

## Tracing Women's Connections from a Letter by Elizabeth Raleigh

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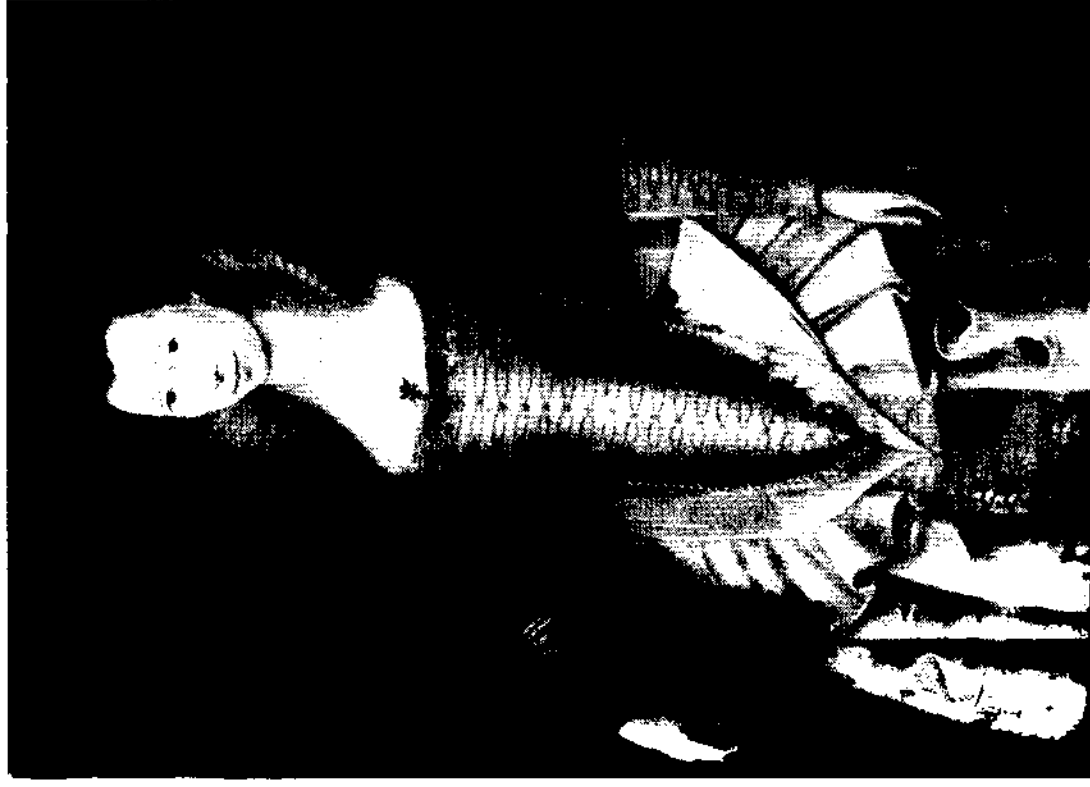
ASSEMBLING EVIDENCE OF WOMEN'S alliances presents a challenge because historical records tend to privilege male experiences as performed within the major institutional structures of a society. Evidence that women engaged in collective rather than singular activity remains frustratingly elusive; while men's connections in early modern England were often marked by formal legal instruments such as indenture or guild membership, women's groupings were often more informal and less frequently documented.<sup>1</sup> Letters by and about women are a resource that can provide suggestions of women's connections, even though women's letters in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries tend to have somewhat restricted purposes and are often written to men, usually those with greater power in the patronage network. This essay considers one tantalizing example of collective activity by women: a list of women's names added as an endorsement to the back of a letter written by Elizabeth Throckmorton, Lady Raleigh, soon after her husband's conviction for treason. At first glance, the list of names seems arbitrary and difficult to identify, the titles and surnames uncontextualized by place or institutional rank. Identifying the names, in itself a difficult task, provides suggestive evidence that this list marks an informal alliance of women based in a kinship network. When the names are examined within the context of Elizabeth Raleigh's life,<sup>2</sup> the evidence suggests that she

called on those women in her circle of kin who had themselves recently been engaged in struggles with the legal system, particularly around issues of inheritance and widowhood.

The names are an unusual addition to a very common kind of letter that appears in the Elizabethan and Jacobean Hatfield papers and the Calendar of State papers: a letter of supplication written by an aristocratic woman in her attempts to salvage some property from the economic disaster that has ensued from her husband's imprisonment or death. These letters were usually addressed to William or Robert Cecil, because the Cecils' positions as secretaries to the monarchs placed them at the apex of distribution and adjudication of leases of Crown lands. A woman's letter, by registering her web of social connections and affirming her social place, formed an element in her self-defense against economic catastrophe. In inviting its recipient to remedy an injury, a letter of complaint implies an ideal structure of hierarchical and economic relations. Despite the appropriate formulations of submission,<sup>3</sup> the supplication enfolded a demand.

