Ralph Thoresby the Diarist: The Late Seventeenth-Century Pious Diary and its Demise

In the 1690s there lived in Hull a clergyman called Abraham de la Pryme. De la Pryme was a learned and inquiring man. He was a model virtuoso, author of Hull's first history and a regular contributor to the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society. In addition, he kept a diary. As a diarist, his main interest was in public affairs. This is a typical entry, from 10 October 1696:

> OCTOB. 10 Things are very quiet yet, but the Jacobites are of undaunted spirits, and continue their high, impudent, treasonable talkings and discourses, almost as much as ever.
> New money beginns to grow plentyfull, there is no one almost but has some little quantity. All the mints are now in motion, and they give satisfaction to the country. (de la Pryme, ed. Jackson, 1870, p. 111)

On the same day, an acquaintance of de la Pryme in Leeds was writing in his own diary. His name was Ralph Thoresby. At first glance Mr Thoresby seems an unlikely companion for a clergyman or a virtuoso. Thoresby at that time was a leader of Leeds's Presbyterian community. This meant that he was barred from civic posts and university education (although not long after this date he conformed to the Church of England). De la Pryme was a servant of the national church; Thoresby defied it. De la Pryme was a professional man; Thoresby came from a family of merchants. Nonetheless Thoresby and de la Pryme moved in the same antiquarian and Royal Society circles; and as antiquarians they had much in common. Thoresby, like de la Pryme, wrote the first history of his town, and he also made a number of contributions to the *Philosophical Transactions*.

This is Thoresby's diary entry for that October day in 1696:

> 10 morn read Annot^{s}. y^{n} at both mills, aft^{e} within writing, but spent y^{e} lat^{e} part of day abroad wth. y^{e} D^{r}. & Salters about business, so part of Even, rest wth dear M^{r}. Ib. read Ann^{s}. (RLC MS NKS 2935, p. 176)

The two men clearly had different ideas about what to put in a diary, and how to put it. De la Pryme records confident opinions on matters of public

interest and expresses them in bold generalisations. Thoresby on the other hand records details about his own life which have no impact on anyone else, and yet does not venture to express an opinion on them. Of course different people write different diaries; but it is argued in this article that the difference between these diaries goes beyond that. In fact, there are good reasons for saying they are different in kind, that they belong to different genres.

The Pious Diary

It is argued here that Thoresby's diary is different from de la Pryme's because it belongs to a wider genre which can be called the pious diary. The word 'genre' is used advisedly. Diarists were likely to have been influenced in the same way as other writers – by what they read. Tom Webster has presented evidence that earlier in the seventeenth century pious diaries were confidential, and often burned on the diarist's death. Although he observes considerable similarity between diaries, he argues that this cannot be because they were circulated (Webster, 1996, pp. 39, 49). Webster's conclusions on the confidentiality of diaries however, cannot be applied to Thoresby's diary at the end of the century, nor to many of the diaries of his peers and associates.

In Thoresby's circle, many, if not all, diaries were written in the knowledge and expectation that they would be circulated after death, and perhaps before. In this respect, diaries seem in some cases to have been treated rather like the MS collections of poetry and other writings circulated among families and friends, described by Margaret Ezell (Ezell, 1999; Ezell's book includes a section on Thoresby's struggle to have his first book printed). Thoresby knew of and read other people's diaries throughout his life (1658–1725). In the Leeds of his childhood, for example, there was Castilion Morris's diary. Morris was a member of the Leeds Corporation during the Civil War, who kept 'a Journall of Letters & Memorandums of matters of moment, Publick & private begun 14 Dec^{e} 1687' (these are printed in the *Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal*, 10 (1889), 159–64). Thoresby not only knew of this diary, but actually took notes from it in later life (YAS MS 17, section 3, p. 31).

Morris's journal was a form of historical chronicle. But the kind of diary most commonly circulated may have been religious. Towards the end of his life, for example, Thoresby records that he is 'glad to understand that he [one of his tenants] keeps a diary' (13 November 1719; YAS MS 25, p.8). There is some evidence that this attitude was found elsewhere in England. Ralph Josselin, diarist and (reluctantly conformist) clergyman of Essex, describes reading and commenting on the diary of a (female) parishioner (Josselin, ed. Macfarlane, 1976, p. 396). Lady Margaret Hoby began her diary on the instruction of her spiritual adviser, and showed it to him regularly (Bourcier, 1976, p. 360).

