice of complete transcendence from sexual urges. Though Augustine was just a Hearer and was not required to behave according to these conditions, it was here that he attainted his ascetic beliefs towards sexual purity.[25] Augustine's ideas of sexual purity would later

---

[23] Augustine, *Confessions* III, iv, 4.

[24] Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 50.

[25] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 201.

become a major part of his life and even during his time as a Manichee, he still prayed, "Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet."[26] Another influence Manichaeism had on Augustine was his career path. Prior to becoming a Manichee, Augustine's education dealt with Roman law, but following his conversion to philosophy and his devotion to wisdom Augustine became a teacher.

In 375, after Augustine's finished his education, Romanianus requested his return to Thagaste to teach literature. It was while back in his hometown that Augustine converted many of his close friends and colleagues to Manichaeism, including his patron Romanianus.[27] Upon returning home, Monica refused him entrance into her house because of his conversion to Manichaeism. [28] Also upon his return home, though he does not leave her until 385, there was no mention of his concubine or his son. During his time back home, he reunited with many friends. One of these close friends became very ill. Though Augustine did not mention him by name, the details of their friendship are discussed at length in his *Confessions.* Augustine said their friendship had been "very dear" and was "made warmer by the ardor of studies pursued together."[29] Augustine had converted him to Manichaeism, but when his friend was close to death and was unconscious his parents gave him a Catholic baptism. When his friend was awake yet again, Augustine thought his friend would laugh at the silly Christian practice; however, his friend accepted baptism and rejected Augustine's friendship. Shortly after his baptism and rejection of Augustine, he dies. The combination of these two events—rejection and death—caused Augustine to become depressed. Then in 376, twenty-two year old Augustine, against the wishes of his patron, Romanianus, returned to Carthage to pursue a career in teaching.[30]

Augustine's desire to teach stemmed from his love of wisdom, and it was this same wisdom and rhetoric that he taught while in Carthage. His classroom would have been in the middle of public life in Carthage; the only separation from the busy town would be a curtain. [31] This method of teaching and his rowdy students he was teaching caused him to desire more. This desire for more encouraged him to make connections with the proconsuls in the area. These men would need teachers to educate their sons. Augustine

[26] Augustine, *Confessions* VIII, vii, 17.
[27] Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 160.
[28] Augustine, *Confessions* III, xi, 19.
[29] Ibid., IV, iv, 13.
[30] Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 64.
[31] Ibid., 65.

planned to use this influence to rise in status. In Carthage, Augustine became friends with Vindicianus, a Roman Proconsul. This man became a father figure to Augustine and discouraged him from learning astrology.[32] In 380, Augustine published his now lost work—*The Beautiful and the Appropriate*. He addressed the book to Hierius, a rhetorician in Rome. During the next two years in Carthage, Augustine became more and more critical of Manichaeism and he began to distance himself from his Manichean friends. Augustine's questioning led him to Faustus, an African spokesman of Manichaeism. Ideally, Faustus would be able to answer Augustine's questions, however, this proved not to be the case—Augustine who wanted, so desperately, to be the student had become the teacher.[33] By 382, Augustine was ready to leave Carthage; he was very impressed with his students from Rome and made plans to move there. When his mother Monica learned of his plans to move to Rome, she traveled to Carthage and begged him to stay; when he declined she threatened to move to Rome with him. Augustine told her when they were leaving so she could come, but he lied and left in the night without her.[34] Augustine's first year in Rome was rather miserable as he suffered illness and the students were not as responsible as he hoped, but he did attract notice from a very important person—Symmachus.

Symmachus was a prominent senator in Rome and was prefect of the city. He was charged with the task of appointing a professor of rhetoric for the city of Milan. Currently, Milan was the imperial residence and had functioned as the capital of the Western Empire for over 100 years. The position as the leading professor of rhetoric meant that one would teach and advise the most important men in the empire including the consuls and the Emperor.[35] Symmachus was a devoted pagan who valued greatly the pagan heritage of Rome; however, the Emperors and other prominent figures were all Catholic. Symmachus' desire was to appoint an individual who would combat these Christians. [36] Symmachus had served as proconsul in Africa and was very familiar with the Manichaeans in the area. Though Augustine was no longer an ardent Manichean, it was his Manichean friends who arranged for his audition before Symmachus. Impressed with Augustine's ability with rhetoric, he received the appointment to the position in Milan. The city of

[32] Augustine, *Confessions* IV, iii, 5.
[33] Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 34.
[34] Augustine, *Confessions* V, viii, 15.
[35] Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 69.
[36] Paul Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Soul* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 66.

Milan was the capital in more ways than one: it served as a society overflowing with knowledge. For Augustine, "Milan meant new interests, new learning, and great changes of success."[37]

In Milan, Augustine continued to climb the social ladder. After a short time spent in Milan, he had an estate large enough to accommodate his wife, son, mother and brother, two cousins, and a body of students.[38] Additionally, he had slaves, stenographers, and copyists. In Milan, Augustine reached a point in his career where having great success in government was a very real possibility. For that career to be possible, however, Augustine had to have a legitimate marriage to a woman of some position. This meant that his companion for the past fifteen years, the mother of his son would be forced to return to Africa. Augustine mourned her departure saying, "She with whom I had lived so long was torn from my side as a hindrance to my forthcoming marriage. My heart which had held her very dear was broken and wounded and shed blood."[39] Another reason for the departure of his concubine was the sexual purity practices he found so appealing in his time as a Manichaen. Though he found this lifestyle appealing, he was still unable to remain sexually pure and took on a mistress to occupy him until marriage. [40] It was only after his conversion that he gave up his ambitious goals and sinful lifestyle.

In Milan, Augustine met one of the most significant men in his life—Ambrose. Concurrent with Symmachus choosing Augustine to be the professor in Milan, Symmachus was also having a dispute with the Emperor and Ambrose over the removal of an altar of Victory from the Senate chamber. Through this dispute, Augustine received his first impression of Ambrose. Another early impression Augustine had concerned Ambrose's fame as a great orator. Augustine, a connoisseur of exceptional rhetoric, began to attend sermons of Ambrose out of professional curiosity.[41] Though Ambrose was famous for being a skillful orator, Augustine was unimpressed and thought that Faustus, the Manichean rhetorician, was more impressive.[42] However, over time, the sermons of Ambrose affected his faith. These sermons caused Augustine to seek guidance from Ambrose; however,

[37] Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 72.
[38] Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 40.
[39] Augustine, *Confessions* VI, xv, 1.
[40] Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 41.
[41] Garry Wills, *Font of Life* (Oxford: University Press, 2012), 70.
[42] Augustine, *Confessions* V, xiv, 1.

Ambrose was too busy to help him.[43] Augustine recorded one such occasion in his *Confessions*. On one such occasion there was a group of individuals who wanted to ask questions of Ambrose, but Ambrose was too busy studying a Greek text. Instead of acknowledging them he continued in his studies.[44] In his *Soliloquies,* Augustine spoke of Ambrose and how "it is cruel not to help" those seeking answers.[45] Though Augustine took on Ambrose as a spiritual father, and despite Catholic tradition in regard to the conversion of Augustine, it was not Ambrose who was the most influential role in Augustine's conversion; it was Simplician who nurtured Augustine's faith.[46] Simplician was the mentor of Ambrose, and would later be Ambrose's successor as the Bishop of Milan. Simplician, unlike Ambrose, regularly met with Augustine. [47] Later letters between Simplician and Augustine confirmed their close relationship. In once such letter Augustine wrote, "I have drunk deep of your fatherly affection for me."[48] Simplician introduced Augustine to Christian Neoplatonism. This belief was very important to Augustine as he later became very interested in the writing of Plotinus. Simplician also told Augustine stories of others who had converted and these stories encouraged Augustine. Augustine then officially converted and began the process for baptism. Though the relationship Augustine desired with Ambrose never developed, his close relationship with Simplician contributed to his conversion.

In 386, Augustine, a newly converted Christian, moved to Cassiciacum to make a clean break with his previous life. He left his court position and lived in a villa loaned to him by Verecundus. It was there that Augustine established a community of Christians dedicated to study and prayer. This country life was very different from the life he had experienced in Milan. Among the people with him were his mother, son, two cousins, two friends, and two paying students. They read Virgil daily, and Augustine would stay up many nights deep in prayer. In addition to study, Augustine wrote a great deal. During his time in the countryside, he wrote his *Soliquies,* in which he asked and answered many religious questions. Additionally, Augustine wrote many letters to close friends including Hermogenianus,

[43] Augustine, *Confessions*, VI, xi, 18.
[44] Ibid., *Confessions* VI, iii, 4.
[45] Augustine, *Soliloquies* II, xvi, 12.
[46] O'Donnell, *Augustine*, 301.
[47] Augustine, *City of God* X, 29.
[48] Augustine, *Letters*, 37.

Zenobius, and Nebridius.[49] This time spent in Cassiciacum also marks the first time Augustine remained celibate. Althought this was not required in the Catholic church, it was a tradition across the Mediteranean that philoshopical individuals in a moral program would become ascetic.[50] This ascetical lifestyle had less to do with Christianity and more to do with Neoplatonism. In 387, at age thirty-five, Augustine made the decision to be baptized and sent Ambrose a notice of his intent. [51]

In January 387, Augustine and his companions returned to Milan to celebrate Epiphany and were enrolled in baptism process. During this time of Lent those enrolled in the baptism process abstained from all sexual activity. Additionally they were inspected daily and every week an exorcism would be performed to rid the body of all evil. This prebaptismal process marked a time of great change for Augustine, as it was here under the tutelage of Ambrose that Augustine was finally able to rectify many of his Manichean criticism of the Old Testament. It was during Ambrose's sermons, as well as the twice daily sessions, that Augustine fell in love with Ambrose's metaphorical interpretation of scripture. The next major step in the baptismal process occurred on Palm Sunday when the individuals would take the secret Apostles' Creed. Finally, the climax of all these preparations came on Easter morning with the procession to the baptistery. Before dawn, Ambrose would perform a ceremony outside the baptistery to enhance the spiritual awareness of the individuals. They would then enter the baptistery, face west and renounce the devil, then facing east they would welcome Christ to their heart. Next, they would strip nude, be anointed with oil, and would enter the baptismal pool. Ambrose would then dunk their heads underwater three times to represent the Trinity and they would exit the pool and be wrapped in a white garment to signify their innocence. They would be anointed yet again and their feet would be washed. Finally, they heard the Lord's Prayer and participated for the first time in the Eucharist.[52] Following this ceremony they would end Lent with a celebratory feast. After his baptism Augustine, along with his family, began their long journey back to Africa. This journey, however, would not be completely joyous, as Monica, Augustine's mother would never make it back to Africa. Throughout Augustine's life, Monica

[49] Augustine, *Letters*, 1-3.
[50] Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 48.
[51] Augustine, *Confessions* IX, xiii, 12.
[52] Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 106.

had been a huge proponent for Augustine's Christian growth, it was only fitting that she lived to see her son become a full-fledged Christian.

Augustine was one of the most prolific Christian writers of his time; however, the early years of his life he spent indulging his sinful desires. For Augustine, the road to his ultimate conversion to Christianity was a slow developing process affected by a multiplicity of factors. Long before his ultimate conversion to authentic Christianity, he held many heretical and controversial views and it was only after working through these views that he came to genuine Christianity. Although his alliances and beliefs changed over time, he never completely abandoned Christianity and in whatever religion he practiced the "name of Christ" was present in every one.[53]

[53] Augustine, *Letters*, 21, 2.

Grace Allen is from Paducah, Kentucky, and graduated from Harding University with a B.A. in History and Music in the fall of 2014. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. She has worked and volunteered in several areas of public history including the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in the museum division, the Brackett Library archives at Harding University, and Old Sturbridge Village New England Living History Museum. Her other passions are traveling, singing, baking Parisian macaroons, acting, and, most of all, reading.

CONCERNS OF A FIFTEENTH CENTURY GENTRY WOMAN: A STUDY IN LETTERS

By Grace Allen

Traditionally, the household, child-rearing, and the kitchen have been seen as the woman's domain. In the late fifteenth century in England, this was no different concerning the gentry class. As an authority on English life in the fifteenth century, H. S. Bennett writes, "If we want to see the medieval woman rightly, it is in her home we must view her. All other things in her life were subservient to her housekeeping."[1] On the nature of women, the attitude of the time held that women were innately inferior to men, both because of the way people interpreted the Bible at the time and because of the widely-held belief in the Hippocratic methods of the four humors, which alleged that the cool and damp nature of women caused them to be indecisive and of inferior judgment.[2] Even so, this bleak underlying view of the women's subservient position was continually contradicted in many fifteenth-century contemporary writings. Most of these writings held that a good wife was highly valued and even respected as a partner to her spouse in business management and the in the household. Though slightly predating the fifteenth century, in "Le Mesnagier de Paris" a bourgeois husband lovingly wrote an instruction manual to his young wife detailing the many responsibilities and assets she was to manage.[3] Bennett and Joan Kirby also assert in their separate studies that gentry wives and husbands functioned as partners in resolving local business matters and in elevating the family reputation and betterment.[4] In recent studies, the various roles and of women, as wives and mothers and as women of legal and local business matters, has been given

[1] H. S. Bennett, *The Pastons and Their England: Studies in an Age of Transition*, 2nd ed. (1932; repr., London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 51.

[2] Joan Kirby, "Women in the Plumpton Correspondence: Fiction and Reality," in *Church and Chronicle in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to John Taylor*, ed. Ian Wood, G. A. Loud, 219-232 (London: Hambledon Press, 1991): 219-220; P. J. P. Goldberg, "Women," in *Fifteenth- Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England*, ed. Rosemary Horrox, 112-131 (1994; repr., Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press, 1996), 116.

[3] Tania Bayard, trans., ed., *A Medieval Home Companion: Housekeeping in the Fourteenth Century* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 21-23.

[4] H. S. Bennett, *The Pastons and Their England*, 51-53; Joan Kirby, "Survival and Betterment: The Aspirations of Four Medieval Gentry Families as Revealed in their Letters," *Family and Community History* 15, no.2 (October 2012): 103.

much attention.[5] The various ways in which English gentry women influenced the world in which they lived; however, the primary concerns that motivated the gentry women have not been greatly discussed. With the examination of primary documents written by and about women in the late fifteenth century, it can be gleaned that in general, English gentry women's primary concerns in their work in and outside the home were to preserve and advance the family unit by securing an adequate inheritance and position for themselves and their children through marriage, legal and social means.

In order to discover the driving motivations that dictated the activities of a fifteenth-century English woman, it is essential to study their lives in their own words. The best place to find their voices is in the letter writing which largely increased in the fifteenth century. Nearly all letters of the fifteenth century, regardless of authorship, were practical and concerned only with conveying immediate business concerns beginning and ending with formal greetings. Malcom Richardson eloquently stated, "A modern reader coming to any of these collections with romantic notions about the Age of Chivalry will quickly be disabused of these preconceptions by the sheer opportunism, naked aggression, and edgy suspiciousness found on virtually every page."[6] Letter writing at this time was the primary means of long-distance communication rather than a leisurely activity. Their purpose was not to comment or express opinion as such, but to inform. Because there is a rarity of other contemporary material written by women, the letters written by gentry women, although business-like, are the best windows into understanding their primary concerns. Through the examination of these letters it can be understood that these women showed their care for the family unit through the actions of gaining and maintaining family lands and prestige so that their family might prosper.[7]

The collections of letters that are representative of the gentry class from the late fifteenth century are primarily the Paston, Stonor, Cely and Plumpton family letters. Together these letters number into over a thousand letters and include a strong cast of wives, mothers and daughters-in-law. The

[5] Valerie Creelman, "'Ryght worchepfull mastres': Letters of Request and Servants' Scripting of Margaret Paston's Social Self," *Paregon* 26, no. 1 (2009): 91; Alison Speddings "'I Shall Send Word in Writing': Lexical Choices and Legal Acumen in the Letters of Margaret Paston," *Medium Aevum* 77, no. 2 (2008): 241-242.

[6] Malcom Richardson, "'A Masterful Woman': Elizabeth Stonor and English Women's Letters, 1399-c.1530," in *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400-1700*, ed. Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 53.

[7] Malcom Richardson, "'A Masterful Woman,'" 53-54.

Paston family made their rise to significance first through successful careers as judges in the Norfolk area, then through a string of advantageous marriages. William Paston, the first to be formally educated person in the family, married Agnes Berry, a local heiress, who brought much-needed social status to the family. Agnes prudently arranged another successful match for her son, John, with Margaret Mautby, also an heiress that improved the family station. When Agnes was widowed in 1444, she was left with a significant portion and continued to live and manage her estates for over thirty-five years. Although Agnes provides a good study, Margaret Paston wrote the majority of letters written by the Paston women, and her strong administration of the Paston household provides a great insight into gentry women.[8]

The Stonors from Oxfordshire were a much older family than the Pastons, but the Stonors also made their rise through judicial means. In the 1350s, as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, John de Stonor brought stability to the Stonor family and amassed enough estates for his children to become landed gentry. The largest number of letters written by a woman in this family's collection is from William Stonor's first wife, Elizabeth. Elizabeth's father was a grocer and she was a member of the London merchant class, which was resented by the William's family for having married below the gentry class. However, Elizabeth had previously been married to a wealthy wool merchant and upon his death inherited a large amount of money and two-thirds of her previous husband's estate. Though Elizabeth died not long after marrying William, she wrote a significant number of letters with an interesting perspective from London, where she preferred a city lifestyle.[9]

The Cely family was also connected to the wool trade, as they were wool merchants primarily based in London and Calais. Theirs is the smallest collection of the four families with only 251 letters between 1471 and 1488. Though the family's origins are debated, the Celys were Londoners who also possessed manors and properties in Essex. The Celys were fortunate in their connection to the Company of Wool Staplers, which had a monopoly on Calais's wool market in exchange for the Crown's ability to take loans out

[8] Colin Richmond, *The Paston Family In The Fifteenth Century: Fastolf's Will* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1996): 7-8; Agnes Paston to William Paston I, April 20, 1440, in *The Pason Letters: A Selection in Modern Spelling*, ed. Norman Davis, rev. ed. (1963; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 2008): 2-3; Valerie Creelman, "'Ryght worchepfull mastres,'' 91.