Elizabeth Raleigh's letter is one of several that she wrote in her attempts to stave off the disaster that ensued on Sir Walter Raleigh's conviction for treason. Sir Walter's fall after the death of Queen Elizabeth I was precipitous, and he was tried and convicted of treason in November 1603. Although sentenced to death, he was granted a stay of execution and was held in the Tower, eventually for thirteen years.<sup>4</sup> During the first years of his imprisonment he and his wife wrote and appealed for economic protection, particularly of the estate of Sherborne granted to him by Elizabeth in 1599.<sup>5</sup> Although the estate, like all property of a convicted traitor, was forfeit to the king, Raleigh believed it was protected from seizure because he had conveyed the estate to his eldest son Walter in 1602. On July 30, 1604, Lady Raleigh received letters patent which seemed to confirm her possession, a confirmation that was rescinded several years later when the Court of Exchequer decided that the deed of transfer was void because of a clerical error.<sup>6</sup> Despite a personal appeal by Lady Raleigh to the king, he granted the estate to his favorite, Robert Carr.<sup>7</sup> Raleigh remained in prison until 1616, when he was granted permission to lead an expedition to Guiana. On that disastrous trip, he failed to find gold and provoked a Spanish attack in which his eldest son, Walter, died. Returning to England, he was executed on October 29, 1618 under the old treason sentence.<sup>8</sup>

Elizabeth Raleigh was a redoubtable woman who never remarried but lived on as a widow until 1647 (figure 9-1). She had survived the early death of her father, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, when she was six, and had become a lady-in-waiting to Elizabeth I in 1584, a year before the death of her stepfather, Adrian Stokes. After her secret marriage to Sir Walter and her hidden pregnancy in 1591, she and her husband were imprisoned by Elizabeth I.<sup>9</sup> Sir Walter was received again at court, but Elizabeth I never allowed the wife of her favorite to return. Despite Eliza-



16180-9-1 Elizabeth Throckmorton, Lady Raleigh. (Courtesy of the National Gallery of Ireland.)

beth I's implacable hostility, Elizabeth Raleigh continued to seek redemption, a tenacity that also marks her behavior at the time of Raleigh's imprisonment for treason.

The letter, endorsed by a group of women's names, was written around the time of her pregnancy with her son Carew, when Raleigh's life had been spared, although he had not been pardoned. In July 1604, Sherborne had

been placed in trust for Lady Raleigh and her son (Edwards, vol. 1, p. 468), but that favor was threatened by the Lord Admiral, Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, who had been granted Raleigh's patent for wine licenses and claimed not only the current and future profits, but also the arrears (Edwards, vol. 1, p. 459). Lady Raleigh petitioned Robert Cecil, specifically to prevent the seizure of property by the Lord Admiral and for protection of herself and her children. She wrote:

As it hath pleased your Lordshept hetherto to be our only cumfort in our lamentabell misfortuns, so I most humbly beseech your Lordshept, both in compassion and justes, to speke one word to me Lord Admirall not to take from us by strong hand that which his Magesti hath geven us for our reliefe.

I might have hoped that me Lord Admirall—if wee might hope for anything from any leving man would rather have geveung us sumthing back agayne of his great porcion. His Lordshepe hath six thowsand pound, and three thowsand pound a yeare, by my husban's falle. And, since hit pleseth God that his Lordship shall build uppon our ruines, which wee never suspected, yet the porcion is great and I trust sufficient, out of onn poor gentelman's fortun to take all that remaines, and not to louke backe before his Magisti's grant, and take from us the debts past, wich your Lordshept knoes ware stayed from us, by a proclamation, befor my husban was suspected of ani offence.

If me Lord's grant do beare them, and his conscience warrant hime, wee must yeild willingly to Gode's will and the King's. But if me Lord Admirall have no onn word, in his grant, for them, then what neither the Keng, lawe, nor conscience, have geven from us, I treust his Lordship will espase us willingly.

God knoes that our debts ar above three thowsand pound, and the bread and foode taken from me and my children will never augment my Lorde's table, though hit famish us. If your Lordshept, without his Lordship's ofens, can in charitic parswade his Lordshept to relinquish ether all, or but half, of that wich belongs not unto him, wee shall be more and more bound to your Lordshept. (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 408–9)

The back of the letter was endorsed with the names of Lady Raleigh and eighteen other women. Given married women's limited access to formal structures of power, they used letters of complaint to announce their need and to mobilize protection.<sup>10</sup> They often used a rhetoric of equity in their letters to affirm an ideal structure of hierarchical and economic relations violated in practice and to invite restitution.<sup>11</sup> Their equity claims could be bolstered by support from powerful connections, most immediately their kin. The most readily available source of power for the majority of women lay in their capacity to form the next generation of kinship through marriage and reproduction. While such capacities are the most conservative and traditional locus of agency for women, it is important that we acknowledge women's negotiation of the powers available to them. The commonplace that the Tudor Court was thickly intermarried<sup>12</sup> tends to obscure the significance for women of that pro-

cess and the importance they attached to the kin links that they forged. Clearly two partners are biologically necessary for reproduction, but the cultural attribution of reproduction to women also implies responsibility for the formation and preservation of the next generation. Such responsibilities are conceded in Sir Walter's moving letter to his wife on the eve of his execution in 1603, in which he urges his wife to remarry after his death and designates his namesake Walter "thy child": "To witnes that thou didst love me once, take care that thou marry not to please sense, but to avoid poverty, and to preserve thy child" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 384). Women's comprehension of the central social power granted them is often displayed in their violation of normative prohibitions against women's public voice. Deathbed instructions, wills, and mother's legacies are locations from which women assert and mark their connections with one another and the significant generational alliances they have formed, primarily (though not exclusively) with kin. Exceptional women entered print culture by asserting this central responsibility.<sup>13</sup>

Despite their limited participation in formal institutional groupings as women, women did affirm their support for one another, particularly over common threats to economic survival. When basic economic rights were at issue, women could draw on connections with other women, usually women of the same class. In this period, there are a number of examples of the king, husbands, and male relatives attempting to disinherit women. Though their legal position was often weak, aristocratic women did attempt to resist such moves. The most well-known example is the struggle of Anne Clifford to inherit her father's land<sup>14</sup>; in this essay, I discuss the suit of a Neville daughter against the inheritance by her male cousin of the baronetcy of Abergavenny. Letters such as the one sent by Elizabeth Raleigh demonstrate women's active and cooperative opposition to the legal operations of primogeniture and inheritance. The women who endorsed Elizabeth Raleigh's plea seem to be responding to perceived parallels between her economic vulnerability and their own, as I will show.

Sir Walter Raleigh's conviction in 1603 precipitated his wife into the dilemmas shared by the wives of traitors, in particular the economic consequences ensuing from the forfeiture of a traitor's property. The common signal of such disasters is a ripple of letters directed to a Cecil seeking favor in the distribution of such property.<sup>15</sup> Also expected is a letter from the wife or widow of the traitor seeking some protection or alleviation from economic disaster; Lady Raleigh did send such a letter. An uncommon feature of Sir Walter's conviction was the delay in execution, which placed him in an unusual legal limbo in which he found himself convicted but neither pardoned nor executed. The long imprisonment during which Raleigh was held in the Tower also shifted the balance between husband and wife. Where earlier Lady Raleigh had stayed at home in Sherborne or at her brother's estate in Surrey while Sir Walter traveled to court and sailed to Guiana, now she moved be-

tween Sherborne, London, and the Tower, in an ongoing attempt to change the family's fortunes.

Immediately after the trial, Sir Walter saw himself as isolated and abandoned. He wrote to his wife in 1603, "To what frind to direct thee I knowe not, for all mine have left mee in the true tyme of triall" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 285). "Friend" in this context signals not only mutual benevolence but also the complex links of patronage, kinship, and favor that marked the interdependencies of the Tudor gentry and aristocracy.<sup>16</sup> Whatever her husband's despair, Elizabeth Throckmorton was resolute in her efforts to protect the property, the inheritance of her son, Walter, and the life of her husband, using the tools of petition and manipulation of the patronage system.

Elizabeth Raleigh had learned to turn to kin early in her life; her father died in 1571, when his daughter was young, probably only six.<sup>17</sup> The following year her mother, Anne Carew, loaned her daughter's portion of £500 to the Earl of Huntingdon, the repayment of which Elizabeth Throckmorton continued to seek throughout her life (Rowse, p. 57).<sup>18</sup> The mother's financial problems were resolved by her remarriage in 1572 to Adrian Stokes, the widower of the Duchess of Suffolk. Despite her poverty and her father's early death, Elizabeth, assisted by her brother Arthur, used her father's rank and connection to Queen Catherine Parr to garner a position as maid-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth I. She was sworn into service to the queen on November 8, 1584 (Rowse, p. 104). Her stepfather died in 1585 and left her hangings and a bedstead from the Duchess's chamber. Her mother's death two years later removed one potential source of support during the disaster of her pregnancy, her secret marriage to Sir Walter in 1591, and the queen's subsequent anger. During the decade of her banishment from Elizabeth's court, Elizabeth Raleigh never gave up her attempts to be readmitted. It is intriguing that, in this earlier trouble, she turned to another woman for help. In an unsympathetic letter, Henry Howard describes her efforts to use the medium of a female ally, Lady Shrewsbury: "The league is very strong between Sir Walter Raleigh and my Lady Shrewsbury and Sir Walter Raleigh's wife. Much hath been offered on all sides to bring her into the Privy Chamber to her old place, because she is a most dangerous woman, and full of her father's inventions" (Rowse, p. 231). In a letter to Cecil, Howard describes her as an angry Proserpina: "His wife, as furious as Proserpina with failinge of that restitution in Court which flatterie had moved her to expecte, bendes her whole wits and industrie to the disturbance of all motions, by counsell and encouragement, that may disturbe the possibillite of others' hopes, since her owne cannot be securid" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 439). A more sympathetic view of her bantering vivacity appears in Raleigh's postscript to a letter to Lord Cobham in 1602: "Bess remembers herself to your Lordship, with a challengd [sic] that shee never hard from you" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 255).

The disaster of Raleigh's treason conviction did not deter her energy, despite the economic catastrophe, a chaos Raleigh described to Cecil: "My tenants refuse to pay my wife her rent. . . . Alas! all goes to ruin of that littell which remaineth. My woods ar cutt down; my grounds wast; my stock which made up my rent—sold. And except some end be had, by your good favor to the Kinge, I perishe every way" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 293). Yet poverty did not diminish his wife's state. Her visits to her husband in the Tower caused comment about the presence of her coach (Edwards, vol. 1, p. 490). She finally moved into the Tower with her husband, and a second son, Carew, was born and baptized in the Chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul on February 15, 1605.<sup>19</sup>