[9] Malcom Richardson, "'A Masterful Woman,'" 43-46.

from the company. These letters are almost entirely business-related and though there are no letters written specifically by women, there are several references by the Cely men to their wives and about marriage arrangements, which illustrates the roles and the complexities of making a successful marriage match and demonstrates the importance of finance in the matter.[10]

The Plumptons had been of the gentry and knightly class since 1166. Similar to the Pastons and the Stonors, they had made their fortunes through auspicious marriages. By the mid-fifteenth century, the Plumpton's fortunes would fade fast. Although the Plumpton's forged many alliances and connections for their daughters through marriages, the family ran into ruin because Sir William lacked an undisputed heir. His illegitimate son Robert Plumpton squandered much of the money left in pursuit of land rights of the manors and inheritance. Letters by Robert Plumpton's wives and daughters show the concerns of a struggling gentry family and their actions to better their situation.[11]

It is important to understand the structure and function of marriage to comprehend the circumstances of women during this time and ultimately to recognize the primary concerns they held. The overwhelming majority of aristocratic women, approximately ninety-four percent, married during this time. Marriages were an important way for a family to secure greater social connections, wealth, and ultimately inheritance. [12] The marriage between William and Agnes Berry Paston is illustrative of this. Conversely, the presence of an unmarried daughter in a household would cause a strain on their families for further support, and for single women, life could even be rather cruel. Elizabeth Paston, though she did marry eventually, spent many years as a single adult in her mother's household. In letters to John Paston, her brother, Elizabeth's mistreatment in the form of beatings was described, and she wrote of seeking a marriage in order to escape her position.[13] John Paston and Margaret Mautby Paston's marriage served to increase the Paston holdings and to connect the family further. Advantageous marriages also ultimately prevented families from facing financial ruin. After Sir Robert Plumpton lost his legal battle for inheritance and legitimacy, his first and second wives' estates and their dowries played a large part in keeping the

[10] Joan Kirby, "Survival and Betterment," 98-102.

[11] Ibid, 105.

[12] Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1500: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 88.

[13] Elisabeth Clere to John Paston I, June 29, Not after 1449, in *The Pason Letters: A Selection*, 23-25.

family solvent financially, although barely.[14] Women also gained more autonomy through marriage as they assumed the position of household manager.

For these reasons, marriage served as the fundamental way of life for most women. A further look into the role of marriage during the fifteenth century requires delving into the legal issue of coverture, dowry and jointure in the marriage contract. When a woman married, her legal person and right to individual property was merged with her husband's person. In a sense, the common law custom of coverture did away with the wife's ability to act on her own behalf in legal matters.[15] Another essential element of fifteenth-century marriage was the use of dowers and jointure to provide for widows. In Harris's study of seven-hundred and fifty-five knights and noblemen who married in the time period, sixty-nine percent of them died before their wives. With the reality that many wives were likely to become widows, it was essential for families to secure a livelihood for them. During the late fifteenth century, the use of dowers decreased as the use of jointure increased. A dower, not to be confused with a dowry, is the entitlement of a widow to one third of her husband's property at his death. This was a significant portion, and because there was often conflict between a widow and her husband's heir (sometimes children from a previous marriage), the use of jointure became a common practice.

In the event of death, the jointure was a settled piece of land often garnering a set amount of money each year that was held in common between the husband and wife. The jointure went to the surviving partner. The jointure was usually seen as compensation for the dowry. Jointures were on average about ten percent of the dowry. If the dowry had not been paid in full at the time of the husband's death, the jointure was often forfeited. Most court cases about marriage concerned these jointures.[16] With these cases, women as widows often represented themselves, though some had to rely on their male relatives to fight on their behalf.[17] For the gentry, marriage was not just a bonding of two people but a bonding of two families and a financial agreement between them. With all these components to a marriage contract and both families striving to get some financial or social benefit from the

[14] Lady Neville to Dame Isabel Plumpton, April 28, 1506. In *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, ed. Joan Kirby (1996; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 182.
[15] Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1500*, 18-20.
[16] Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1500*, 44-52.
[17] Ibid, 52.

agreement, the marriage negotiations could take years to finally settle.[18]

Evidence of the complexity of these marriage contracts can be seen by looking more closely at the marriages of both the Cely brothers, Richard and George, and the Paston brothers, John Paston II and John Paston III. It took a significant amount of time to successfully negotiate each one's marriage contract. The Cely brothers first began to mention marriage in their letters in 1481. In May of 1482, Richard told of his pursuits of a gentlewoman with the family name of Lemryke from the Cotswolds and his competition for her favor with his rival William Mydwyntter. These ventures faded to nothing, but by 1484 both brothers were successfully married to women of means. Most notable was the marriage of George to Margery Rygon, whose first husband had left her nearly everything because he had no children.[19] Similarly, in 1477 John Paston III made a very successful match financially, despite its long negotiation, to Margery Brews; however, his brother, John II, was caught in an unsatisfactory engagement. John II had previously been engaged to Anne Haute, a relative of the Queen. Though there was no outright objection to an alliance with the family nor to finances, John II and Anne seemed to have had a change of heart and John II spent several years trying to get a legal release from their engagement.[20]

Engagement was not merely an agreement between two people but also a legal matter. John Paston II and John Paston III had a sister, also named Margery, who was not able to escape the legal ramifications of engagement, much to the displeasure of Margaret Paston, her mother. Margery had fallen in love with the family bailiff, Richard Calle, and they had secretly become engaged. This was an embarrassment to the family; the bailiff was a far cry from a great family connection for which they would have hoped. Of the unfavorable situation John III told his brother, "even if my father (on whom God have mercy) were alive and had consented to it, and my mother and both of you as well he would never have my good will to

[18] Joan Kirby, "Survival and Betterment,"102.

[19] Richard Cely the younger to George Cely, London, June 4, 1481; May 13, 1482, in *The Cely Letters: 1472-1488* ed. Alison Hanham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975): 106-107, 151-153; Alison Hanham, *The Cely's and Their World: An English merchant family of the fifteenth* century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985): 310-311.

[20] Margaret Paston to John Paston, March 12, 1469; John Paston II to John Paston III, November 22, 1473; Margery Brews to John Paston III, February 1477; Margaret Paston to Dame Elizabeth Brews, June 11, 1477, in *The Pason Letters: A Selection*, 172, 221, 234, 240-241.

make my sister sell candles and mustard in Framlinghm."[21] Regardless of the family's convictions that the engagement should be dissolved, these kind of secret promises or vows of engagement were as lawfully binding as marriage vows. In the church law, engagement spoken aloud *per verba de praesenti* had the same gravity as actual marriage vows. Though both Margaret and Margery's grandmother Agnes disputed the issue, hoping to dissolve the promise by taking it before the bishop, the matter was closed because the vows were irrevocable.[22] Secret vows of engagement and even the concealment of a suitor such as that of Margery Paston were seen as disreputable and disrespectful attempts to undermine a mother's authority. In the poem "How the Goodwife Taught Her Daughter," popular in the fifteenth century as an advice manual from a mother to her daughter, there is a stanza that warns against secret suitors: "If any man offer thee courtship, and would marry thee… show it to thy friends and conceal it naught… for a slander raised of ill Is evil for to still, My leif child."[23] Margery and her mother have very little record of communication after she broke her mother's trust; however, there is some record of a possible reconciliation in that Margaret left Margery's son £20 in her will. [24] The clear indications that Margery Paston's engagement was such a scandal indicates that this kind of rebellion was less common and that in general, a good marriage to procure a better position for the brides and their families was deeply valued by the mothers and daughters, if not always for initial happiness.

The business-like nature of these marriage agreements being driven primarily by materialistic gains has often led some historians to conclude that these women were cold and detached from their children. It would seem that many of these women did not take into account the happiness of their children as a primary concern.[25] Though the way they went about these marriage agreements sometimes seems to put their children's feelings aside,

---

[21] John III to John II, May, 1469. In *The Pastons: The letters of a family in the Wars of the Roses,* ed. Richard Barber (1981; repr., Middlesex England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985): 148-9.

[22] Richard Barber, *The Pastons: The Letters*, 153.

[23]Edith Rickert, ed. "How the Goodwife Taught Her Daughter," in *The Babee's Book Medieval Manners for the Young: Done Into Modern English From Dr. Furnivall's Texts* (New York: Duffield, 1908): 33; Candice Gregory, "Raising the Goodwife: Mothers and Daughters in Fifteenth-Century England," 145.

[24] Richard Barber, *The Pastons: The letters*, 155.

[25] Ann S. Haskell, "The Paston Women on Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Englnd," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* vol. 4 (Berkely: University of California Press, 1975), 469-470; Candice Gregory, "Raising the Goodwife," 164-165.

there is also significant evidence to support that many women did have sympathy and love for their children. When Elizabeth Stonor was told her daughter from her first marriage, Katherine Ryche, was sick, she told her husband to immediately bring her home so that she might care for her.[26] Lady Edith Neville's reply to her daughter Isabel Plumpton's troubles with her absent husband and their money difficulties was that of affection and condolence. She said her husband would send the last of Isabel's dowry payment in hopes that it might help and told her that the Lord helps those who are in need.[27] Even Margaret Paston was willing to work through a difficult contract with the Brews family for the before-mentioned marriage of John Paston III and Margery Brews, despite the probability that her dowry was slightly less than what she wanted for him. Because John Paston III and Margery were in love and despite her eagerness to be rid of the situation, Margaret sought to come to some agreement with the acceptable Brews family.[28]

From these examples it is clear that these medieval women loved their children. This practical kind of love was not necessarily focused upon their child's emotional happiness but upon ensuring for them a better financial and social position so that they could live a good and productive life according to the society in which they lived.[29] However business-like these women may appear, it would have been improper for them to write in an emotional way that readers of today might expect to see and understand. In their own way, these women conveyed their concerns for the family, both children and husbands, through their business conduct.[30] Perhaps they showed their love in this manner because they defined happiness not as an emotional state but as success in their family's position.

When a woman married for the first time she was often quite young. In many cases women went to live with their in-laws for a significant time of their young married life. When John Paston I and Margaret were first

---

[26] Elizabeth Stonor to William Stonor, August 18, 1476. In "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters: A Revised Text with Notes, a Glossary, and a Collation of Those Letters Edited by C.L. Kingsford in 1919 and 1924," by Alison Truelove, (PhD diss., Royal Holloway, University of London, 2001): 251.

[27] Lady Neville to Dame Isabel Plumpton, April 28, 1506. *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, 182.

[28] Sir Thomas Brews to John Paston II, March 8,1477; Margaret Paston to Dame Elizabeth Brews, June 11, 1477. In *The Paston Letters A Selection*, 237-241.

[29] Barbara Hanawalt, "Medievalists and the Study of Childhood," *Speculum* 77, no. 2 (April 2002): 456.

[30] Malcom Richardson, "'A Masterful Woman,'"43-44.

married, Margaret stayed with her mother-in-law, Agnes Paston, where she was able to observe Agnes's household and see how it functioned. The close quarters that many young wives shared with their mothers-in-law were a source for teaching the young wife how to handle matters of household.[31] Once the couple came into inheritance or established themselves separately, wives had to settle into their role as the center of the household.[32] As such, the wife had many responsibilities. Despite coverture and the lack of a legal status, women actually had great authority when it came to their husband's estates. Often the importance of a wife or woman to manage the household was such that the absence of one could be sorely missed. A responsible wife was usually highly valued by her husband. Though there were certainly unhappy marriages, this mutual respect and partnership often grew into a deeper affection. Despite the commonality of arranged marriages, it seems that most husband-wife relationships either began in love or became loving over time. [33] Elizabeth Stonor often thanked William in her letters for the venison and other fare that he attentively sent her. She also wrote out of concern to her husband when she heard that he was exposed to the small pox, and asked him to come home, or if the case were that he had already fallen ill, she offered to go to him, despite the risk of exposure.[34] Though John Paston I often seemed cold and business-like in most letters, he wrote Margaret a poorly-penned but kindly meant love poem in 1465.[35]

Women's husbands were often gone on business. Many of the Paston letters were written between Margaret Paston and her husband, John, and later their sons, about matters of business in their absences. The Celys also frequently left their wives at home for their merchant business. In their husband's absence, women had to know extensively about their husband's affairs and essentially served as their husband's authority on the estate. [36] On the estate they often managed tenants, settled disputes and even handled financial matters concerning debts, expenses of food, and other miscellaneous matters.[37] "How the Goodwife Taught Her Daughter" gives an excellent

---

[31] Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women,1450-1500,* 62-63; Margaret Paston to John Paston I, 1443-4. In *The Pastons: The letters,* 20-22.

[32] Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1500,* 61-62.

[33] H. S. Bennett, *The Pastons and Their England,* 60-64.

[34] Elizabeth Stonor to William Stonor, September 12, 1476. "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 254-255.

[35] Margaret Paston to John Paston I, September 27, 1465 in *The Pason Letters: A Selection,* 138-41.

[36] H. S. Bennett, *The Pastons and Their England,* 60-64.

[37] Richard Barber, *The Pastons: The letters,* 113-115.

example of how the wife was expected to manage her estate: "And wisely govern thy house, and serving maids and men…. And if thy husband be far from home, let not thy folk do ill, But look who doeth well and who doeth nil… And if thy time be strait and great be thy need, Then like a housewife set to work with speed."[38]

The letters that consist primarily of business records are by far the most numerous in comparison to letters that were matters of a personal nature. Agnes Plumpton, the wife of Sir Robert Plumpton, detailed her duties of collecting money from tenants in several different letters, one of which says that she had collected her husband's "thewsans" to be sent to him.[39] She and Margaret Paston also gave examples of how they delegated the task of collecting the rent to their young sons in order to train them, familiarize them with their land, and promote good relations with their tenants.[40] These women clearly took a great initiative in the preservation of their family's estates for both themselves and their children.

Another example of their initiative in preserving their family's assets is that of Elizabeth Stonor. Sir William Stonor preferred to live in the country, whereas Elizabeth had ties to her family and first husband's wool business in London, and kept a house there. It is fairly certain that even though the wool business would have been absorbed by William Stonor at his marriage to Elizabeth, she appears to have continued to oversee the business. Elizabeth remarked on the price of wool and the little profit that was made in one letter to her husband, and in another she discussed a debt that someone owed her for wool.[41] As the closest managers to the estate and in closer connection to their community, these women were often asked by various business associates and family to intervene with their husband on their behalf. William Goidwyn was promised a buck by William Stonor, and in order to get what was promised, he asked Agnes Stonor, William's second wife, to speak to her husband about the issue.[42] Likewise, these women also were consulted about filling vacant positions on their estates. Often they managed

[38] Edith Rickert, "How the Goodwife Taught Her Daughter," 37.

[39] Dame Agnes Plumpton to Sir Robert Plumpton, March 19, 1503. In *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, 170-171.

[40] Dame Agnes Plumpton to Sir Robert Plumpton, November 16,1502. In *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, 156.

[41] Elizabeth Stonor to William Stonor, November 7, 1476 and March 7, 1477, "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 275, 292.

[42] William Goldwin to Agnes Stonor, July 18, 1480, in "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 511.

multiple estates or manors so they would have to give directions from afar. In May of 1481, Richard Germyn asked Agnes Stonor to give him directives on how to fill the position of the poor man in the alms house in Devon.[43] When Agnes Paston officially inherited her jointure after her husband William passed away, she spent a significant amount of time improving her estate by building a controversially-placed wall next to the parish which redirected the highway. Though there were many disputes over this wall, she eventually prevailed.[44]

Women also managed expenditures on their estates, and often if they could not reach their husband or if their family was short of money, they had to find a way to stretch their resources. Sir Robert Plumpton's squandering of the fortune resulted in disaster at the Plumpton family's estates, which lasted throughout the marriages of both his first and second wives. Their tenants and the people living in the area knew of their financial struggles, and both wives, Agnes and Isabel, wrote at various times to Robert, complaining of not being able to sell wood to make a profit, of not being able to make their servants and tenants work, and recounting the rebellion by their neighbors who tried to take advantage of their difficulties. Isabel pleaded with her husband to come home and remedy the situation. [45]

One of the most important matters that landed gentry wives handled was the protection and defense of their land holdings. The Wars of the Roses did not prevent the proceedings of legal courts and law enforcement, and disputes over the land inheritance of many of the estates owned by the gentry families were very common. These land disputes between gentry and noble families often involved staking ownership through the physical occupation of the estates as well as trying to get legal rights of inheritance. This meant that defending the home or knowing when to abandon the home was very important in securing the family's property for the future. The Pastons were involved in a number of land disputes, one of which was with Lord Moleyns over the Gresham estate which turned increasingly hostile in 1448. Margaret sent to John for crossbows and other defense supplies sometime between October and January to defend the house against Partridge, the Moleyns's bailiff, and his men. Though Margaret had apparently fortified the manor, on

[43] Richard Germyn to Agnes Stonor, May 1, 1481, in "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 563.