Elizabeth Raleigh concentrated her efforts on the protection of the estate of Sherborne, leased to Raleigh by Elizabeth I in 1592 and granted in perpetuity in 1599. The estate, like all property of a convicted traitor, was forfeit to the king, and it attracted suitors at the time of Raleigh's conviction. Robert Cecil, at the intersection of a series of letters seeking the estate at Sherborne, writes to one suitor, "There hath not been so few as a dozen suitors for it" in October 1603 (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 467). Lady Raleigh, too, wrote to Cecil a series of petitioning letters seeking to stay confiscation of the estate, in the common currency of submission and plea. Raleigh wrote to Cecil in 1605, "My wife tolde mee that your Lordship had pleased to move his Majestie for Sherburne, and that his Majestie was graciously disposed toward the reliefe of her and her poore children" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 319). She not only spoke and wrote directly to Cecil himself, but she also sought assistance from powerful court figures. Cecil, declining a petition from one suitor for Raleigh's property, blames Elizabeth Throckmorton for his inability to satisfy the seeker. "[B]ut without the wife of Sir Walter hath made such means by some of his goods, besides that all his chattels will hardly pay the debts."<sup>20</sup> The comment uses the very agency of Lady Raleigh to deflect any anger at disappointment from himself to a more vulnerable target, a woman acting effectively in disaster. Some of her temperament comes clear in this description by Sir Walter himself who, despite imprisonment, did not find himself immune from blame by his wife. He complained to Cecil in 1605, "Shee hath already brought her eldest sonne in one hand and her sucking child in another, crying out of her and their destruction; charging mee with unnaturall negligence, and that having provided for myne own life I am without sense and compassion of theirs" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 318).<sup>21</sup>

In her 1604 letter to Robert Cecil, already quoted here, her appeals to compassion, justice, pity, and charity enclose an account of economic debt and unjust profit. The list of nineteen women's names on the back of the letter<sup>22</sup> is an endorsement that presents a series of small puzzles. When Robert Cecil received letters addressed to him in either his public

or private capacity, he or his secretary annotated the letter by noting sender, subject matter, and from time to time other pertinent details. When a letter was signed by several people, their names appear in the endorsement; for example, one sent to the Privy Council by three Vice Admirals was endorsed: "Vice-Admiralls Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Mountjoye, Sir Walter Raleigh, to the lords" (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 190). The holograph in Elizabeth Raleigh's hand is without a date, although the document has been dated and annotated with Lady Raleigh's name in a hand that has not been securely identified.<sup>23</sup> The date of 1604 is complicated by Lady Raleigh's reference in the letter to her "children," since she did not give birth to her second son, Carew, until February of the following year. It is unclear whether the date is inaccurate, or whether she wrote during her pregnancy in 1604 and used the plural "children" in anticipation of the birth to bolster her plea. The list of women's names was added in the hand of Captain Thomas Brett, who later worked for Cecil's heir as Receiver-General in 1612.<sup>24</sup> The women listed in the endorsement to Lady Raleigh's letter have not signed it, but are aligned in some way with her. The date and circumstances of Brett's annotation of the letter remain uncertain. It may be that he was filing past papers for the Second Earl of Salisbury and added the endorsements at the time of his employment in 1612. Or he himself might have been the bearer of the letter in 1604, presenting it to Robert Cecil with the list of those supporting Lady Raleigh. Another Brett was involved with the property transactions of 1604: in July of that year, Sir Alexander Brett became trustee of Sherborne for Lady Raleigh and her son (Edwards, vol. 1, p. 468). These mysteries have received no attention from the editor of the letters, nor has the puzzle of the names received comment. A cursory inspection of the names from the perspective of Sir Walter Raleigh reveals only a group of women connected to Raleigh through his military and familial networks. Lady St. Leger was the daughter-in-law of Raleigh's old friend Warham St. Leger; her husband accompanied Raleigh on his last disastrous trip to Guiana in 1617. Lady Herbert could refer to the Countess of Pembroke, a kinswoman of Raleigh, who persistently supported him and urged her son to do so as well.<sup>25</sup> Lady Pawlett probably refers to the widow of Sir Antony Paulett who preceded Raleigh as Governor of Jersey. Lady Bronker's husband, Sir Henry Brouncker, not only was President of Munster but had custody of Arabella Stuart in 1603.

While such identifications are quite simple to make from the perspective of a notable male figure, when the connecting thread in this list is traced from Elizabeth Throckmorton, the claim that this list records a set of Lady Raleigh's kin links is much more difficult to establish. Even though the bilateral kinship system of England privileges both maternal and paternal kin, recognition of the kin links of women is difficult because their marks on the record are not only less frequent but are often ambiguous. A central difficulty of tracing women's kinship ties is the

disappearance of the names of female relatives because of name changes at marriage. Amy Louise Erickson reiterates Mary Prior's observation that the process of "tracing women [cuts] across the grain of the historical record. Mothers' names are not always recorded in parish baptismal registers; the most common social phenomena, such as women exchanging their family name upon marriage—every marriage—create enormous obstacles for the historian. Even for historians not specifically tracing women, kin by marriage are difficult to identify" (Erickson, p. 18).<sup>26</sup> Further, even when women's natal family connections are recognized and the siblings are identified, contemporary Northern European notions of kinship involve too restricted a field. Joel T. Rosenthal urges that attention be paid along "a horizontal plane, towards the more flexible bonds and relationships between siblings, cousins, and the other cognatic and agnatic kin who often lived, worked, schemed, and fought together" (1990, p. 103), yet the task of uncovering cognates, particularly female cousins, is extremely difficult because of the transmutation of women's names at marriage. Family records and genealogies of the peerage trace the male line and pay little attention to the sisters who disappear into other families. It is easy to confuse women because female cousins often share the same Christian name, names drawn from a limited store with repetitions of Anne, Catherine, Mary, and Elizabeth. Using *Burke's Peerage*, the *Dictionary of National Biography* (DNB), the *Calendar of State Papers*, Kathy Lynn Emerson's useful volume *Wives and Daughters: The Women of Sixteenth Century England*, as well as collections of letters particularly those recorded by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, I have identified one-half of the women who appear on the list.<sup>27</sup> Despite their rank and connection to major figures at court, the women's names remain at the very verge of historical recoverability.

When analyzed from the perspective of Lady Raleigh, a network of female allies of Elizabeth Throckmorton herself appears. From the perspective of cousinage traced through the families of Elizabeth Throckmorton's parents, nine of the eighteen names on this list can be identified as her cousins, several through her mother's family. "Cousin" is the term used for those affines linked through shared grandparents, though the more distant reaches of the family tree could be acknowledged or not.<sup>28</sup> The claim of kinship was a more flexible category than simply consanguinity. Cousinage was determined not only by direct blood ties but also by linkages through second marriages and step-families.<sup>29</sup> The crucial significance of second marriages can be illustrated by the Throckmorton connection to the Tudors. Nicholas Throckmorton's mother was Katherine, "daughter of Sir Nicholas, lord Vaux of Harrowden . . . and widow of Sir William Parr, K. G. She was thus aunt by marriage to Queen Catherine Parr, and Sir Nicholas claimed the queen as his first cousin" (DNB, vol. 19, p. 810). Queen Catherine acknowledged the link, and her cousin joined her household soon after her marriage to Henry VIII. Elizabeth Throckmorton's royal connection established her as far superior in

standing to Sir Walter, who came from a family of minor West Country gentry. A less exalted example is Richard Carew's dedication of his *Survey of Cornwall* to his "kinsman" Ralegh.<sup>30</sup>

While the reasons for the women's endorsement of the letter must remain speculative, the clusters of women from four family groupings—Carew, Neville, Hastings, and Norris—are kin of Elizabeth Throckmorton who had themselves recently been involved in contentions over inheritance. Elizabeth Ralegh seems to have summoned support in her time of need from groups of women who recognized in her dilemma difficulties that they themselves had suffered.

The first group of connections are those most closely linked to her by blood and affection—her brother's wife, Lady Throckmorton, and her mother's kin—and thus those most closely affected economically by her sudden poverty. Her brother, Sir Arthur Throckmorton, had been knighted in 1603, although the couple lived retired from court, according to her brother's diary.<sup>31</sup> Through her mother, Anne Carew, Elizabeth Throckmorton was connected to the Killigrews,<sup>32</sup> who in turn were cousins of the Cornwallis family (*Cornwallis Correspondence*, p. 29). Mrs. Killigrew and Lady Cornwallis then can be seen as family connections of Elizabeth Ralegh's mother.

Primary evidence of Lady Ralegh's turning toward her mother's family is the decision to name her second son Carew. He was christened at St. Peter ad Vincula in the Tower on February 15, 1605.<sup>33</sup> While parish records do not indicate the name of the godparents selected for the christening, the name Carew is also the name of her uncle, Sir Francis Carew, and is the name taken by her younger brother Nicholas when he was adopted as his uncle's heir. The adoption is one signal of her uncle's continuing connection and bond with the young orphans of his sister's family.<sup>34</sup> Early evidence of the connection is Elizabeth Throckmorton's baptism at Beddington, her uncle's property, in 1585, as well as the frequent mentions of the estate in her brother's diary. Elizabeth Ralegh actually intended to bury her husband in the family vault in Beddington after his execution in 1618 (Edwards, vol. 2, p. 413). The name Carew might also signal a turning toward Ralegh's connections since it was the name of Ralegh's older brother, and it may also refer to Sir George Carew, a friend of Ralegh who remained loyal throughout the long years of Ralegh's imprisonment and pleaded with James I for Ralegh's life in 1618.<sup>35</sup>

The second group of women were members of the Neville family who had recently been engaged in a long and contentious inheritance suit over the Barony of Bergavenny. When the direct male line of the baronetage ended with the death of Henry Neville, 4th Baron of Bergavenny, in 1586, the title was claimed by his male cousin Edward, who died before he was summoned to Parliament in 1589. Mary Neville, Lady Fane, daughter of the 6th Lord of Bergavenny, disputed the sys-

tem of male primogeniture and tried to prevent the inheritance of Edward's son; the case was not settled until 1604 when the title was granted to the male heir.<sup>36</sup> Mary's stepmother, Lady Sydley, was the second wife of Edward Neville, 6th Lord Bergavenny.<sup>37</sup> The Bergavenny case was intimately familiar to the Throckmorton family because Mary Neville Fane's cousin, Catherine, had married Clement Throckmorton. Catherine Neville, Elizabeth Ralegh's aunt on her father's side, is the linch pin connecting the Throckmortons and the Nevilles and linking four of the women on the list. Mrs. Goring, also named Mary Neville, is her sister.<sup>38</sup> Lady Oxenbridge is Catherine Neville's granddaughter.<sup>39</sup> Lady Fane's cousin, Ursula,<sup>40</sup> had married into the St. Leger family and was mother-in-law to the Lady St. Leger whose name appears on the list. Mary Neville Fane's first cousin once removed,<sup>41</sup> Sir Henry Neville, had married Anne Killigrew, thus forming a link with the Mrs. Killigrew named on the list.<sup>42</sup> Although the name of Catherine Neville, the closest Neville kin to Elizabeth Throckmorton, does not appear on the list (unless she had been granted an honorific title<sup>43</sup>), three of her cousins do appear.