[44] Agnes Paston to John Paston, Summer 1451. *The Plumpton Letters and* Papers, 56-59.

[45] Dame Agnes to Sir Robert Plumpton, December 21, 1502; Dame Isabel Plumpton to Sir Robert Plumpton, 1506, *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, 158, 181.

January 28, 1449, John Paston sent a petition to the King that said that Moleyns's armed supporters rioted on the estate and broke down the doors, ejected Margaret and her household, and looted and damaged the building. Margaret escaped and found safety at John's advisor's house. Determined not to let the rioters intimidate her, she stayed in the area and made her presence known. A week after being ejected, she parlayed with them, standing her ground and insisting on a fair price of the goods from her household that had been pillaged and sold. Margaret Paston described their discussion and all that had transpired in a letter to her husband dated February 15, 1449. Margaret's indication that she was handling their situation allowed for her husband to continue to pursue their battle in court, to their eventual success and return of the manor. This is but one example of the efforts by gentry women to keep their estates running and intact, with the end result being the securing of property and a continued improvement of their social status and wealth.[46]

In pressing these gentry family's claims to their land rights in and out of the legal courts, it was essential to have the support of a higher-ranking noble family. John Paston ultimately sought patronage in the Duke of Norfolk. Though at first he looked to another man on the king's council, Margaret, his wife, persuaded him that there was a better choice after looking into the situation further. John Paston and his sons also fought under the Duke's heraldry for several years, and their uncle Richard Paston fought under Lord Hasting's heraldry at Calais with King Edward IV.[47] Thomas Stonor was also called to fight by a messenger from the King.[48] These nobility connections were understood as essential to a family's successful movement up the social ladder. The social element in creating a strong bond with their patron was important, but so too was that of being considered a worthy candidate to receive patronage.

Gentry women also understood how important it was to form these associations, and though they did not go to war or work for the wealthier noble families, they made these connections through other means. It is clear that these gentry women saw social connections as one of the key ways to achieve their ends when it came to promoting the family. Elizabeth Stonor

[46] Richard Barber, *The Pastons: The letters,* 33-36.

[47] Richard Barber, *The Pastons: The letters*, 42,43; Joan Kirby, "Survival and Betterment," 109.

[48] Jane Stonor to Thomas Stonor II, August 2, 1463. In "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 65.

was perhaps one of the most adept at playing this social game. In several of Elizabeth's letters she elaborates on dinners and social gatherings. In one letter she indicates to her husband that her patron is none other than Elizabeth of York, Duchess of Suffolk and the King's sister. In the letter she says that she had dined with the Duchess and waited upon her, and that the Duchess would be visiting her sometime the next week. She also expressed concern for her sisters-in-law, who served Elizabeth of York, fearing that they have displeased the Duchess because they are, "no better arayed, and leke wyse… (they) owght they be otherwyse arayed, sche seyth sche maynot kep them."[49] No doubt Elizabeth was writing to John to warn him to acquire appropriate clothing for his sisters so as to not detract from the family reputation and keep their family's connection with the Duchess of Suffolk. It was extremely significant to keep up appearances and show that the family had a substantial amount of wealth to merit being seen in service to Elizabeth of York. On another occasion, Ann Stonor, William's second wife, tells him that she is staying in Taunton with the Marquis of Dorset's wife, further establishing the importance the women placed on making social connections as a way of furthering the status and betterment of her family's future.[50]

Some women sent their young adult daughters to serve at greater houses where they would learn both how to manage a household estate successfully and how to make essential connections. Joan Kirby mentions that Lady Ingoldsthorp was renowned for her education of ladies in household management and it was considered a privilege to be able to learn from her. Dorothy Plumpton was placed in the home of her step-grandmother, Lady Edith Neville. Though Dorothy said that Lady Neville was very kind to her, she wished to come home and begged her father to "fynd athing meyter for me in this parties, or any other, she [Lady Neville] will helpe to promote me to the ultermost of hir puyssuance."[51] Most likely Dorothy thought that she was in a menial position and wished to be in a higher family's house.[52] One of Jane Stonor's daughters, earlier mentioned in

[49] Elizabeth Stonor to William Stonor, October 22, 1476. In "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 263-265.

[50] Ann Stonor to William Stonor, February 27, 1482. In "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 604.

[51] Dorothy Plumpton to Sir Robert Plumpton, May 18, 1506. *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, 182.

[52] Thomas Stapleton, ed. *Plumpton Correspondence: A Series of Letters, Chiefly Domestick, Written in the Reigns of Edward IV, Richard III, Henry VII, and Henry VIII* (London: John Bowyer Nichols and Son, 1839), *202-203.*

service to Elizabeth of York, became homesick and pleaded to return home. In Jane's reply she told her daughter that she was not being unkind but being a good mother, and that they would be willingly disobeying Elizabeth of York if they allowed their daughter to come home without being released from service.[53] This rationale might be considered cold and unfeeling, but Jane probably recognized that the preparation of her daughter to the responsibilities of a gentry woman depended upon her understanding of the best way to advance in the future and that to offend Elizabeth of York would be to weaken the ties of the family's patronage.

Women knew the essential part that dress, hospitality, and display of wealth played in carrying the family into higher standing. As important as it was for Jane Stonor's daughters to be well-dressed in the company of Elizabeth of York, so it was for all gentry women that they might reflect their family's status and maintain their position. In "Le Mesnagier de Paris," the husband related the importance of dress and presentation. In addition to telling her to make certain that she is dressed according to their resources and status, he told her to, "Take care that you are respectably dressed without introducing new fashions, and without too much or too little ostentation."[54] Because gentry women were high in the social chain without being in the highest class, it would be considered presumptuous to introduce new fashions. The women and their families usually held a precarious position, striving to be taken seriously and seeking approval from their patrons and betters. A new fashion could make them seem as though they thought of themselves as overly important. Likewise the sumptuary laws were regulations that restricted the dress in cost, textiles and number of garments that could be owned for each social class so that people might know one's class based on their dress. This was central to the gentry in maintaining their place as members of one of the upper classes, and in distinguishing themselves from the growing middle class.[55] The Celys were as conscious of keeping a record of the cost of their servants' clothing as they were of the cost of their own clothing. In 1487, Margery Cely noted that she had one of her gowns furred, along with those of her sons. This furring almost certainly displayed their status, as furring was restricted by the sumptuary laws for

[53] Jane Stonor to her daughter, before 1473. "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 180.

[54]Tania Bayard, *A Medieval Home Companion*, 35.

[55] Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, "Reconciling the Privilege of a Few with the Common Good: Sumptuary Laws in Medieval and Early Modern Europe," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 39, no. 3 (Fall 2009): 599-600.

upper classes. There are also records of dry cleaning and tailor bills showing the importance of the presentation of dress in their daily lives.[56] The Paston and the Stonor women also continually sent word to their husbands or other relatives to send them clothing or accessory items, and to give accounts of bills for clothing services.[57] These women were constantly overseeing the appearance of the family through the clothing and social position. It is clear that appearances kept by the women and their family were essential to presenting a formidable exterior that symbolized the state of the family.

Whether by the amassing of land and estate through marriage and legal means, or the accumulation of wealth due to patronage and social connections, the English gentry women of the fifteenth century had many concerns and interests. Although examination of the written words to and from some of these women can tell us much about the activities with which they were involved, it is hard to determine a full scope of their character and purpose from the business style of the letters that often lacked personal thoughts and emotion. However, the importance of their family's position in society and the focus on future wealth and stability permeates and underscores the descriptions they give of their lives as household managers, wives, and mothers. This primary concern of perpetuation of the family success through status, property and marriage was not just a superficial function of their roles in society, but the way in which these women sought to improve the quality of life for their family and children and solidify their future.

[56] Alison, Hanham, *The Celys and their World,* 332-333.

[57] Jane Stonor to Thomas Stonor II, October 28, 1470. In "The Fifteenth-Century English Stonor Letters," 122.

C. Claire Summers is a senior from Conway, Arkansas. She is majoring in History and minoring in English. She was president of Phi Alpha Theta for the 2014-15 school year and will graduate this year and enter the College of Education to receive a Master of Arts in Teaching with licensure degree. After that, her plans include pursuing a Master's and Ph.D. in History and working at either a university or a museum.

THE INDIAN REBELLION OF 1857

By C. Claire Summers

India in the mid-1800s was Britain's prized possession, called the "Crown Jewel" of Queen Victoria's holdings. The logistics of its administration, however, were carried out not by the home government but by the designated agency of the Empire: the British East India Company. Often referred to simply as The Company, this entity had been a presence in India since the Mughal Emperor Jahangir granted the English a trading base near Bombay in 1613, during the reign of James I.[1] The Company eventually grew to become the chief military and governing power in India in 1784, augmented by troops from the Queen's Regiments. The armies of The Company consisted primarily of local infantrymen known as sepoys, and by 1856 the ratio of British soldiers to sepoys in the army was one to six or more.[2] This staggering numerical difference between the British and Indian soldiers combined with religious strife among the ranks of the sepoys led to a large-scale revolution against the British in 1857. This revolt, known commonly as the Indian Rebellion or Sepoy Mutiny, had a significant impact on both the collective British spirit and the logistical administration of the Empire.

In 1707, after the death of Aurangzeb, the last powerful Mughal Emperor, The Company began militarily expanding its influence in India; expanding, in fact, to the extent that Parliament felt the need to pass several regulations placing The Company almost entirely in the hands of the British government.[3] Even so, The Company still controlled the affairs in India with only minimal Parliamentary involvement. Christopher Hibbert described the new role of The Company in his book *The Great Mutiny*:

> [The Company] became the agent of the British Government in India. Gone were the days when its ill-paid employees made vast fortunes by trading on their own account: they were now officials of a centralized bureaucracy whose reputation for integrity became widely respected.[4]

[1] Christopher Hibbert, *The Great Mutiny: India 1857* (New York: Viking Press, 1978), 17.
[2] Ibid., 19.
[3] Hibbert, 18.
[4] Hibbert, 18.

These new rules made them responsible for overseeing the civil affairs of their territories as well as the sepoy armies. The Company did this largely through control of the Indian authorities. F.W. Buckler said of this system, "The source of the Company's power in India lay, not in the Charters of the King of England, nor in the Acts of the British Parliament, nor in the sword, but in the *farmāns* [edicts] of the Mughal Emperor."[5] Through pervasive government regulation and cultural influence, the reach of the British in India continued to spread.

A growing restiveness among the Indian citizens accompanied the increase in British power. Governmental land reforms affected rich and poor alike, depriving many Indians of their property. If the British had anticipated a willing acceptance of their new laws, they were mistaken. Hibbert recorded the feelings of the Indian peasants:

> They preferred their own old ways to the strange ones being imposed upon them by the foreigners… They did not understand the new rules and regulations; they did not trust the new law courts whose native officials were notoriously corrupt and whose procedure was quite incomprehensible; they would much rather have been governed by their former native masters, unpredictable and violent though they sometimes were.[6]

Conflict brewed within the ranks of the armies as well. Large factions of both Muslim and Hindu troops comprised the forces, creating a breeding ground for religious conflict. The sepoys' respective religious beliefs frequently sparked concern that the British were attempting to subvert their faith; for example, Hindu troops would often refuse certain orders for fear that they would undermine the caste system.[7] Both groups felt that they were not receiving due consideration from the British leaders, and this sentiment helped stoke the fires of rebellion.

The catalyst for the uprising was a direct result of this religious conflict, specifically stemming from dietary prohibitions. Early in 1857, a rumor began circulating through the ranks of the sepoys stationed in Meerut

[5] F. W. Buckler, "The Political Theory of the Indian Mutiny," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5 (1922): 74.

[6] Hibbert, 49.

[7] Denis Judd, *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to the Present* (London: HarperCollins, 1996), 69.

that the cartridges for the newly distributed Enfield rifles had been greased with pig and cow fat.[8] The soldiers were required not only to handle the cartridges, but also to bite off the ends before loading the rifles. Hindus believed cows were sacred, and Muslims considered pigs unclean and therefore forbidden from consumption. Charles Creighton Hazewell, writing for the *Atlantic Monthly* in December 1857, described the impression this made on the soldiers. He said that the sepoys became afraid the use of the cartridge grease was a plot designed to make them religiously unclean, destabilize the caste system and otherwise begin a process of forced conversion to Christianity. As Hazewell observed, "The consequences of loss of caste are so feared… that upon this point the sensitiveness of the Sepoy is always extreme, and his suspicions easily aroused."[9] The cartridge incident initiated a wave of insurrection amid the ranks of The Company's armies that continued to build throughout early 1857, coming to a head in May that same year.

Elisa Greathed, a British woman living in Meerut with her husband at the time of the incident, recorded her experiences on May 10, 1857, the day the rebellion began in earnest. After hearing a commotion in the distance and being warned of danger by British officers, Mrs. Greathed and her husband took shelter on the rooftop of their house. The sepoys set their home ablaze during their march through the city, and they only managed to survive with the help of their loyal servants. She described the aftermath of the rebellion:

> Never was dawn more welcome to us than on the 11th of May; the daylight showed how complete the work of destruction had been. All was turned into ruin and desolation, and our once bright happy home was now a blackened pile. Sad was the scene; but thankfulness for life left no place for other regrets…We had been utterly cut off from all communication through the night, and sad was the tale of murder and bloodshed we now heard, and… it was found that the telegraph wires had been destroyed by the Sepoys, before any knowledge of what was occurring had transpired. The mutineers got away during the night, and

[8] Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 89.

[9] Charles Creighton Hazewell, "The Indian Revolt," *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1857 (*The Atlantic* online database: http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/issues/1857dec/revolt.htm).

pursuit was useless.[10]

The story of the Meerut episode, told from Mrs. Greathed's point of view, shows how quickly the violence escalated after it began. The rebellion spread from Meerut, throwing many of the British Indian holdings into chaos.

Revolts broke out in several other locations on the subcontinent, most significantly at Cawnpore, Lucknow, and Delhi.[11] British troops struggled against the sepoy forces, which generally outnumbered them.[12] On the whole, the rebellion was relatively fractured. The sepoys had no unified command structure, and many of them retained their loyalty to the British; only a minority of the troops mutinied.[13] In addition to the rebels' lack of leadership, they had no cohesive plan of action. Laborious British victories at Delhi and Lucknow served as the turning point of the rebellion, and following those the fighting descended into sporadic guerilla warfare and soon ceased altogether.[14]

The fact that the 1857 incident held such significance for the British may seem something of a mystery, especially when examining the event in the larger context of nineteenth-century warfare. Christopher Herbert observed that, in actuality, the British were not politically or militarily weakened by the confrontation. They were able to tighten their imperial hold on India and amend their management to make it more efficient.[15] In fact, compared to the other European wars of the nineteenth century the Indian Rebellion was of small consequence. Only about 2,000 British soldiers were killed in action during the course of the mutiny, compared to 16-25,000 in the Napoleonic Wars.[16] Denis Judd observed that "in real terms, British supremacy was not seriously threatened,"[17] and Herbert calls it a "lurid

---

[10] Elisa Greathed, "An Account of the Opening of the Indian Mutiny at Meerut, 1857," ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Modern*. Accessed 21 March 2014.

[11] Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and the Victorian Trauma* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 4.

[12] The general statistics indicate that the sepoy soldiers in the British armies in 1857 outnumbered the British six to one (Hibbert 19), and although figures for the rebellions in individual cities varied somewhat the British would have been similarly outnumbered in most cases.

[13] Judd, 72.

[14] Herbert, 5.

[15] Ibid., 2.

[16] Matthew White, "Statistics of Wars, Oppressions and Atrocities of the Nineteenth Century, http://necrometrics.com/wars19c.htm (accessed April 2, 2015).

[17] Judd, 73.

footnote to the tale of nineteenth-century imperialism."[18] If this was the case, it seems odd that the conflict was so injurious to the collective British consciousness.