The final cluster of three names forms a web connecting the Norris and Hastings families, a set of women made significantly aware of a widow's economic difficulties after the death of Bridget Kingsmill's husband, Thomas Norris, in Ireland. Bridget Kingsmill had sought Lady Ralegh's assistance in the economic troubles following her husband's death. She wrote to Lady Ralegh in 1600, enclosing a draft of a letter to Cecil and hoped: "I trust if Sir Walter Ralegh will take the pains to polish them, he shall also prevail in the subscribing" (*CSP Domestic Elizabeth 1588-1601*, p. 447). She wrote to the couple, detailing the circumstances of her property:

Nevertheless I had had no consideration, not so much as to enjoy the little remnant left me, which is my house and land, the building whereof cost my husband five thousand pounds, besides the "Ordinance" and other defensible furniture, to the value of a thousand pounds: all which the garrisons there placed make use of, as also of the wood, hay, cattle and pastures, not sparing to spoil, as is incident to such people. . . . (HMC Cecil, vol. 10, p. 447)

Bridget Kingsmill's stepmother was Elizabeth Hastings. Lady Hastings had been prevented from becoming a countess by the death of her husband, the heir of the 4th earl of Huntingdon, and she then wed Justice Kingsmill.<sup>44</sup> Bridget Kingsmill Norris's sister-in-law was Catherine Norris, sister of Thomas Norris and the widow of Sir Antony Paulet. Lady Pawlett's name thus appears in the endorsement, not simply a representative of her husband, but as a "sister" to another woman on the list. The Huntingdon family was a Throckmorton connection; this is perhaps why Anne Carew had loaned her daughter's portion of £500 to the Earl of Hunting-

don. The Hastings family may have felt some obligation to Elizabeth Raleigh, since the portion was never repaid, despite Elizabeth Raleigh's pressing for repayment throughout her life.

The cluster of women's names, not immediately identifiable as connected, mark a network of family ties formed through women's connections. Marriage alliances at the royal level have begun to be recognized as the material of diplomacy in the sixteenth century.<sup>45</sup> The list of women's names on the back of Lady Raleigh's letter gives access to a web of connection that today would barely be perceptible without the letter. It suggests that women were aware of and could turn to kinship alliances constructed through the female line.

Women's function as linkage or connection is acknowledged overtly by male writers, although the connections so formed did not necessarily guarantee that affines would demonstrate loyalty to their new kin. The transformative failure of one such connection surfaces in the Raleigh treason trial. George Brooke, one of the conspirators tried at the same time as Raleigh, had been closely linked to Robert Cecil through Cecil's marriage to Brooke's sister, Elizabeth (who had, however, died some years earlier). Brooke, in writing to Cecil after his conviction, calls on that connection in terms that attempt to mobilize a line of love from husband to wife to brother. He invokes the memory of his sister as an agent who forms a connection between the two men, "by the memory of her whom Cecil yet loves" (November 18, 1603. *CSP Domestic James I* 1603-1610, p. 54). The transformation of Cecil and Brooke into brothers is a potential connection that failed to transform an affine into an agnate. In George Brooke's case, female agency beyond the grave did not save the "brother" of the female line from execution.

If this list records women who supported Elizabeth Raleigh in her quest to save some property from the wreckage, it raises the question of how and why such links operate. The dense intermarriages of the prominent families of Tudor England mean that many such connections could be traced, and the names on the letter certainly do not record all of Elizabeth Raleigh's kin. Half of the names on the list are of women who had recent experience with problems of inheritance and the vulnerability of women before the law. As the wives or widows of soldiers, a number of these women might have recognized parallels with or vulnerability similar to Elizabeth Raleigh. Certainly women did offer other women support in property struggles.<sup>46</sup> Finally, the issue of affective ties arises. Friendship is a term under profound scrutiny at the moment, particularly with the development of queer theory and the reevaluation of homosocial and homoerotic bonds in the period.<sup>47</sup> If these women did try to support Elizabeth Throckmorton as she protested the distribution of her husband's property, kin linkage through cousinage overlaps with the category of friend.<sup>48</sup> They stand by their kinswoman, who finds herself friendless, unlike her friendless husband.

## NOTES

I would like to acknowledge the help of my research assistant, Damien Keane, whose thorough work uncovered the Kingsmill-Norris connection. I would also like to thank James Brain, Miriam Cohen, Susan Frye, Elizabeth Robertson, and Paul Russell for their invaluable assistance on this essay.

1. See Mary Wack's essay in this volume on the exclusion of Chester women from guilds.

2. In this paper I call her Elizabeth Raleigh because that was the signature she used immediately after her secret marriage to Raleigh; A. L. Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons* (London: Macmillan, 1962), p. 164.

3. Submission was an important aspect of such letters. For example, in 1562 when Lady Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, and her husband were imprisoned in the Tower for their part in the marriage of their son to Mary Queen of Scots, the countess was instructed by William Cecil that the queen "desire[d] that her husband's submission should come from himself, and not by her teaching." The queen found his subsequent letter "a very slight amends" (*CSP Domestic Elizabeth I* 1547-1580, p. 204).

4. He was released from the Tower on January 30, 1616; Edward Edwards, *The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1868), p. 563.

5. He was granted a lease in 1592 and the property in perpetuity in 1599.

6. The deed was missing a crucial phrase "shall and will from henceforth stand and be there seised," which meant that the deed had never been properly activated, the son had not been put in possession, and thus the estate was forfeit to the king; Robert Lacey, *Sir Walter Raleigh* (New York: Atheneum, 1974), p. 317.

7. Lady Raleigh requested an audience with the king, when that was refused, she went to Hampton Court and fell on her knees before him. The story of her petition in 1608 was well known, although the king's reply, "He mun have it for Car" may be apocryphal; William Oldys, *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh* (London, 1740), p. 360.

8. Elizabeth Throckmorton's resistance continued after Raleigh's execution in 1618. Lady Raleigh had to petition to protect his books from seizure by Sir Thomas Wilson. See her letter to Lady Carew asking for assistance in November (?) 1618 (Edwards, *Life*, vol. 2, p. 474). In 1621 a bill of restitution of her son, Carew Raleigh, was passed in the House of Lords, but went no further. Sponsored by the Earl of Pembroke in 1623, Carew Raleigh presented himself to the king, who found him too like the ghost of his father, and the son withdrew to travel on the continent. In 1624, a bill of restitution was presented again and passed by Parliament, but the king refused to sign it, although in 1624 a provisional settlement for Carew's future was arrived at with a pension of £400 per year; his father's goods and chattels were granted in trust for the family. The bill was presented again in 1626, but it did not finally pass with royal assent until 1628.

9. The course of the story of the birth and baptism of their first child, Damerai, can be followed in Rowse's summary of Arthur Throckmorton's journal. Essex was one godfather, Arthur the other. Anna Throckmorton, Arthur's wife, was godmother. Damerai died; a second son, Walter, was born in 1593. A third son, Carew, was born in 1605.

10. See Lynn Magnussen, "The Elizabethan Woman as Suitor: Epistolary Rhetoric and Shakespearean Intertexts," First Plenary Session, Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association Conference, Banff, Alberta, May 15, 1997, for analysis of the exigencies and performances of women's letters.

11. Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 1995), observes that scholarly attention to common law

with its severe limitation of women's rights tends to obscure the importance of equity courts (p. 5).

12. "Almost all its members came from established Tudor Court families, and the web of intermarriage and family connection was extremely tight: they were practically all each others' cousins in the most literal sense"; Simon Adams, "Eliza Enthroned? The Elizabethan Court and Its Politics," in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh (London: Macmillan, 1984), p. 69.

13. See Wendy Wall, "Dancing in a Net: The Problems of Female Authorship," in *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance*, Wendy Wall (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993); on the mother's legacy and women's negotiations of authorship.

14. In that struggle Clifford was supported not only by her mother, but also by Queen Anne; *The Diary of Lady Anne Clifford*, ed. Vita Sackville-West (London: Westminster Press, 1923), p. 48, entry for January 1617.

15. The fall of a prominent man can be traced in the Hatfield papers and the Calendar of State Papers by the letters seeking distribution of his property. Robert Cecil said that he had had at least twelve requests for Raleigh's property (Edwards, *Life*, vol. 1, p. 467).

16. Barbara Harris observes that "marriage and kinship formed the basis of the patron/client relations at the center of early Tudor politics" (p. 266). Adams, "Eliza Enthroned?," p. 70, points out Sir Walter's singularity as dependent solely on Elizabeth's favor and suggests that his lack of a powerful familial base as well as his manner provoked much enmity.

17. She was baptized on April 16, 1565, at Beddington (Rowse, *Raleigh*, p. 57).

18. See her letter to Robert Cecil in 1594-95 (Edwards, *Life*, vol. 2, p. 399).

19. Personal correspondence, Terry Radley, Sexton of the Chapel Royal of St. Peter ad Vincula, October 2, 1994.

20. Letter to Sir James Elphinstone, 16 Oct. 1603, *HMC Cecil*, vol. 15, p. 259.

21. Sir Walter had conveyed the property to his son Walter in 1602. On July 30, 1604, Lady Raleigh received letters patent which seemed to confirm her possession of Sherborne, but the confirmation did not withstand the king's desire to reward Robert Carr. In 1607 the Court of Exchequer requested Sir Walter to show proper title. After judicial deliberation, the transfer of the property was voided because of a clerical error (see note 6), and thus the estate was forfeit to the king, who granted it to Robert Carr (Lacey, *Raleigh*, p. 317).

22. "Lady Rawleigh, Lady Saltingstone, Lady Woodroffe, Lady Bronker, Lady Pawlett, Lady St. Leger, Mrs. Killegrew, Lady Kingsmill, Lady Cornwallis, Lady Oxenbridge, Lady Throgmorton, Lady Walssh, Lady Sydley, Lady Herbert, Mrs. Blanch, Lady Martin (?), Lady Cheek, Lady Trafford, Mrs. Goring" (Edwards, *Life*, vol. 2, p. 409).

23. The hand is identified by Edwards as that of Robert Cecil, though Robin Harcourt Williams, Librarian at Hatfield House, is not certain that the identification is correct (personal communication, June 5, 1997).

24. I am grateful to Robin Harcourt Williams for his assistance in the identification of Brett's hand. This may be the Mr. Brett introduced to Cecil by Elizabeth Raleigh in 1595 when she sought his support for a suit by Brett against Sir Ralph Horsey (Edwards, *Life*, vol. 2, p. 400).

25. The Herbert family's support of Raleigh was loyal, and Philip Herbert sponsored Carew Raleigh at court in 1623.

26. Feminist epistemology has developed arguments about situated knowledge. See Gunew's introduction to *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 13-35.

27. I would like to thank Carole Levin and Donald Foster for their generous suggestions at the outset of this project.

28. David Cressy, "Kinship in Early Modern England," *Past and Present* 113 (1986): 38-69, explains the operations of the system as one "of interdependence and mutual obligation which, however dormant or latent for much of the time, could be activated by relatives when needed. Participants understood the system in terms of possibilities, resources, and obligations" (p. 47).