Primarily, the rebellion infuriated the British both at home and abroad. Both sides committed atrocities, but the propaganda in the English homeland elicited a violent outcry against the sepoys. Papers published excerpts like this one in the *Atlantic Monthly*, quoting an unnamed "officer of great distinction":

> Three regiments left their lines, fell upon every European, man, woman, or child, they met or could find, murdered them all…and, after working such a night of mischief and horror as devils might have delighted in, marched off to Delhi en masse…The horrors of Meerut were repeated in the imperial city, and every European who could be found was massacred with revolting barbarity. In fact, the spirit was that of a servile war. Annihilation of the ruling race was felt to be the only chance of safety or impunity; so no one of the ruling race was spared.[19]

Newspapers printed accounts like this as they received them from India, keeping the British people updated on events and appalled by the media's descriptions of the acts of the sepoys. Some of the primary vessels for stirring up these sentiments were political cartoons. The cartoons relating to the rebellion emphasized racial differences and styled Britain as the keeper of peace and justice in India (see Fig. 1 & 2). Portrayal of the rebellion in the media successfully instilled fear of the Indians in the minds of the British people, as well as reinforcing the idea that the "Mahometans" (Muslims) and "Hindoos" were savage and in great need of the "enlightened and beneficent rule" of Britain.[20]

Likely the greatest blow to British pride was the underlying atmosphere of betrayal surrounding the rebellion, which led the public and the press to refer to the incident primarily as the "Indian Mutiny" or the "Sepoy Mutiny."[21] Britain had spent copious time and resources bringing much of India under one rule and "civilizing" it, and the people who were dedicated to the concept of a benevolent imperialism were appalled that the

[18] Herbert, 2.
[19] Hazewell, "Indian Revolt."
[20] Hazewell.
[21] Judd, 67.

Indians would reject their improved administration. The press initiated an extremely successful push to redefine the incident as the mutiny of a few disgruntled sepoys rather than a dangerous threat to the Empire itself, which is how many had begun to view the situation.[22] Though reports had initially been hyperbolized, the revisionist campaign took the view to the opposite extreme, greatly downplaying the significance of the event.[23] The British populace wanted to know that their domains were still secure and to rest assured that their lives would not drastically change as a result of this event. Empire had become an inextricable piece of the British identity, from the monarchs to the lowest classes, and holding the empire together was crucial in the minds of the Victorians. The concept of a people challenging this goal by betraying their mother country was both shocking and offensive.

Among the more tangible results of the rebellion were the reorganization of the British government in India and the diminished power of the East India Company.[24] Parliament passed the Government of India Act in 1858, instituting a Minister of the Crown and a governing Council in India designed to handle affairs more smoothly.[25] This placed the administration of India in the hands of the government, as opposed to The Company. Parliament also created the position of Secretary of State for India, striving for stronger ties between the home government and the one overseas. Eventually Queen Victoria was declared "Empress of India," ostensibly to remind the local princes that they were part of the British hierarchy.[26] Although The Company still existed and traded, its power in India in all practical respects was lost. As Judd observes, "Ironically, although perhaps inevitably, the East India Company was the main casualty of the uprising."[27] The new British officials promptly initiated a reorganization of the army. They brought in more British soldiers to balance the ratio and attempted to avoid religious radicals like the Muslims and Hindus who had initiated the rebellion, preferring Sikhs or men from smaller tribes.[28] All in all, as a result of the rebellion the arm of the British in India was actually fortified rather than undermined.

---

[22] Judd, 68.
[23] Hibbert, 391.
[24] Angus Hawkins, "British Parliamentary Party Alignment and the Indian Issue, 1857-1858," *Journal of British Studies* 23 (Spring 1984): 86.
[25] Hawkins, 105.
[26] Judd, 81.
[27] Judd, 74.
[28] Ibid., 75.

Though British popular opinions on the "mutiny" of 1857 varied and shifted, there can be no doubt as to the reality of its influence on the populace of the mother country. Although initially somewhat perplexing considering the limited casualty figures, it is clear that the effects of the rebellion were largely psychological and administrative rather than military. Precipitating the end of the East India Company's great power and the full incorporation of India into the British government, the rebellion sparked conversations about India from Parliament to the back streets of London. Outrage at the audacity of the sepoy rebels, the drive to preserve the empire, the spirit of goodwill created by the idea of the civilizing influence of the English—all of these feelings played into the British mentality that formed as a result of the rebellion. The administrative reforms instituted by the British government in India were substantial, and had a profound effect on the development of India in the following years. Despite its seemingly minor role in the larger context of British imperialism, the Rebellion of 1857 had a significant influence on both British and Indian culture that helped shape the mindset of both peoples.

Figure 1. "Justice," political cartoon, *Punch* magazine, 12 Sept. 1857, 109.

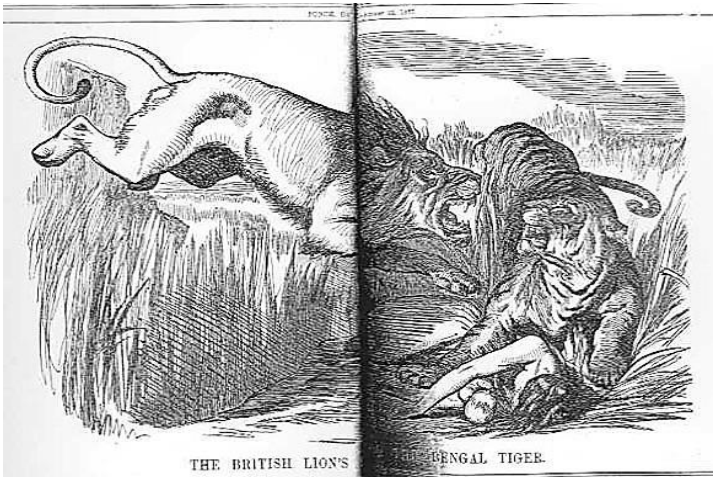


Figure 2. "The British Lion's Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger," political cartoon, *Punch* magazine, 22 August 1857, 76-77.

Erin Kayla Choate is a senior majoring in History and minoring in English. She is from Searcy, Arkansas, and is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. She plans to eventually upkeep and give tours through the home of a famous person of history who she loves but is not sure at this point which historical figure.

"MY OWN LITTLE HOME": HISTORICAL PLACES OF PEACE IN BRITISH LITERATURE

By Erin Kayla Choate

Kenneth Grahame, Beatrix Potter, and Alan Alexander Milne were three children's authors living between 1859 and 1956 who wrote stories revolving around a sense of what can be called a place of peace. Each one's concept of peace was similar to the others. Grahame voiced it as "my own little home" through his character Mole in *The Wind in the Willows*.[1] Potter expressed it through the words "at home in his peaceful nest in a sunny bank" in her book *The Tale of Johnny Town-Mouse*.[2] Finally, Milne described it in *The House at Pooh Corner* as "that enchanted place" where "a little boy and his Bear will always be playing."[3] As a whole, it seems their definitions centered on the home in the English countryside, usually a small abode equivalent to a cottage within a quiet village.[4] The idea of a place of peace is an old one, but where did this concept of peace come from, particularly for these three authors and the Victorian and Edwardian periods in which they lived? The Industrial Revolution, certain lifestyles of the two time periods, and the nostalgia that Grahame, Potter, and Milne felt for their childhoods are three main historical origins of the peace concept.

Before examining the historical origins, it is necessary to elaborate on the definition of what historian Humphrey Carpenter called "the theme of…Arcadia"[5] and on its general historiography. As stated above, the concept may be summarized as a small home within the English countryside. The idea was not confined to one particular area, but to all of the English countryside. In *The Wind in the Willows*, there is a chapter entitled "Dulce Domum" where Mole and Rat head to Rat's house through a village and see a window from which "the sense of home and the little curtained world within

[1] Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows* (1908; repr., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), 89.

[2] Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Johnny Town-Mouse* (1918; repr., London: Frederick Warne, 1989), 33.

[3] A.A. Milne, *The Complete Tales of Winnie-the-Pooh* (New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1994), 344.

[4] Other authors around the Victorian and Edwardian time periods also wrote about the same type of places of peace, but the need to be selective required the choice of Grahame, Potter, and Milne as the focal points.

[5] Humphrey Carpenter, *Secret Gardens: A Study of the Golden Age of Children's Literature* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1985), x, 1.

walls—the larger stressful world of outside Nature shut out and forgotten—most pulsated."[6] The snow-covered village itself is quiet, with people taking tea, laughing, and engaging in enjoyable work and leisure.[7] Carpenter stated that the Arcadia between 1860 and 1930 was a community far from the worries of the outside world.[8] Another historian, Valerie Porter, observed that villages before 1850 were small and self-sufficient with close relationships and without an awareness of the outside world.[9] Returning to the literature, each of the three authors described the homes of their characters as places where they feel contentment and belonging. They are also places set in nature. To name a few examples, Jeremy Fisher has a "little damp house amongst the buttercups,"[10] Rat has his River, and Christopher Robin and all of his friends have the Hundred Acre Wood which holds their separate homes and is, in itself, home. Within their homes, the characters perform quiet activities, such as having a friend for tea, going boating, and exploring the woods. In history, the desire for a home, especially for one in the country, stemmed from a longing for a slower and simpler lifestyle. George H. Ford speculated that Victorians dreamed of "a blissful scene of a green valley in which was nestled a scattered group of thatch-roofed cottages."[11] He drew this conclusion from the knowledge that the Victorians equated the cottage with stability and a quiet life in nature.[12] This perception of and desire for the country cottage continued into the 1900s.[13] The outward definition of the place of peace for the late Victorians, Edwardians, and these three authors was a cottage in an English country village amid nature where they could forget the world and live a simple happy life in peace and safety. Inwardly, the place of peace was an "internalization" of Romanticism or a "making-inward of what was external Nature."[14] Essentially, it was and still

[6] Grahame, 84.
[7] Grahame, 83.
[8] Carpenter, ix, 16.
[9] Valerie Porter, *English Villagers: Life in the Countryside, 1850-1939* (London: George Philip Ltd., 1992), 7.
[10] Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Mr. Jeremy Fisher* (1906; repr., London: Frederick Warne, 1989), 9.
[11] U.C. Knoepflmacher and G.B. Tennyson, eds., *Nature and the Victorian Imagination* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977), 29.
[12] Knoepflmacher, 41 73.
[13] Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 303.
[14] Knoepflmacher, 173.

is the "inward joy" that the famous philosopher, John Stuart Mill, once described as the one thing for which everyone searches and yearns.[15]

In terms of historiography, research has predominantly been done on topics lightly touching the Arcadian theme by several scholars both in the history and literature fields. For example, *English Villagers: Life in the Countryside, 1850-1939* by Valerie Porter looked at how changes over time, especially ones caused by the Industrial Revolution and World War I, influenced the English country village. She stated that the romantic village idea came from nostalgic memories and dreams of villages in the past.[16] Another study, *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*, a collection of essays edited and compiled by U. C. Knoepflmacher and G. B. Tennyson, discussed the Victorians' entire concept of nature—how they viewed it in the countryside, in science, in literature, in painting, and so on. One of the essayists, George Levine, remarked on how Victorian fiction points to an admiration for the domestic farm life.[17] Next, Mark Girouard's *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* discussed how the upper classes lived in England from medieval times to 1940. Girouard observed that an idealization of the countryside developed in the cities' middle classes in the early 1900s.[18] Other books such as *Kenneth Grahame* by Lois R. Kuznets were biographies describing the lives of the people and the authors who lived in the late Victorian and Edwardian times. They revealed whether or not the authors drew the Arcadian societies in their books from the reality of their lives and the lives of the people around them or from their imaginative desires. Kuznets observed that Grahame wrote *The Golden Age* by fondly remembering his childhood.[19] Even more books focused on the literary views of rural life. Ernest Walter Martin compiled excerpts of writings from the 1500s to the mid-1900s concerning the title of his work, *Country Life in England*. He included a section of Alfred Ainger's *Crabbe* from 1903, which commented on how the Pastoral Poets gave "sentimental pictures of country life."[20] So, most of the research done by scholars concerned the Victorian and Edwardian countryside, village, lives of people

[15] Knoepflmacher, 185.
[16] Porter, 7.
[17] Knoepflmacher, 137-138.
[18] Girouard, 303.
[19] Lois R. Kuznets, *Kenneth Grahame*, Twayne's English Authors Series (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987), 59.
[20] Alfred Ainger, *Crabbe*, in *Country Life in England*, ed. E.W. Martin (London: Macdonald and Co., 1966), 117.

and authors, literature, and feelings towards nature, but none of them specifically studied the Arcadian theme and its causes—except one. The only book with Arcadia as its central question was *Secret Gardens: A Study of the Golden Age of Children's Literature* by Humphrey Carpenter. Carpenter noted the similarities of peaceful settings in a certain group of books written between 1860 and 1930 and he endeavored to find the reasons behind them.[21] Nevertheless, he mainly concentrated on the authors' lives of the "Secret Gardens" books and devoted only the prologue to the examination of historical causes; whereas, more time should be spent contemplating the historical origins and the existence of the general population to find the true inspiration for the idyllic life of the time.

Now that the definition of the ideal life and its historiography has been discussed, the historical causes for its appearance can be examined. Many events inspired the views of cottage and countryside in England, but they are considered minor in regards to the larger impact of the Industrial Revolution.[22] England rediscovered nature and its own countryside with the better transportation brought by the Industrial Revolution. The ugliness of the industrial city and the new awareness of nature reinforced the Romantic Movement, which in turn helped produce the idealized vision of owning a home in the English countryside. Romanticism and industry led to the rise of an urban middle class who believed in the merits of a country life and wanted to act on that belief. Last of all, the Industrial Revolution, with its surplus production and shipments of inexpensive foreign food into England, resulted in an agricultural depression which may have further stimulated the search for an "inward joy," the defining characteristic of the place of peace.

The Industrial Revolution began in England around 1770 and continued until about 1850. It was marked by an increase in technology and cities.[23] The rural world opened up to the outside under the Industrial Revolution. Tourism in the countryside increased during the mid-to-late 1700s due to travel journals, better roads, improved maps, and the appearance of larger and more comfortable inns.[24] During the 1800s, the spread of railroads and the invention of the bicycle, products of the Industrial Revolution, gave urban people more access to the country and rural people

---

[21] Carpenter, ix-x.

[22] Other events include the Enclosure Movement, the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, and World War I.

[23] Porter, 43.

[24] *Thomas Gray's Journal of His Visit to the Lake District in October 1769*, ed. William Roberts (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001), 133, 135, 143-144.

more access to towns.[25] According to John Ruskin, people would take advantage of the better transportation to go to the country to escape from "that great foul city—rattling, growling, smoking, stinking—a ghastly heap of fermenting brickwork, pouring out poison at every pore."[26] It is evident from Ruskin and others that, though the Industrial Revolution brought benefits, it also brought pollution, complexity, and poverty. Charles Dickens wrote about the unhappiness of the urban poor. Throughout the literature of the time, there is an expression of fear and disgust of industrialization,[27] along with a need to find simplicity and be "freed from the thrall of the machine."[28] Once in the country, many found the beauty they sought. The travel journals gave pleasant descriptions, such as in Thomas Gray's account of the Lake District located in northern Britain: "the most delicious view," "magnificent heights," and "green and smiling fields."[29] Others living rurally also described it as picturesque. On one page of his diary, clergyman Francis Kilvert detailed the orchards, birdsong, clear air, attractive farms, and daffodils that "grew in forests" around the church in Bredwardine where he lived in 1878.[30] Of course not all of the English countryside was considered lovely, but the majority was. Historian Daniel Pool more objectively described the geography of the Victorian countryside—in the central areas it was gentle hills and fertile farming land, in the southwest it was coastland and more farmland, and in the north it was more a wilderness of rocks and cliffs.[31] The Victorians and Edwardians, especially those living in the towns, were largely reawakened to the countryside by the improved transportation of the Industrial Revolution which enabled them to visit the rural areas. Travel journals and the desire to leave the new world of industry also contributed to the rediscovery. The country they sought was one of natural peace and beauty in contrast to the smog and confusion of the industrial city and, on the whole, they found it.

---

[25] Howard Newby, *Country Life: A Social History of Rural England* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Books, 1987), 96-97.

[26] John Ruskin, quoted in Carpenter, 121.

[27] Carpenter, 121.

[28] Pamela Horn, *The Changing Countryside in Victorian and Edwardian England and Wales* (London: The Athlone Press, 1984), 223-224.

[29] Gray, 45.

[30] *Kilvert's Diary, 1870-1879*, ed. William Plomer (1944; repr., Boston: David R. Godine, 1986), 264-265. Bredwardine is in central western Britain.

[31] Daniel Pool, *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew: From Fox Hunting to Whist—the Facts of Daily Life in Nineteenth-Century England* (New York: Touchstone, 1994), 158-159.

The Romantic Movement was a reaction against several incidents and philosophies, including the Industrial Revolution.[32] It began in the late 1700s and continued into the 1800s. The age of industrialization greatly strengthened Romanticism as the polluted city ignited a desire to escape to the woods and enabled many to do so with the new railways and improved roads. The Industrial Revolution also destroyed cottages and much of the traditional rural lifestyle, thereby, increasing the public's nostalgia for the past.[33] For instance, in 1860, Charles Dickens travelled to the country to visit a beloved garden of his childhood, only to discover that a railroad station stood in its place.[34] Romanticism emphasized emotion, including nostalgia, and idealized the past and the countryside, among other things. Much of the Romantic literature and poetry during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods reflected idealization and a focus on feelings. One historian observed that the Romantic writers conceived of the country as "a God-made paradise" and the village as a "happy land of peasant enjoyment."[35] They also influenced the outlook on the cottage and nature as a whole. William Wordsworth was one of the Romantic poets who greatly influenced people's admiration of nature and the perception of the cottage as "a product of Nature," according to his own words.[36] It was with Wordsworth and others that the Victorians began to view the cottage as a place of emotions that fed the soul.[37] Romanticism emphasized the pastoral and the picturesque as well,[38] and equated them with peace and beauty—an idea furthered by the travel journals and Romantic authors. Although sometimes the authors exaggerated in their accounts due to their love of idealization and emotion, they were frequently true. Francis Kilvert called the cottages about Clyro "cosy" and thought of them as "kindly hospitable houses about these hospitable hills."[39] In comparison to the towns—one man described the slums of Manchester in 1844 as having "heaps of refuse, offal and sickening filth"—the countryside was a place of refuge and inner renewal.[40] There was

[32] Some may think the Romantic Movement is a separate event from the Industrial Revolution, but, according to the evidence, it seems the Industrial Revolution had a great impact on the Romantic Movement.

[33] Horn, 3.

[34] Knoepflmacher, 46.

[35] E.W. Martin, preface to *Country Life in England*, 8.

[36] Knoepflmacher, 24; William Wordsworth, quoted in Knoepflmacher, 73.

[37] Knoepflmacher, 47-48.

[38] Porter, 73.

[39] Kilvert, 74-75.

[40] Knoepflmacher, 33, 46.

also the sense that the village life had been simpler and happier in the past—an idea brought on partly by nostalgia, but once again somewhat true.[41] An old villager named Mrs. Giles remembered life and people in Wiltshire in the 1870s as "contented, and happy, always ready to lend a helping hand. Everyone joined in dancing, sliding, skating in the meadows, or picnics on the downs."[42] As the Industrial Revolution progressed, romantic nostalgia for the conventional country life increased for, as the city grew, more people absorbed the Romantic Movement and remembered the happier times of the past.[43] Carpenter argued that Grahame, Potter, and Milne's writings were a drawing inward of nostalgic romanticized memories of their childhoods and moments spent in the countryside.[44] The Industrial Revolution strengthened the Romantic Movement, which in turn strengthened the concept and need for a place of peace. Romanticism was about idealizations, and the place of peace idea was and is an ideal.

The Industrial Revolution created many new businesses and opportunities for financial increase and, as a result, an urban middle class rose up and grew in power and wealth. Romanticism deeply influenced the new middle class and caused them to believe in the cottage in the country as a comforting, upright life worthy of obtaining or at least visiting. Their newly acquired wealth enabled many of them to buy homes in the country as they desired.[45] Many came in the 1880s and 1890s in search of a "lost heritage."[46] Others wanted to return to the simpler existence to—as Ruskin once said—"watch the corn grow and the blossoms set; to draw hard breath over ploughshare or spade; to read, to think, to have, to hope, to pray."[47] The townspeople received the impression from Romanticism that a true connection between nature and man was valuable and could be found in the countryside.[48] Whether the urban middle class took "hard breath over ploughshare" or not, they were not dependent on such labor for a living; therefore, the peaceful way they lived in the country often was only true for them and not for the actual cottagers who were agricultural laborers. The *Country Life* magazine began in the 1890s; its pleasant descriptions of rural

[41] Porter, 7, 46.
[42] Porter, 46.
[43] Knoepflmacher, 46-48, 173.
[44] Carpenter, x, 201.
[45] Girouard, 268, 270, 303.
[46] Porter, 45.
[47] John Ruskin, quoted in Horn, 223.
[48] Gray, 146; Knoepflmacher, 48; Horn, 219.

life came from the prosperous urban middle class and spread the unrealistic idea that being amidst nature created peace for everyone.[49] Frequently, however, only the established landowners and the new urban middle class could afford to pursue the ideal life and both did. Historical records show a rise in the building of scenic but impractical cottages and villages in the mid-1800s.[50] The romantic preoccupation with a rural lifestyle continued into the early 1900s and broadened to include the country house, as well as the cottage.[51] Unfortunately, though, as the townspeople came pouring into the countryside during the 1800s, the expansion of railways, roads, and buildings gradually turned much of the country into suburbs. The urban middle class's desire to live the peaceful life slowly demolished that way of life.[52]

Another cause of rural decline was the agricultural depression England experienced that officially began in 1879 and did not dissipate until the early 1900s.[53] The Industrial Revolution was the main cause of the depression as it brought an increase in trade with large amounts of inexpensive imported food flooding into England.[54] In his analysis of British literature and history, Carpenter concluded that the "faltering in Britain's fortunes" helped induce the Arcadia theme.[55] The economic and political unrest of the time caused many people to worry, including Beatrix Potter who, in 1885, wrote: "I am terribly afraid of the future."[56] Carpenter deemed that Britain's troubles sparked authors to look inside themselves for security and the "inward joy," and several did—going back to memories of visits to the country.[57] It is evident that the agricultural depression caused many people besides authors to search for security, as well. Historian Pamela Horn indicated in her research that it was when the agricultural world suffered and faced extermination that the urban middle class felt its greatest desires to return to the country and what they thought it held—the basic joys of human life.[58] Edward Hudson started the *Country Life* magazine in order to promote

[49] Horn, 224.
[50] Horn, 28; Porter, 73.
[51] Horn, 223; Girouard, 302.
[52] Newby, 96; Horn, 224-225.
[53] Horn, 1, 32.
[54] Girouard, 300.
[55] Carpenter, 14.
[56] *The Journal of Beatrix Potter from 1881 to 1897*, transcribed by Leslie Linder (New York: Frederick Warne and Co., 1966), 161.
[57] Carpenter, 14-15, 17.
[58] Horn, 2-3.

and preserve life in the countryside.[59] Overall, as Britain's troubles increased, so did her yearnings for the simpler, happier times and surroundings.

The Industrial Revolution had a significant impact on the Utopian views of the late Victorians and Edwardians. It resulted in a rediscovery of the countryside, romanticism for the countryside, a longing to return to the countryside by the rich urban middle class, and an agricultural depression which strengthened the desires for the countryside. Other than the Industrial Revolution, the lifestyles of certain people in the late Victorian and Edwardian time periods also helped create the idea of the country cottage as an idyllic place of peace. Some people actually lived peacefully in cottages.

Rural society of the mid-to-late Victorian period was characterized by farming and a firm social hierarchy.[60] The classes were divided into the aristocracy who owned ten thousand acres or more, the gentry who owned one to ten thousand acres, the squires who owned one to three thousand acres, the farmers who owned some land at first but gradually became renters of land, and the agricultural laborers who were hired to farm the land.[61] The agricultural workers and craftsmen were the people who lived in the cottages.[62] The cottage and its surroundings were often pretty. Kilvert described a woodsman's cottage as "seated in a pleasant nook in the wooded hillside looking towards the rising sun…the garden was in the most exquisitely neat order and the house beautifully clean."[63] Beatrix Potter's Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle also lives in a house set in a hill with a "nice clean kitchen."[64] Joseph Arthur Gibbs lived for a time in a Cotswold village in the 1890s and wrote that most of the cottages were gabled, built with local stone, and between two to three hundred years old. He also stated that almost all of them were neat and had "an air of homely comfort which calls forth admiration of all strangers."[65] Of course, the country cottage was not always

---

[59] Girouard, 303.

[60] Newby, 220-221.

[61] Pool, 164-165; Newby, 63-64; Porter, 64.

[62] Pool, 165. The cottagers will be the primary focus since it is the cottage life as the place of peace which is being examined.

[63] Kilvert, 267.

[64] Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle* (1905; repr., London: Frederick Warne, 1989), 18, 21.

[65] J. Arthur Gibbs, *A Cotswold Village or Country Life and Pursuits in Gloucestershire*, 3rd ed. (1918; repr., EBook: Project Gutenberg, 2004), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11160/11160-h/11160-h.htm (accessed November 12, 2014), Ch. 2 and 3. The Cotswolds are in the South West of England.

beautiful. George Eliot once related two kinds of villages—a slum with "dingy" and "dark" cottages and a "trim cheerful" village with "bright" cottages and their "little gardens."[66] Kilvert also encountered the dark cottage. He once went to see a dying man who lived in a "dark hole in the hovel roof."[67] A cottage also sometimes looked clean on the outside but was dirty on the inside. A poorly kept cottage was frequently the fault of a bad cottager or landowner.[68] Such was the case in Hertfordshire where Edwin Grey grew up. He observed that usually it was the drunkards of the village who left their homes in a neglected state.[69]

Furthermore, rural laborers were often subject to bad conditions which helped contribute to making the cottage and rural life a less than ideal existence. According to historical records, agricultural laborers had to work longer days for little pay—many were at poverty level.[70] Grey attested that only a few cottagers could save some pennies if they were frugal and had only a small family.[71] Most laborers, however, had larger families, so they further suffered from crowded home lives.[72] A cottage typically had between one room for the extremely poor and four rooms for the more well-off.[73] Grey's firsthand account supported the historical research. He stated that almost all of the cottages in his Hertfordshire village were filled with too many people and several of the bigger families shared one bedroom.[74] Also, Horn and others have indicated that cottages frequently had contaminated drinking water and were encompassed by sewage.[75] Kilvert documented an incident when a boy almost drowned in sewage.[76] Grey and Gibbs, however, both encountered clean water supplies in their villages and mostly clean surroundings, so unsanitary conditions depended on the place.[77] The agricultural workers also had to endure, as Gibbs phrased it, a "dulness of…existence" and a "monotonous round of daily toil" with few

---

[66] Knoepflmacher, 35.
[67] Kilvert, 72.
[68] Knoepflmacher, 35, 37.
[69] Edwin Grey, *Cottage Life in a Hertfordshire Village* (St. Albans: Fisher, Knight and Co., 1935), 52.
[70] Horn, 91; Newby, 80.
[71] Edwin Grey, 66.
[72] Horn, 92.
[73] Pool, 190.
[74] Edwin Grey, 46-47.
[75] Horn, 92-93; Porter, 142-143.
[76] Kilvert, 72.
[77] Edwin Grey, 47; Gibbs, Ch. 2.

opportunities for relaxation and entertainment.[78] Nevertheless, no matter how tedious it was, working on the farm was essential as it guaranteed the laborer a home—the cottage came with the job and to lose one was to lose both.[79]

With all of these disadvantages to country life for the rural laborer, it was no wonder that many left for the town during the Industrial Revolution. By 1851, over half of England's population had moved to the cities.[80] In fact, the Revolution did not make circumstances any easier as the advent of the machine brought a decline in the number of men needed to work the farm.[81] Both Gibbs and Kilvert talked about men without work and traveling to find employment.[82] The agricultural depression also had a negative impact on country life, as previously mentioned. Gibbs blamed the depression for the abandoned villages in the countryside.[83] Oftentimes, the serenity that strangers observed in the occupied villages was a façade masking concerns and hardship.[84]

The rural upper classes also suffered from the drastic changes in the society and economy. Not only did the rise of the middle class result in the decline of their authority, but the shipments of foreign food lowered their incomes so that several had to sell their land and houses. Otherwise, the upper classes usually lived comfortable lives in country houses and employed between ten and fifty servants. The prosperous aristocracy also valued the Arcadian qualities of hospitality and a content family life at home, as seen in the family portraits of the period.[85] In fact, the rural aristocracy, gentry, and wealthy middle class often lived out the Arcadian dream. Francis Kilvert and J. Arthur Gibbs were both well-off, lived in places of peace, and engaged in the peaceful lifestyle. Kilvert enjoyed reading, gardening, and going on picnics, among other activities.[86] Kenneth Grahame's Rat and Mole went picnicking, as well as A. A. Milne's Pooh, Piglet, and Christopher Robin.[87] Gibbs could "linger in the woods" and be still just listening and watching nature and life go on around him.[88]

---

[78] Gibbs, Ch. 2; Newby, 92-93; Edwin Grey, 186.
[79] Horn, 92-93.
[80] Knoepflmacher, 31; Porter, 43.
[81] Porter, 43.
[82] Gibbs, Ch. 3; Kilvert, 225.
[83] Gibbs, Ch. 2.
[84] Horn, 3.
[85] Girouard, 270, 272-273, 276, 300.
[86] Kilvert, 42, 69, 270.
[87] Grahame, 12-13; A.A. Milne, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, 54-55.
[88] Gibbs, Ch. 15.

Although the rural laborer of the late 1800s frequently struggled to survive, they also were often content[89] and enjoyed some of Arcadia as well. The beautiful surroundings already discussed and the feeling that the village was "far from the madding crowd's strife"[90] served a significant role in producing an Arcadia, even for the poor lower classes. In spite of the Industrial Revolution and depression, a few villages flourished and retained the old customs.[91] Many of the villagers in the Cotswolds and Hertfordshire, if not elsewhere, were "healthy, bright, clean, and old-fashioned" and lived to advanced ages.[92] Gibbs' villagers also felt closely tied to one another, regardless of class.[93] Cottagers were kind and hospitable to outsiders as well; Kilvert said he felt "welcome and beloved everywhere."[94] Agricultural laborers also took pleasure in gardening vegetables and flowers.[95] Gardens are a prominent feature in Beatrix Potter's books. So, the place of peace did exist somewhat between 1860 and 1900. An even closer example of its existence comes from Kilvert's visit to a family on a little farm—neither poor laborers nor rich landowners. Kilvert wrote, "I think they have the true secret of happiness" and recorded how the father, in difficult times, had "always been cheered and brightened and helped by the thought of the beacon light of home…and the love that awaited him there."[96]

The Edwardian Era from 1901 to 1910 was similar to the late Victorian Era in many ways. Rural society was still divided into the same classes with the landlords and farmers in control.[97] The effects of the Industrial Revolution and agricultural depression carried on into the early 1900s and the better-off were still enjoying the benefits of life in the countryside. The rural laborer continued to suffer from bad conditions, yet some still found peace and beauty in their country lives. Clifford Hills was born to agricultural laborers in 1904 and lived in Great Bentley, Essex.[98] He loved his childhood village which was a close community where anyone

---

[89] Edwin Grey, 109-110.
[90] Gibbs, Ch. 2.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Gibbs, Ch. 3; Edwin Grey, 27, 52.
[93] Gibbs, Ch. 2.
[94] Kilvert, 229.
[95] Edwin Grey, 112; Gibbs, Ch. 15.
[96] Kilvert, 242.
[97] W.H. Hudson, *Afoot in England* in *Country Life in England*, ed. E.W. Martin, 135; Newby, 212.
[98] Thea Thompson, introduction to "Clifford Hills" ch. in *Edwardian Childhoods* (1981; repr., London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), 37-38.

would drop by for tea and he and his family would walk through the woods and admire the bluebells.[99] A reader of the account is reminded of the foxgloves in the forest in *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck*.[100] However, Hills said most of the community was poor and his own family "lived hand to mouth" with "never enough money."[101]

Progress and effects from the Industrial Revolution and agricultural depression persisted into the 1900s. According to historian Thea Thompson, Edwardian England was "the most urbanised country in the world."[102] During the Edwardian period, the outlook for the country cottage life, if anything, seemed to rapidly grow worse. By 1901, only twelve percent of men in England and Wales worked on the land, and by 1914 half of Britain's food was being imported. The farmer still struggled against the production of the machine and the village increasingly lost its crafts and traditions. From 1881 to 1911, land employment decreased by eighteen percent, resulting in landlords' refusal to build any more cottages or make anything more than a few repairs on the old ones.[103] According to a 1913 survey, the wages of the farm laborer in all of England's counties except five, were lower than the funds necessary for survival.[104] Some improvements, though, were made as well. In 1908, old age pensions allowed older cottages to continue living in their cottage homes. Between 1875 and 1908, the Agricultural Holding Acts were passed which permitted tenants to choose how they farmed and gave them compensations and more secure tenures.[105]

While the countryside seemed to be fading away more and more in the face of progress, the fascination for rural life increased even more.[106] In the early 1900s, the urban middle class came flooding in more than ever before.[107] The newcomers often tore down the countryside and transformed it into suburbs.[108] However, not all of the upper and middle classes were destructive and some—as in the late Victorian period—actually found the

---

[99] Clifford Hills, interview by Thea Thompson, *Edwardian Childhoods*, 42-44.
[100] Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck* (1908; repr., London: Frederick Warne, 1989), 22-23.
[101] Hills, 41-42.
[102] Thompson, 37.
[103] Robert Cecil, *Life in Edwardian England* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1969), 111-112, 115, 124, 126.
[104] Horn, 217.
[105] Cecil, 113, 118-119.
[106] Horn, 223.
[107] Cecil, 131.
[108] Porter, 7; Cecil, 125.

idyllic life they sought. Edith Holden and Sir Edward Grey were two well-off individuals of the Edwardian age who managed to prove the existence of the place of peace. Edith Holden was a naturalist who lived in Warwickshire and kept a diary of her observations in 1906. In this diary, she documented not only the beauties of nature, but also some of her activities including berry picking, country walks, gardening, feeding the birds, and searching for mushrooms. On one occasion, she picked some violet leaves in the woods.[109] In Milne's *The House at Pooh Corner*, Piglet also picks violets in the Hundred Acre Wood.[110] In fact, all of the peaceful endeavors she engaged in are reminiscent of Grahame, Potter, and Milne's characters and their pastimes. Sir Edward Grey and his wife also kept a diary of their life from 1894 to 1905 in a cottage at Itchen Abbas in the Hampshire countryside. Sir Edward received the land from a cousin and then built the cottage originally for fishing outings, but it became something more.[111] Grey described it as "a lovely refuge" and "something special and sacred, outside the ordinary stream of life."[112] He and his wife refused to let any work or social engagements bother them when they went there on the weekends. Instead, they watched birds, fished, bicycled, and took walks.[113] The cottage was a place where they had "perfect peace" with its red roof and walls covered in flowers.[114] Its location on the Itchen River and comfortable interior was similar to Rat's home in *The Wind in the Willows*.[115] In the end, when looking at the lifestyles of the late Victorian and Edwardians, it becomes apparent that the Arcadia in books is partly based on reality after all.