29. "Cognate" describes all kin related by blood. "Agnates" are blood relations through the father's line, a category significant in patrilineal societies. "Affines" are relations formed through marriage. The system of cousinage in Tudor England draws on all these possibilities. I am grateful to Bonnie Urciuoli and James Brain for their assistance with these categories. The terms "cognate" and "agnate" are terms from Roman law.

30. He signs himself, "Your Lordship's poor kinsman, Richard Carew of Antonie." The kinship was through Anne Carew, Elizabeth Raleigh's mother. Both Richard Carew and Anne were descended from Sir Nicholas Carew of Hacombe; F. E. Halliday, ed. *The Survey of Cornwall* (London: Andrew Melrose, 1953) p. 77.

31. Throckmorton's diary has an unfortunate gap between 1596 and 1609. The volumes are extant between 1578 and 1595 and then between 1609 and 1613 (Rowse, *Raleigh*).

32. William Killigrew, groom of the chamber to Elizabeth I, received a bequest in Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's will, "my best coat and cloak that he will choose" (Rowse, *Raleigh*, p. 56).

33. "Carew Rawley was Baptized ye 15th February the sonne of Sir Walter Rawley kt." Private correspondence from Terry Radley, Sexton of the Chapel Royal of St. Peter ad Vincula, October 2, 1994.

34. Family loyalties have long roots. Following Wyatt's rebellion in 1554, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton was imprisoned in the Tower along with his wife's cousin, Sir Gawen Carew, while Sir Peter Carew managed to escape on a ship provided by Walter Raleigh, Sir Walter's father (Rowse, *Raleigh*, p. 21).

35. George Carew, Baron Carew of Clifton and Earl of Totnes. "In 1618 he pleaded with James I on behalf of Sir Walter Raleigh with whom he had lived for more than thirty years on terms of great intimacy, and Lady Carew, his wife, proved a kind friend to Raleigh's family after the execution" (*DNB*, vol. 3, p. 961). Sir George was knighted in 1585. In 1599-1600 he became President of Munster, succeeded by Lord Brounker. F. E. Halliday, *Survey*, points out that "collateral branches of the families of Raleigh, Edgcombe, and Carew (both of Devon and Cornwall) intermarried, which probably accounts for Sir Walter's elder brother being called Carew Raleigh" (p. 77).

36. Cecil's investigation of the pedigree, during the winter of 1588, after the Armada, engages with the question of female inheritance. The material includes "lists of noblemen now living that had their baronies by inheritance from women; also of noblemen, being barons, that have their baronies and their titles by their ancestresses." *CSP Domestic Elizabeth 1588-1601*, February 1589, p. 581. Her petition in 1598 claims the title through her mother, Elizabeth Beauchamp (*CSP Domestic Elizabeth 1598-1601*, p. 122). The title passed to Edward Neville, grandson of George the 4th baron, although Mary Neville, Lady Fane, was granted a consolation, the barony of Le Despencer (*Burke's Peerage*, p. 13).

37. Mary Nevill's stepmother Elizabeth, the second wife of her father, married Sir William Sedley after the death of her first husband. Though the spelling is different, I suspect that this is the Lady Sydley whose name appears on the list. John Chamberlain *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman Egbert McClure (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), comments on "Sir William Sidley of Kent that married the Lady Abergavenny" (vol. 1, p. 415). Elizabeth, Lady Sedley, born Darrell, then Darrell, then Sedley (index)

38. Mary Neville, George Goring's wife, remained a simple Mrs. Goring until her husband's knighthood in 1608. Sir Henry Goring married into the Kingsmill family.

39. She married Daniel Oxenbridge.

40. Ursula St. Leger and Sir Richard Grenville's wife were heroines of a siege at Carrigaline, Cork, in Ireland in 1569.

41. Cousinage is determined through descent from a shared grandparent, or a more remote ancestor. First cousins are descended by an equal number of steps from shared grandparents. Children of first cousins are second cousins to one another.

42. In 1561, CSP *Domestic* records "A remembrance for Mr. Henry Killigrew to move secretary on behalf of his cousin . . . Killigrew" (p. 513).

43. Clement Throckmorton was not knighted. Catherine was "daughter of Sir Edward Neville, second son of George Neville, third baron Bergavenny" *DNB*, vol. 19, p. 809.

44. Sir George Kingsmill, Judge of Common Pleas, died in 1606. Chamberlain, *Letters*, reports that Kingsmill treated his widow well: "And hath dealt kindly with his Lady Hastings leaving her all his moveables [some few legacies reserved] and all his lands and leases during her life" (vol. 1, p. 226). McClure traces her marriages: Sarah Harington, to Francis Lord Hastings, heir of the 4th Earl of Huntingdon, to Kingsmill, to LaZouche (Chamberlain, *Letters*, index).

45. Benjamin G. Kohl, "Diplomatic Dreams: Carrara Marriage Alliances in the Trecento," presented at the Annual Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, Vancouver, B.C., 6 April 1997.

46. Anne Clifford's mobilization of support through the maternal line for inheritance of her father's property and her advice from Queen Anne is well known. Amelia Lanyer's dedicatory poems to *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* construct a female alliance. Martha Howell, "Fixing Moveables: Gifts by Testament in Late Medieval Douai," *Past and Present* 43 (1996): 3, analyzes the way in which women's wills document female alliance.

47. Indeed, at times Renaissance queer theory seems to institute male homosexual bonds as the central axis of connection in the period.

48. For contemporary anthropological analysis of the way that kinship is used to double friendship, see Sarah Uhl, "Forbidden Friends: Cultural Veils of Female Friendship in Andalusia," *American Ethnologist*, 18, no. 1 (1991): 90-105.