The Industrial Revolution and the lifestyles of the periods have been examined and proven as two historical causes of the Victorian and Edwardian place of peace. Next, the lifestyles and inspirations of three authors—Kenneth Grahame, Beatrix Potter, and A. A. Milne—need to be discussed. They and other authors propagated an idea that was already present but they also helped create the place of peace concept by envisioning it more clearly

---

[109] Edith Holden, *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), 6-7, 9, 15, 143, 155.

[110] A.A. Milne, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, 250.

[111] Sir Edward and Lady Dorothy Grey, *The Cottage Book: The Undiscovered Country Diary of an Edwardian Statesman*, ed. Michael Waterhouse (London: Victor Gollancz, 1999), 30.

[112] Edward Grey, 18-19.

[113] Edward Grey, 12, 18-19, 111, 115, 123.

[114] Edward Grey, 19.

[115] Edward Grey, 19; Grahame, 4-5, 21.

and personally. Childhood greatly affected Grahame, Potter, and Milne and the places of peace in their books.

Kenneth Grahame was born in Edinburgh on March 8, 1859, into the upper middle class. When he wrote *The Wind in the Willows*, he had two central inspirations: his childhood and his adult life. His childhood, though, seems to have affected him the most. Although Grahame did not have a particularly easy childhood, he still nostalgically viewed it as a time free of cares. He used writing to relive his boyhood and forget his stressful marriage and adult life.[116] Despite hardships like the death of his mother and the neglect of his father,[117] Grahame enjoyed his childhood and it greatly impacted *The Wind in the Willows*. For example, Grahame largely set the book at Cookham Dene in the Berkshire countryside where he lived in a house on the Thames when he was very young. It was there that he developed a passion for walks through the countryside.[118] The two major themes of *The Wind in the Willows*, escape and home, can also be found in Grahame's early days. First, in terms of the escape theme, Mole abandons his spring cleaning for freedom outside, Rat feels a call to go to sea, and Toad is ecstatic for "the Open Road."[119] It is possible that Grahame longed to drop all responsibilities like his father did.[120] As for the home theme, all of the characters live in "comfortable womb-like burrows" and value domesticity.[121] The book even ends with Toad singing a song about coming home.[122] Carpenter argued that Grahame valued the home after being forced to move around so much as a child.[123] Even as an adult, Grahame said he often had a dream of "a certain little room, very dear and familiar" with "always the same feeling of a home-coming, of the world shut out, of the ideal encasement" and the knowledge that "all was my very own…."[124] As Mole says when he wants to return to his hole underground, "it was my own little home."[125] Grahame was also inspired by his adult life, though he derived no central

[116] Carpenter, 118-120, 151, 153.
[117] Kuznets, 2-3.
[118] Kuznets, 2-3.
[119] Grahame, 1-2, 186, 38. The escape theme is also called the adventure theme.
[120] Carpenter, 117.
[121] John David Moore, "Pottering About in the Garden: Kenneth Grahame's Version of Pastoral in *The Wind in the Willows*," *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 23, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 45.
[122] Grahame, 255-256.
[123] Carpenter, 117.
[124] Moore, 46.
[125] Grahame, 89.

themes from it. For instance, Grahame had a friend named Edward Atkinson who lived on the Fowey River and owned thirty boats. He became the model for Rat.[126] His most significant inspiration in his adult years was his son Alastair. *The Wind in the Willows* began as a bedtime story to his son on his fourth birthday in 1906.[127] Grahame's surroundings may also have influenced him. For example, Grahame's characters live by the seasons like the agricultural laborers.[128] Nevertheless, not everything in the book was true in its portrayal. He created the world with idealizations such as the Thames River which, though polluted in reality,[129] was all "glints and gleams and sparkles" in the book.[130] Overall, his childhood, especially his time spent at Cookham Dene, became a "felicitous space"—a place of safety and imagination—for him.[131] Grahame defined the felicitous space through the words of Rat as he talks of the River: "It's brother and sister to me…. It's my world, and I don't want any other. What it hasn't got is not worth having, and what it doesn't know is not worth knowing."[132]

Beatrix Potter was born on July 28, 1866, into an upper-middle class household like Grahame.[133] Potter used childhood nostalgia less than Grahame and Milne because she lived in an actual place of peace—Hill Top Farm.[134] However, her childhood days still greatly influenced her. In her journal, she stated: "As we struggle on, the thoughts of that peaceful past time of childhood comes to us like soft music…. We do not wish we were back in it…for the very good reason that it is impossible for us to be so, but it keeps one up, and there is a vague feeling that one day there will again be rest."[135] Growing up, Potter loved the holidays she and her family spent in the Hertfordshire countryside at Camfield Place and at Dalguise House in Perthshire, Scotland. It was at Camfield that Potter first came to love nature, and in Scotland she sketched her first drawings.[136] She described Camfield as a "perfect whole where all things are a part…the distant sounds of the

---

[126] Kuznets, 11, 117.
[127] Kuznets, 14.
[128] Kuznets, 103-104.
[129] Kuznets, 102.
[130] Grahame, 4.
[131] Kuznets, 101-102.
[132] Grahame, 10.
[133] Linda Lear, *Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007), 9.
[134] Carpenter, 140-141.
[135] Potter, *Journal*, 81-82.
[136] Lear, 13, 26-27, 35.

farmyard, the feeling of plenty."[137] The farms and woods of Hertfordshire and the forest and rocky rivers of Perthshire inspired her and so did the Lake District. The Potters began going to the Lake District on holiday when Beatrix was sixteen. During her visits there, Potter toured the countryside and developed an affinity for the village of Near Sawrey and the nearby Esthwaite Water.[138] In 1896, she wrote that Near Sawrey was "as nearly perfect a little place as I ever lived in" with "such nice old-fashioned people" and "flowery little gardens."[139] In 1905, Potter bought Hill Top Farm outside Near Sawrey. Hill Top Farm was Potter's place of peace and one of her greatest inspirations. She set many of her books in and around Hill Top. *The Tale of Mr. Jeremy Fisher*, published in 1906, is set in Sawrey and at Moss Heckle Tarn—a nearby lake with water lilies.[140] Jeremy Fisher's boat is a water lily in the story.[141] She placed *The Tale of Tom Kitten* (1907) at Hill Top and the garden into which Mrs. Tabitha Twitchit "turned out" her children was Beatrix Potter's own flower garden.[142] Children also inspired Potter. She wrote most of her stories for children she knew and loved. The first book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), began as a collection of "picture letters" to her friends, the Moore children.[143] Potter's childhood holidays in the countryside laid the foundations for her books by producing the love of nature and the love of a place. She portrayed a living Arcadia in her books that was based largely on the reality of her peaceful life. Her contentment is reflected in her remark at the end of *The Tale of Johnny Town-Mouse*: "For my part I prefer to live in the country, like Timmy Willie."[144]

Alan Alexander Milne was born on January 18, 1882, to a lower middle class family.[145] Milne related his two major inspirations for the beginnings of the Christopher Robin and Pooh stories in his autobiography: "There on the other side of the lawn was a child with whom I had lived for three years…and here within me were unforgettable memories of my own childhood."[146] His son Christopher affirmed that it was his "boyhood from

---

[137] Potter, *Journal*, 431.
[138] Lear, 5.
[139] Potter, *Journal*, 417, 422.
[140] Lear, 7, 212-213.
[141] Potter, *Jeremy Fisher*, 18.
[142] Lear, 218-219; Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Tom Kitten* (1907; repr., London: Frederick Warne, 1989), 22.
[143] Lear, 142.
[144] Potter, *Johnny Town-Mouse*, 59.
[145] A.A. Milne, *Autobiography* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1939), 23, 35.
[146] A.A. Milne, *Autobiography*, 280.

which all his inspiration sprang."[147] It may have been a love of his boyhood days that caused Milne to purchase Cotchford Farm in Sussex in 1925. Milne had spent a pleasant part of his childhood in that area of England.[148] Cotchford Farm was a beautiful place. Christopher Milne described it as "a cottage, a little bit of garden, a lot of jungle, two fields, a river and then all the green, hilly countryside beyond, meadows and woods, waiting to be explored."[149] It truly was a place of peace and the setting for the Pooh books. Along with his childhood memories, which caused him to write about and buy an "enchanted place," Milne's son Christopher Robin also inspired him. However, even observing his son served as a tool to relive childhood. Christopher stated: "My father, who had derived such happiness from his childhood, found in me the companion with whom he could return there…we grew up side by side and as we grew so the books were written."[150] In his writing, the character Christopher Robin often represented Milne himself as well as his son.[151] Nevertheless, it was through watching his son play on Cotchford Farm and describing his son's stuffed animals that the Winnie-the-Pooh stories came to be.[152] The world of Winnie-the-Pooh is centered on trees.[153] According to Christopher Robin, that "in real life, was how it was."[154] Poohsticks Bridge was real too and Christopher and his father played Poohsticks on it just like the characters did in *The House at Pooh Corner*.[155] Posingford Wood was the basis for the Hundred Acre Wood.[156] Many other places and activities in Pooh's adventures were founded on real life. A. A. Milne's childhood deeply influenced him in producing his enchanted place—set in idyllic Cotchford Farm, the place of peace in the Pooh books is a mixture of nostalgia and reality.

When Kenneth Grahame, Beatrix Potter, and A. A. Milne wrote their books, they depicted a place of peace derived from the world around and within them. The late Victorians and Edwardians idealized the cottage in the English countryside as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution. The cottage

---

[147] Christopher Milne, *The Enchanted Places* (1974; repr., New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 172.
[148] Christopher Milne, 201.
[149] Christopher Milne, 69.
[150] Christopher Milne, 173.
[151] Christopher Milne, 38.
[152] A.A. Milne, *Autobiography*, 286.
[153] A.A. Milne, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, 2-3, 5, 9, 46-47, 130, 231.
[154] Christopher Milne, 81.
[155] Christopher Milne, 72; A.A. Milne, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, 258-259.
[156] Christopher Milne, 79.

became a source of security and inward joy as they faced a new world of change. Upon examination, it seems the place of peace, although an ideal, was possible as several rich and poor people, including the authors, actually lived the quiet life in the country. So, the Arcadia of Grahame, Potter, and Milne's books and the time period was a combination of romanticism and nostalgia on the one hand and a true reality on the other. In 1898, J. Arthur Gibbs stated: "It is often said that in books like these we paint arcadias that never did and never could exist on earth. To this I would answer that there are many such abodes in country places, if only our minds are such as to realise them….Let us have all that is joyous and bright in our books, and leave the trials and failures for the realities of life."[157]

[157] Gibbs, preface.

Chloe Maxwell is a senior majoring in Political Science and is from Kent, Ohio. She is a member of both Phi Alpha Theta and Pi Sigma Alpha. After graduation she intends to pursue a career in politics.

GEORGE CREEL AND THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION 1917-1918

By Chloe Maxwell

In September of 1916, a relatively unknown Kansas City journalist published a short book titled *Wilson and the Issues.*[1] The short book, only 167 pages in length, was released deliberately in line with President Woodrow Wilson's reelection. Within these pages, author George Creel systematically defends Wilson and his first term as president. Creel discusses events such as the German occupation of Belgium, the sinking of the *Lusitania,* and Wilson's neutrality.[2] Those familiar with Creel's work called him a professional "muckraker" and an outspoken supporter of the Progressive agenda.[3] Before war broke out in Europe, Creel advocated for child labor reforms, woman's suffrage, and direct democracy.

Over the course of World War 1, George Creel created an unprecedented propaganda machine that unified the United States behind the war. Towards the end of his life, Creel wrote that he felt like his work was his patriotic duty to his country, yet, he is still heavily criticized for his wartime propaganda. Creel's actions can be justified by the limited way in which he implemented propaganda and censorship.

The Wilson Administration understood that if the United States declared war on Germany, than public support would be crucial to victory.[4] America was not under direct attack, so public opinion would already be limited. At this time, the United States was a nation with a deliberately weak central government and a diverse population with strong isolationist and anti-military beliefs. Wilson knew that he would have to unify the country behind a war taking place on the other side of the world.[5] He had to unify the people behind the Wilsonian agenda.

---

[1] Alan Axlerod, *Selling The Great War: The Making of American Propaganda,* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 47.

[2] George Creel, *Wilson and the Issues,* (New York: The Century Co., 1916).

[3] Seth Abrams, "The Committee on Public Information after World War I: The Failure to Develop into a Peacetime Organization." *Midwest Political Science Association,* (April 2011): 2-18.

[4] Krystina Benson, "Archival Analysis of The Committee on Public Information: The Relationship between Propaganda, Journalism and Popular Culture," *The International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society* 6, no. 4 (2010): 151-164.

[5] Robert H. Zieger, *America's Great War,* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 78.

It appears as though Wilson had considered creating a publicity agency as early as June 1914. The president hoped a publicity agency would clarify the government's position on certain issues Wilson thought were important to the American war aims.[6] Eight days after Congress passed a Declaration of War, Wilson issued Executive Order No. 2594 which created the Committee on Public Information (CPI).[7] When it came time to select the person who would stand at the head of this committee, George Creel was an obvious choice for the president.[8] Wilson trusted him, and there is no indication that he considered anyone else for the job.[9] Creel's loyalty to Wilson and Progressivism made him perfect for this position.[10] Creel viewed it as his job to influence public opinion and to convey the Allies war aims.[11] Creel himself wrote that it was a fight "for the minds of men, for the conquest of their convictions" which would allow for "the gospel of Americanism" to "be carried out to every corner of the globe."[12] He campaigned not only for public support, but also to increase enlistments. He persuaded the American people to buy War Bonds and to save their food. It can be said, though, that the most important goal of the CPI was to convince the populace that they should hate the enemy, which, in this instance, was Germany.[13] Creel was an idealist, and he strongly believed truth should be the prevailing factor in any propaganda. He operated on the theory that when presented with all the facts, people would then be able to think for themselves.[14] Creel believed that facts would persuade the American people that they could make the world secure for democracy at the expense of their sons and, temporarily, some of their rights.[15]

Creel had the daunting task of uniting the nation behind a war they

---

[6] Henry Turner, "Woodrow Wilson and Public Opinion," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (Winter, 1957-1958): 505-520.

[7] Eric Van Schaack, "The Division of Pictorial Publicity in World War I," *Design Issues* 22, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 32-45.

[8] Many people refer to the CPI as the Creel Commission.

[9] There were others appointed to a board which was originally supposed to run the CPI but Creel quickly became the most powerful and important actor within the CPI.

[10] Stephen Vaughn, "First Amendment Liberties and the Committee on Public Information," *The Journal of Legal History* 23, no. 2 (April 1979): 95-119.

[11] George Brown Tindall and David Emory Shi, *America*, 7th ed, vol 2, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2007), 718.

[12] Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1947), 46.

[13] Ray Eldon Hiebert, *Courtier to the Crowd: The Story of Ivy Lee and the Development of Public Relations*, (Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1966), 253.

[14] Axlerod, 49.

[15] Ibid., 53.

were not completely sure they were ready to support. Creel wrote that in order to understand the actions of the CPI a person must first remember the deep divisions within the country at the start of the war.[16] Historian, Dr. Alan Axelrod writes that the divisions Creel points out seem to be factions that are essentially synonymous with democracy. People living in a democracy are free to think what they wish, rather than be compelled to embrace the ideas of a monarch or dictator.[17] Creel wrote that the nation needed to somehow find a "war-will," which he defined that as a will to win.[18] Axlerod suggests that Creel understood the "paradoxical nature of his mission." Creel was tasked with uniting "a democracy [in] the kind of mass behavior that might be expected from people under a totalitarian regime, yet do so without destroying democracy."[19] The CPI was stuck with a fallacious argument. They needed the American people to be on the side of Wilson and they also needed Americans to feel free to think what they pleased. Americans are sensitive of media censorship. Accordingly, Creel had to find a way to censor the media all the while allowing Americans to think their ideas were original and not orchestrated by the government.[20] The government had two options. The first option would be to implement "ironclad censorship" which would require government officials to determine what was harmful and what could or could not be published. The second option was voluntary censorship, which is what Creel ended up implementing.[21] From the beginning of his career, Creel was strongly against strict censorship legislation. He believed it would be too difficult to enforce such laws that legislatures would ultimately struggle to codify.[22] Creel believed it was "essential in the creation of public support for the war through expression, not suppression, of news."[23] Creel proposed voluntary censorship.[24] He recognized the need for some sort of censorship but knew the government would have to attack it from a less

[16] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 5.

[17] Axlerod, 62.

[18] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 5.

[19] Axlerod, 63.

[20] Vaughn, 95-119.

[21] James Mock, Cedric Larson, *Words That Won the War*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939), 11.

[22] Axlerod, 65.

[23] American Journalism, 14.

[24] Axlerod, 67.

obvious angle.[25] Creel knew if he could tap into the patriotic nature of American newspapermen, then he would possess all the power he would need to control the message.[26] He made every paper its own censor.[27] Creel created three categories of information for the newspapers: dangerous, questionable, and routine. Dangerous news featured reports on operations being performed by the armed forces. Questionable stories were to be published only after the approval of the CPI. Almost all the stories that were published contained information about everyday events which were considered to be routine and those were to be published at the discretion of the newspaper.[28]

Creel would continue to say during and after the war that he had no official power to enforce censorship. Members of the CPI had no authority to arrest anyone who did not comply with their program of voluntary censorship. Creel considered this a check to his power. In 1917, Congress passed two very important acts: The Espionage and Sedition Acts. These acts outlawed any negative criticism of the government and this led to 1,000 convictions.[29] It effectively quieted the opposition.[30] It made it punishable by law to make slanderous statements about the armed forces, hinder the sale of war bonds and enlistments, and for opposing the cause of the United States. Before the country entered the war the Department of Justice (DOJ) had 300 agents posted around the country. A few months into the war they had already added another 100. The DOJ also created the American Protective League which consisted of everyday Americans who wished to do their part on the home front by catching spies. By June of 1917, League members were in 600 cities and it is suggested that their numbers were as high as 100,000. By 1918, their membership reached 250,000. The Espionage and Sedition Acts were the force behind the CPI even if Creel wished not to see it this way.[31]

One of the most vital aspects of Creel's CPI was the "Four Minute

---

[25] Benson, 151-164.

[26] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 16.

[27] Ibid., 8.

[28] Vaughn, 95-119.

[29] After the war, the Supreme Court heard the case *Schenck v. United States* in which the courts upheld these laws stating "Free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater, and causing panic." They specified that the Sedition Act applied only when there was a "clear and present danger."

[30] Tindall, Shi, 718.

[31] Carl Brent Swisher, "Civil Liberties in War Time," *Political Science Quarterly,* 55 no. 3 (September 1940) 321-347.

Men." These men would become the public face of the CPI.[32] Local volunteers were used to spread the word on the community level. They were most famous for speaking to an essentially captive audience at motion pictures.[33]It took movie operators four minutes to change film reels.[34] In these four minutes, the Four Minute men were able to update people on events in Europe and also share Creel's message, usually in speeches that lasted no more than four minutes. Across the country when people went to a show, a slide would appear on the screen which read:

> FOUR MINUTE MEN
> [Name of speaker]
> Will speak four minutes on a subject
> of national importance.
> He speaks under the authority of
> THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION
> GEORGE CREEL, CHAIRMAN
> WASHINGTON, D.C.[35]

Associate Director of the Four Minute Men Division, and Public Speaking Professor, Bertram Nelson stated:

> How can we reach [the people]? Not through the press, for they do not read; not through patriotic rallies, for they do not come. Every night eight to ten million people of all classes, all degrees of intelligence, black and white, young and old, rich and poor, meet in the moving picture houses of this country, and among them are many of these silent ones who do not read or attend meetings but who must be reached.[36]

It is estimated that in 1917, ten million Americans went to the cinema every day.[37] In Los Angeles County in 1918, the Four Minute Men were able to speak to 1,000 people in less than a weeks' time.[38] The CPI recruited 75,000 volunteers who gave approximately 7,500,000 speeches to

[32] Axlerod, 92.
[33] Thomas Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory: America in World War I,* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 95.
[34] Lisa Mastrangelo, "World War I, Public Intellectuals, and the Four Minute Men: Convergent Ideals of Public Speaking and Civic Participation" *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 12 no. 4 (2009) 609.
[35] Fleming, 95.
[36] Mastrangelo, 607.
[37] Zieger, 79.
[38] Mastrangelo, 610.

an estimated 130,000,000 people while the CPI was in existence from 1917-1918. During this time, there was a common joke that when more than six people gathered together it would be a rare thing if a Four Minute Man did not arrive to inform them that they needed to buy war bonds, save food and fuel, and support the actions of the government.[39] The CPI knew they had to find a way to spread their message in the most efficient way possible, and the Four Minute Men were the answer.[40] Bertram Nelson provided them with about 30 suggested topics. Nelson also had a speech professional on staff to help evaluate and train future four minute men. The speeches were not done entirely in English, but were instead spoken in a variety of languages such as: Italian, Polish, Lithuanian, Magyar-Hungarian, Russian, Ukrainian, Armenian, Bohemian-Slovak, and Yiddish. The program is estimated to have cost only $100,000 which was only a small fraction of the CPI's budget.[41]

When Wilson announced the draft in the summer of 1917, the CPI set out to support this as well. They viewed their work as successful when on the first day of the draft 10,000,000 men signed up and there were no large scale riots or public demonstrations like America had seen after a draft was announced during the Civil War. Creel, and his men, had no problem with taking credit for the large number of people who enlisted after the draft was announced.[42]

As the Four Minute Men worked on speaking to everyone they possibly could, the Division of Pictorial Publicity (DPP) worked to expose every American to their form of propaganda. Creel called for the best artists from across the country to do their part to fight the war by using their skills to help the United States in the war effort. According to Creel, America had more posters than any of the countries they were fighting. More importantly, American posters were better. Creel realized early on that posters would play a large role in what they did and to this effect Creel stated, "The printed word might not be read, people might not choose to attend meetings or watch motion pictures, but the billboard was something that caught even the most indifferent eye."[43]

---

[39] George T. Blakey, *Historians on the Homefront*, (Lexington, The University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 57.

[40] See Figure 3.

[41] Mastrangelo, 610

[42] Mastrangelo, 612.

[43] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 133.

The DPP tended to portray the horrors of a possible German invasion in their work. In one famous poster it says, "Beat Back the Hun with Liberty Bonds."[44] The character can be seen wearing a Prussian helmet called a *Pickelhaube.* The word *Pickelhauben* comes from the German word *Pickel* meaning point and *Haube* meaning headgear. It is was helmet worn primarily in the nineteenth and twentyith centuries by Prussian military, firefighters and police.[45]This was something that Americans viewed as stereotypically Prussian. Ironically, the Prussians had ceased to use this piece of equipment in 1916, yet this this is exactly the point. It did not matter that the pictures were not accurate. The DPP was able to effectively portray through a poster the fears of the average American. They feared that that the Prussians would invade, and if they did, they would have to do so with American blood on their fingers and bayonets. It told the American people that even though they might not be on the battlefield, they could keep the Prussians away by buying War Bonds.[46]

The artists in the DPP played off the fears felt by the average American. Though some, it can be argued, were extremely dramatic, they were effective nonetheless. Joseph Pennell's famous poster depicts Liberty Island in New York City under attack.[47] He wrote "my idea was New York City bombed, shot down, burning, blown-up by the enemy."[48] He originally planned to give it the caption "Buy Liberty Bonds or You Will See This."[49] Millions of Americans believed this was a definite possibility, and the DPP knew it and played off this fear. Creel suggested that their success can be seen in the fact that more than 20 million people, over half the adult population, bought War Bonds. It is estimated that nearly seven billion dollars were raised through their sale.[50] It would give the DPP too much credit to say they were *the* reason why so many War Bonds were bought, but it is reasonable to say they played a large role in this operation.[51]

By the time the armistice was signed in November of 1918, the DPP had 279 artists and 33 cartoonists on their payroll. Creel estimates 700 posters

[44] See Figure 1.
[45] http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/tips/helmets.html
[46] Van Schaack, 32-45.
[47] See Figure 2.
[48] Van Schaack, 32-45.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.

were created with a total of 1,438 visual works all together.[52] This included things such as cards for street cars and window displays, items published in newspapers, cartoons, and buttons. The message of the DPP told Americans to not only buy War Bonds, but also to conserve food, coal and electricity, it urged enlistment and support of the Red Cross. The DPP teamed with George Creel was a force that showed the American people what the government wanted them to think.[53]

The publishing machine that Creel created was remarkable. During its existence the CPI published approximately 75 million pamphlets. It also published the government's first daily newspaper, *The Official Bulletin,* which at its height in popularity reached 115,000 subscriptions. The *Bulletin* was also distributed to every news office around the country free of charge.[54] To Creel, public opinion was in a way "a weapon of war." With this in mind, it can be seen that Creel's actions fell completely in line with this opinion.[55]

Within one day of the armistice going into effect, orders were sent out that called all active CPI campaigns to an end. Creel believed that many of the departments within the CPI could be useful in peacetime. He also believed that "the Committee was a *war organization* only, and that it was without [a] proper place in the national life in time of peace."[56] He realized it did not matter how "honest its intents or pure its purposes," the CPI operating during a time of peace would be viewed as tyrannical in the same way Americans viewed a large peacetime standing army.[57] The populace was done with war and had not completely bought into Wilson's idea of "peace without Victory."[58] Creel believed that the work of the CPI was finished but he was not. Creel traveled to Europe with Wilson to work out the President's dream, the League of Nations.[59]

When Creel returned to the United States in 1919, he, like Wilson, had very few friends in the Republican Congress. Creel planned to take apart

---

[52] Van Schaack, 32-45..

[53] Axlerod, 135-145.

[54] American Journalism 14

[55] Michael S. Sweeney, "Harvey O' Higgins and 'The Daily German Lie,'" *American Journalism*, 23 no. 3, (Summer 2006) 20.

[56] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 401.

[57] Ibid., 402.

[58] Woodrow Wilson hoped to achieve peace without anyone coming out on top. He hoped this would more permanently stop bloodshed.

[59] Axlerod, 214.

the CPI with care, but Congress did not.[60] Congress actively tried to discredit Creel professionally. George Blakey wrote, "The irony of much of the Republican criticism is that it was intended for Wilson [but] aimed at Creel."[61] Creel wanted to save all the records that he knew would someday be important to the story of the CPI but Congress did not think this was necessary.[62] On June 30, 1919 Congress cut off what was left of the CPI from their money supply. In Creel's memoir he wrote:

> Every dollar of our appropriation, every dollar of our earnings, was swept back into the Treasury, and the Committee itself wiped out of existence, leaving no one with authority to sign a check, transfer a bank balance, employ a clerk, rent a building, or with any power whatsoever to proceed with the business of settlement. The action was so utterly mad, and yet…there was nothing we could have done about it.[63]

Creel took it upon himself to save what was left of the CPI. He borrowed Army trucks to transport everything to empty space he found within the Fuel Administration Building and he rode with every truck load to personally oversee the move.[64] The offices he found were empty, so he hired a security guard at his own expense to watch over the remnants of the CPI.[65] Congress did not let these files stay at this location long. Creel states the files were "dumped into trucks *for the second time*… whatever resemblance of orderly arrangement remained was entirely smashed by this last transfer."[66] In October of 1919, Congress made allegations against Creel, effectively saying he wasted the government's money, and ironically, the tedious records that Creel worked hard to save were what cleared his name of these accusations.[67]

The only honor Creel ever received in regards to his work with the CPI was a personal letter from President Woodrow Wilson. He spent most of

---

[60] Axlerod, 216.
[61] Blakey, 128.
[62] Axlerod, 216.
[63] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 427.
[64] Creel was rightly concerned that important information would get lost in transportation.
[65] Axlerod, 216.
[66] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 430.
[67] Ibid., 431-432.

the rest of his life out of the public eye, except for a failed run in a California Gubernatorial race. Creel continued defending what he did in World War I until his death in 1953.[68] Arguably, Creel is most famous for saying, "In no degree was the Committee an agency of censorship, a machine of concealment or repression. Its emphasis throughout was on the open and the positive. At no point did it seek to exercise authorities under those laws that limited the freedom of speech and press."[69]

The question that remains is whether Creel was the master propagandist manipulating the minds of naïve Americans or was he a patriot fighting to save democracy. Creel appears to have been some of both. It seems as though Wilson was able to find someone who he could not only trust but also influence. Even though many criticize his work, none of it was illegal or inaccurate. Creel believed he was doing the right thing for the country, and this is something scholars agree on. It is more accurate to call Creel naïve. He behaved as tough he was blinded by the allure of Wilson's progressive agenda. He was a master of propaganda. Creel used his talents in a way that preserved democracy in the best way he could find. Though Creel and the CPI definitely used the heightened emotions of a nation during wartime to their advantage, they absolutely were successful in uniting a majority of the country behind the war. Creel admirably took the initiative to dismantle the CPI following the conclusion of WW1. Creel did produce a large amount of effective government funded propaganda during WW1, but President Wilson should be the one criticized for it, not George Creel.

According to Axelrod, historians have noticed similarities between the way Hitler's propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, ran the Nazi propaganda ministry with the centralized way Creel ran the CPI. Currently, there is no way to be absolutely certain about this, but it seems logical that Goebbels would have researched the CPI which was the one of the most important propaganda agencies during WW1. In 1933, former CPI official, Edward Bernays invited the foreign correspondent of the Hearst newspapers, Karl von Weigand, to a dinner.[70] Barneys reportedly told stories to the other guests about Goebbels' plan to consolidate Nazi power. Goebbels, who would soon after be appointed head of Hitler's propaganda ministry, showed

---

[68] Axlerod, 217.

[69] Cedric Larson, "Found: Records of the Committee on Public Information," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1 no. 1 (January 1937), 116-118.

[70] Axlerod cites page 111 of *The Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays and the Birth of Public Relations* (New York: 1998) as the source for the relationship between the CPI and Nazi propaganda.

Weigand his extensive library, which included all of the best works on propaganda, the most extensive collection Weigand had ever come across. Goebbels told Weigand he was particularly fond of Bernay's 1923 book, *Crystallizing Public Opinion.* He used the book "as a basis for his destructive campaign against the Jews of Germany."[71] Hitler also wrote in *Mein Kampf* that "it was not until the [First World War] that it became evident what immense results could be obtained by a correct application of propaganda."[72] It does not appear to be too much of a stretch then to suggest that high level Nazi officials were familiar with Creel's success in propaganda in WW1.[73]

In January of 1939, an article was published in the *Science News Letter* informing the public that mysterious files were found in the basement of an old War Department building in Washington DC. These were the files Creel took so much care to preserve.[74] The files, since made public, tell the story of the CPI and its success in WW1 in a way that the highly-criticized Creel never could. The files shed light on a dark time in American history when President Wilson felt like a propaganda ministry was completely necessary to win WW1. Creel was able to preserve Democracy as best he could by convincing Congress and the President that they did not need explicit, strict censorship. George Creel was a powerful man, but the President was the one with the influence over a man who whole heartedly believed that he was a patriot and that he was doing his part to make the world safe for democracy.

The actions George Creel took during WW1 remained controversial for the rest of his life. Even now the words propaganda and censorship have a dirty connotation, and it is necessary to understand that these things are multi-faceted. Creel's WW1 propaganda and censorship were an Americanized version. Although it did play off the heightened fears of a nation at war, there was no force behind the censorship and propaganda, unlike more renowned instances of propaganda, such as the Nazi regime. Because of the lack of force behind the propaganda and the context of the time, the evidence found in the basement of the War Department are enough to exonerate Creel's record and show that his actions were justified.

---

[71] Axlerod, 219.

[72] Ibid., 218.

[73] Axelrod seems to strongly believe that there is a strong chance these two events have too much in common to ignore their similarities.

[74] The files were found and analyzed by Dr. James R. Mock and Cedric Larsen of Princeton University. After they concluded studying the files of the CPI, they published *Words That Won the War* arguably the most important monograph written about Creel and the CPI.

George Creel

Figure 1[75]

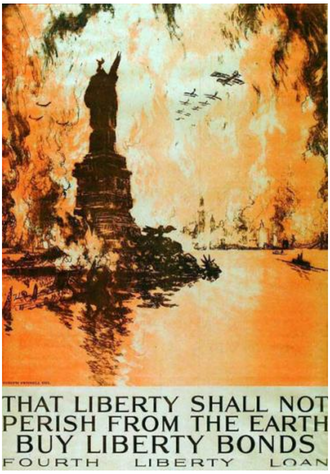


Figure 2[76]

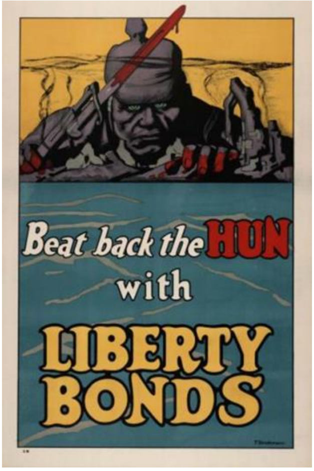
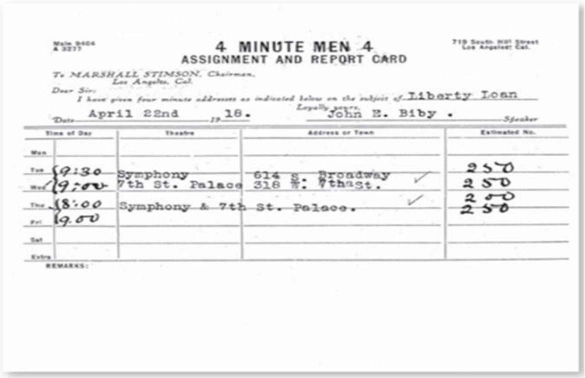


Figure 3[77]



4 MINUTE MEN 4
ASSIGNMENT AND REPORT CARD

To MARSHALL STIMSON, Chairman,
Los Angeles, Cal.

Dear Sir:
I have given four minute addresses as indicated below on the subject of Liberty Loan

Date April 22nd 19 18.

Loyally yours,
John E. Biby . Speaker

	Time of Day	Theatre	Address or Town	Estimated No.
Mon				
Tue	9:30	Symphony	614 S. Broadway ✓	250
Wed	9:00	7th St. Palace	318 W. 7th St.	250
Thu	8:00	Symphony & 7th St. Palace.	✓	250
Fri	9.00			250
Sat				
Extra				

REMARKS:

---

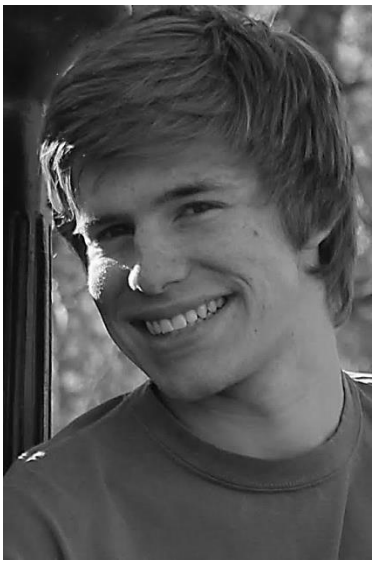
[75] Van Schaack, 32-45.
[76] Ibid.,
[77] Mastrangelo, 609.

RAYMOND L. MUNCY SCHOLARSHIP

An Academic Scholarship for Undergraduate Students of History

The Raymond L. Muncy Scholarship is a one-time financial award for those undergraduate students at Harding University majoring in History who demonstrate exceptional scholarship, research, and Christian character. The scholarship was created to honor the late Raymond L. Muncy, Chairman of the Department of History and Social Sciences from 1965-1993. His teaching, mentoring, and scholarship modeled the best in Christian education. Applied toward tuition, the award is granted over the span of a single academic year. The award is presented annually at the Department of History and Social Sciences Banquet.

Marcus McCormick's "Platonism and the Eucharist: Transubstantiation in the Second to Fourth Century" has been awarded the 2014 Raymond L. Muncy Scholarship.



Marcus McCormick is a junior from Austin, Texas, and is majoring in History. He loves mountains, soccer, and philosophy and has been blessed with several opportunities to travel abroad to Greece, Ireland, and Israel. Marcus is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. With an eventual degree in History, it is his hope that he can return to his home to do graduate studies at the University of Texas, either in Classical History or in the field of Law.

PLATONISM AND THE EUCHARIST: TRANSUBSTANTIATION IN THE SECOND TO FOURTH CENTURY

By Marcus McCormick

The Lord's Supper, commonly termed as the eucharist from the second century until the era of the reformers in the sixteenth century, is a central component of Christian liturgical and sacramental doctrine. Eucharistic practice dates its institution to the early first century, as found within the Gospels[1]. The concept of communal remembrance of the Lord's death and sacrifice has been echoed throughout the writings early church fathers as well as the latter portion of the New Testament outside of the Gospels. Particularly in the writings of early church fathers, a sense of doctrinal evolution concerning the Lord's Supper can be distinguished from author to author. Eucharistic thought underwent a change that mirrored the progressively more Hellenized environment surrounding it; the institutional language and practice of the Lord's Supper would eventually give way to a Greek, more specifically Platonic, understanding that would powerfully shift understanding of the eucharist in the direction of transubstantiation during the second to fourth century.

In order to best understand the development discussed in this paper, it is beneficial to keep in view the form in which the practice of the Lord's Supper eventually assumes. The doctrine of transubstantiation remains the practice of the modern Catholic Church[2], and was coined as a term within Catholic theology in the early twelfth century[3]. Language involving transubstantiation will pre-exist its theological title, but the contention that follows will seek to bring to light the progression of the system through its institutional context into an increasingly Platonic direction in the second to fourth centuries.

The scriptural eucharist given to the disciples during the Last Supper ought to be understood within the context of Passover meal which Jesus and his disciples were participating in. The Jewish Passover was a celebration as well as a remembrance of the exodus of the Jews from Egypt, in which Jews

[1] i.e., Matthew 26: 26-29, English Standard Version.

[2] As understood by the Catholic Church today, "it is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in the sacrament."

[3] William R. Crockett, *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1989), 118.

would reflect on God's past redemptive work[4]. In this way, the redemptive power of God to the Jew was a reality. In the Mishnah[5], a Jew remembering Passover was "to regard himself as if he came forth himself out of Egypt."[6] When you compare this statement of the Hebraic text to Jesus's words "This is my body,"[7] the Lord's Supper seems to be a reality to the early Christian Church in a similar way. While the presence of God is a reality in both, the statements are not necessarily literal. This thought is mirrored in the mention of the Lord's Supper in the Greek word *anamnesis* in Corinthians[8], translated as "memorial."[9] Though it is a memory that is invoked through this practice, it is more than a mental response that the eucharist ought to evoke. Instead, the real effects of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross would take place in the church, adding in aspects of fellowship and eschatological joy to their worship. In addition to this, the related term to *anamnesis* in the Hebraic tradition is *zkr*, meaning memory[10]. In Deuteronomy, the Israelites direct access to the redemptive events of God's liberation of Israel is a thing of the past. The memory of those events of a past and future sense: the memorial remembrance of God's past deeds points to God's supremacy over time. God's past actions were therefore actualized in the remembrance of a Passover meal, rather than literally reoccurring. Early Christians were able to actively participate in the celebration of God's grace and power through the celebration just as Jews did during the feast of Passover.

As time went on, the Christian worldview became increasingly tied to the Greek understanding of the world. Christian leaders began to have to defend their fledgling religion against developed natural theology, and began to amalgamate their beliefs with compatible intellectual cores to support them. Platonism visibly integrated itself through the school at Alexandria (established in the second century, flowering in the third), where many Church fathers would receive their educations, including Clement of

[4] Exodus 12

[5] The Hebraic Mishnah is a supplemental text to the Torah and the writings of the prophets. Its work is primarily for use in hermeneutics of the Hebraic text, and will in this paper provide the basis for understanding the relation of Hebraic Passover symbolism to eucharistic symbolism.

[6] Pesahim 10:5, trans. Herbert Danby.

[7] Mark 14:22.

[8] 1 Corinthians 11:24-25.

[9] Everett Ferguson, "The Lord's Supper in Church History; the Early Church through the Medieval Period" *The Lord's Supper; Believers' Church Perspectives* (1997), 22.

[10] Crockett, 23.

Alexandria (c.150-c.215) and Origen (c.185-c.254)[11]. Observing a symbolic memorial through Platonic lenses renders a reverse image of the nature of symbols and their respective realities. Within the later Platonic world, a symbol would partake in that which it represented and could very nearly be that same entity. Both Plato and the leaders of fourth century church viewed the world in a two tier system: the world of senses (our experiences), and the world beyond our senses and experiences[12]. As these two realms are concretely separated in Platonic thought, the use of transubstantiative language becomes more viable; transubstantiation will claim that material that was once of the physical realm has made the jump to the world beyond human sense. This way, the physical elements of the eucharist can remain as bread and wine to the senses, but can metaphysically (as well as substantially) be the same entity. Consequentially, church fathers were able to synthesize the truth they perceived in platonic philosophy with that which they understood within Christian theology.

St. Ignatius of Antioch, believed to have been born around the time of the crucifixion (c. 33 A.D)[13], Ignatius was believed to be the third bishop of Antioch also was put to death during the latter potion of the emperor Trajan's reign (98-117 A.D)[14]. Ignatius was responsible for the composition of many letters to the churches, especially those in Asia Minor. Those letters were primarily concerned with maintaining orthodoxy in Christian theology and practice. Concerning the Lord's Supper, consider this text in his letter to the Philadelphians:

> Be zealous, then, in observance of the Eucharist. For there is one flesh of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and one chalice that brings union in his blood. There is one altar, as there is one bishop with the priests and the deacons, who are my fellow workers. And so, whatever you do, let it be done in the name of God.[15]

---

[11] David N. Bell, *A Cloud of Witnesses: An Introduction to the Development of Christian Doctrine to AD 500* (Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1989), 51-52

[12] Crockett, 116-117.

[13] John Bonaventure O'Connor, "St. Ignatius of Antioch," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. vol. 7, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), 3-5.

[14] Francis X. Glimm, Joseph M.F. Marique, S-J, Gerald G. Walsh, S-J, trans., *The Fathers of the Church: The Apostolic Fathers* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 1962), 83.

[15] Glimm, 114.

Platonism and the Eucharist

At the outset the language Ignatius uses seems to favor platonic literalism, appearing contrary to the aforementioned idea actualization. On the other hand, a consideration of the context of this passage can further reveal the author's intentions. Ignatius' letters were written in response to the debate concerning prevalent heresies plaguing his correspondent congregations. Prefacing the quote above, Ignatius admonished the Philadelphians to "shun schisms and heresies," as well as to "keep away from the poisonous weeds… where Jesus Christ does not till the soil.[16]" The juxtaposition of this discourse on heresy and the mention of eucharistic practice implies something about the purpose for which St. Ignatius mentioned it. Ignatius seeks to combat precursors to the Gnostic movement that will eventually stem off from Christianity, which will be founded on a fundamental misunderstanding of the true divinity and humanity of Christ. The precursor Gnostic-Docetists[17] will deny one of these parts of Christ's nature, therefore misunderstanding also the nature of what the eucharist is meant to be[18]. Denial of Christ's body would mean that the Lord's Supper was essentially without meaning, as Christ would not have a body to offer on our behalf. Similarly, the denial of the divinity of Christ would also render the offering of the eucharist (as well as his sacrifice) meaningless, as it would lack redemptive power over sin. This direction is also taken in Ignatius' letter to the Smyrneans during his conversation on Docetism (related to Gnosticism[19]). Ignatius condemned those in the Smyrnaean church who "speaks ill of [his] Lord by denying that he had a body," and again admonished the church to "let no man be deceived." [20] This language concerning Christ and his body informs this following statement:

> They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer because they do not admit that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, the flesh which suffered for our sins

[16] Glim, 114.

[17] Gnostics claimed that Christ, being divine, could not in fact manifest himself in human form because of the corrupt nature of the physical world. Similarly, Docetists stated that Christ (from the Greek word *doceo – "seemed"*) only seemed to be physically present, but was in fact a phantom.

[18] Karen L. King, *What is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003), 175

[19] Ibid.

[20] Glimm, 120.

> and which the Father, in His graciousness, raised from the dead.[21]

Here the Lord's Supper is discussed in a way that seems even more Platonically literalist than before, speaking of the eucharist as his flesh to convey the reality of Christ's humanity rather than the transubstantiation of the table elements. Ignatius is not an early purveyor of eucharistic transformation or Platonic thought, but is overwhelmingly concerned with Christian orthodoxy and unity.

St. Justin Martyr, born in Samaria very near to the time of Ignatius' death (c. 100 -110 A.D), was thoroughly a Gentile[22]. His ancestry was Greco-Roman, and he was educated in the Greek schools of philosophy (particularly the Platonist school)[23]. Despite this, Justin's familiarity with the ideals of his birthplace and the Hebraic scripture used within the early church cannot go understated in his apologetic dialogues, despite his penchant for Platonic thought. In Justin's first apologetic petition to the emperor Antonius Pius, he addressed specifically the topic of the Eucharist:

> Not as ordinary bread or as ordinary drink do we partake of them, but just as, through the word of God, our Savior Jesus Christ became Incarnate and took upon Himself flesh and blood for our salvation, so, we have been taught, the food which has been made the Eucharist by the prayer of His word, and which nourishes our flesh and blood by assimilation, is both the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.[24]

Just as in the writings of Ignatius, a strong element of literalism seems to present itself in Justin's writing. Also it ought to be taken into account that this passage, unlike the references in Ignatius' letters, was set aside as a specific part of the apology to the emperor. The practice of the table must have become an aspect of Christian worship that was known to the public and had become a facet of worship that was inquired about, especially by pagan outsiders. In this passage, the following elements are significant: first, the bread and the wine are no longer "ordinary" food and drink; that is to say,

---

[21] Glimm, 121.

[22] Jules Lebreton, "St. Justin Martyr," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. vol. 8,(New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), 4-5.

[23] Thomas B. Falls, trans., *The Fathers of the Church: St. Justin Martyr* (New York: Christian Heritage Inc., 1948), 9.

[24] Ibid, 105-106.

they now serve a new purpose; second, the transition from ordinary food and drink to their purpose as eucharistical elements (regardless of either interpretation) is enacted by the word of Christ; third, the bread and the wine are still nourishing to our physical bodies. While this passage may seem to speak outright for literal interpretation, the possibility of Justin expressing the importance of the humanity of Christ, along with the idea of a repurposed style of memorial mentioned above, still remains. This position becomes stronger when Justin's responses to the Jews concerning the eucharist shed additional light on his standing regarding the nature of the Lord's supper. Pulling language from scripture to speak with his Jewish colleague Trypho, Justin remarked upon the Eucharist as a "remembrance [*anamnesis*] of the Body… [and] his Blood[25]" and refers to the element of the wine as a "memorial [*anamnesis*] of his Blood." Justin has not simply contradicted himself, but rather, has put forth that the purpose of the table is this idea encapsulated by the word *anamnesis*. This is a concept that Justin, as well as his Jewish audience, understands well. Though when speaking to intellectual pagans, Justin adopts the lenses of Platonic philosophy (while not taking on a full Platonic understanding) so that they are better able to understand, as well as satiating their intellectual desires.

In 339, in the far reaches of the Western portion of the Roman Empire, St. Ambrose was born to a distinguished Roman family. Ambrose grew to become a renowned preacher after his selection as the new bishop of Milan in 373[26], and was a devoted student of theology; among Ambrose's favorite authors were Origen, Basil, and Philo, all of whom were students of Greek philosophy in addition to their Christian education[27]. Also during his time as bishop, Ambrose found much time to create works of his own regarding Christian theology. In his work entitled *The Sacraments*, Ambrose wrote about the practice of the eucharist, and gave particular attention to the literalist language in John 6, stating that it is the "my flesh is true food… and my blood is true drink"[28] that Christians receive. Despite this, he remains true to his Platonic roots and shows that the eucharistic food has a primarily spiritual character. In part, this is because the literalism might be offensive,

[25] Falls, 262.

[26] Roy J. Deferrari, trans., *The Fathers of the Church: St. Ambrose* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1963), vi-xvii.

[27] James Loughlin, "St. Ambrose," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. vol. 1, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), 2-4.

[28] John 6:55

just as it was in John 6: "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" [29] Therefore, Ambrose is also keen to emphasize that "it is not bodily food, but spiritual."[30] That being said, Ambrose wrote believing that this spiritual nourishment was delivered through physical means. Ambrose understands the spiritual and physical realms to be united by a ceremony of consecration, after being effected by the working words of Christ. He explains:

> "Before consecration, it is bread, but when the words of Christ have been added, it is the body of Christ… And before the words of Christ, the cup is full of wine and water. When the words of Christ have operated, then it is the blood that redeems the people"[31]

This language seems similar to the above instances of eucharistic observance, but the primary difference lies in the overt recognition of the role of the priest. The body of Christ was not present before the consecration, but after the consecration it is. In his work *The Mysteries*, Ambrose makes this clearer by stating that "even nature itself is changed"[32] by the blessing, and that the words of the Savior as so powerful that they "make out of nothing what was not"[33]. A new reality is added to the elements. Consecration allows the figure (the element), to become the reality, ultimately reconciling it to the Platonic understanding: the element which comes from the world of our senses, "becomes the body,"[34] which, being divine, is beyond our world of sense. This explanation of how the act occurs in opposition to the earlier texts which attempt to explain what occurs strongly suggests what can be recognized as transubstantiative thought.

This final result of transubstantiation is not a product of Ambrose alone, but reflects a culmination of a gradual progression of the church fathers into a fully Greek understanding of the symbol and reality of the Lord's Table. First was Ignatius' understanding of the Table as signifying the humanity of Jesus, next was St. Justin's apologetics to the educated pagan world, thereby adopting Platonic lenses to augment eucharistical understanding. Last was St. Ambrose, who took on the lenses as his primary

[29] John 6:60
[30] Deferrari, 27.
[31] Ibid., 305.
[32] Ibid., 24-25.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Deferrari, 304.

understanding of Holy Communion; therefore, setting the precedent for medieval theologians who would coin the term *transubstantio* in the early twelfth century[35].

[35] Crockett, 118.

The Editorial Board for this issue

:

Caroline Reed is a junior from Atlanta, Georgia. She is a History major and Political Science minor and is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. She plans to attend Law School after she graduates.

John L. Frizzell is a junior from Memphis, Tennessee. He is majoring in History and Leadership and Ministry and is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. This is his second year to serve on the editorial board.

C. Claire Summers is a senior from Conway, Arkansas. She is majoring in History and minoring in English. She was president of Phi Alpha Theta for the 2014-15 school year and will graduate this year.

In Memoriam:
Raymond L. Muncy