Even diarists who were not supervised in this way may have known that their diaries would be read after their death – by children, by parishioners, and often by an even wider public. Thoresby seems to have valued diaries as patterns of exemplary life. He looked for evidence of piety, seeking help for his own spiritual troubles. He felt honoured when John Sharp, Archbishop of York, lent him the diary of Archbishop Toby Matthews, a Puritan of celebrated piety. Thoresby valued this diary so highly that he transcribed it (17 August 1695; YAS MS 22, p. 254). Moreover, Thoresby assumed that his own diary would be read after his death. He prefaced one volume of his diary (1683) with 'This is the diary of a sinfull worm' (RLC MS NKS 2935), a preface which could only have been written for the benefit of future readers. His autobiography, much of it taken from his diaries, is written explicitly for his sons' benefit. Hence the conclusion to an anecdote about a coincidence:

> […] a pretty odd accident tho it might perhaps be lookd upon as trifling if comunicated to any others than my own children. (YAS MS26, p. 81)

He expected his diary to be cherished by his children, for he refers them to it in his autobiography, as in this summary of the events of 1685: 'See my Diary, Nov^{em}' (YAS MS 26, p. 39). And despite his modest claim that what he says will be 'trifling' to outsiders, there is at least a hint that he conceived of an audience beyond his own family. This hint comes in a description of spiritual ecstasy in his autobiography. The passage includes a gloss on a Yorkshire word, suggesting, at the very least, self-consciousness: 'my heart … begun to tremble & flacker (as we cal it) within my breast' (YAS MS 26, p. 92). The parenthetical 'as we cal it' suggests that Thoresby imagined readers from outside Yorkshire.

Thoresby was keen to read any diaries which came his way both for pious and scholarly reasons. His collection of diaries, whether original or transcribed, is described in his library and museum catalogue, and printed in the *Ducatus Leodensis*, Thoresby's history of Leeds:

> Extracts from the *Day-Book*, a curious M.S. of my honoured Friend Dr. *Hen. Sampson*, and from Mr. *Heywood's* Diaries. Memoirs of Dr. *Sam. Winter*, not in the printed Narrative. The Life of Mr. *John Shaw*, Vicar of *Rotheram*, from the Original, writ by himself. Mr. *Reyner* of *Lincoln*, from his Diary, *&c.* The Life and Death of Archbp. *Tobie Matthews*, by Dr. *Sampson*; and of Mr. *Elk. Wales* of *Pudsey*, near *Leedes*, which I collected from Registers, M.S. and Original Papers in this *Musaeum*…
> The Diary of Mr. *Yardley* Vicar of *Astley, An.* 1668…
> The last Diary of the Pious Mr. *Hen. Stubs*…
> A Diary, giving an Account of the rising and falling of the *Barometer*…
> A Transcript of Archbishop *Toby Matthews's* Diary …
>
> (Thoresby, 1715, pp. 537, 541, 542, 543)

What did Thoresby hope to learn from other people's diaries? Part of the attraction was the display of exemplary lives. Thoresby was well acquainted

with the practice of turning diaries into moralised biographies. In 1714, he records hoping of a pious man 'y^{t} his Memoirs wil be published fr^{o} his Diary' (YML MS 21, p. 390). Indeed, Thoresby himself contributed short biographies of this kind to Edward Calamy's register of ministers ejected in 1660, supplying Calamy with material from the collection of extracts catalogued above (see for example, 25 April 1702, YAS MS 23, p. 82).

It seems then that religious and non-religious diaries were sometimes circulated to readers who were looking for examples. This may explain why few surviving diaries seem to depict lurid vices. Pepys seems to have been the exception rather than the rule in recording material which could potentially damage his family's honour, although, of course, we do not do how many such diaries were destroyed (Bourcier, 1976, p. 83). Certainly, Thoresby himself may use colourful and melodramatic language to describe his spiritual condition (such as his description of himself as a worm), but he never commits anything truly damaging to paper.

The circulation of pious diaries in Thoresby's circle would also explain the close family resemblance between diaries within that circle. Thoresby knew the diaries of the Presbyterian ministers Oliver Heywood and Henry Newcome. Heywood's and Newcome's diaries both bear a strong resemblance to Thoresby's. Interestingly, the diary of the Presbyterian minister James Clegg is also similar to these three, although Clegg does not seem to have been known to Thoresby. This entry from Thoresby's diary is typical:

> 8 Dec: 1701, morn: read Clark before family pray^{e}, writ rest of Sermon in diary in secret, y^{n} at pray^{e}, aft^{e}noon had M^{r}. *Dixon* & M^{r} *Pawsons* kind assistance in accounting with M^{r}. I^{b}. til Even, within writing to y^{e} Dean of *York* & M^{r}. *Hodgston* & … read Antoninus & Clark before pray^{e}. (YAS MS 23, p. 27)

As in all but a handful of entries over thirty-seven years, Thoresby splits the day into three: morning, afternoon and evening. He never writes a continuous narrative of the day. Bible study (reading Clark's annotations on the Bible) and prayer are carefully noted as always. There is little in the way of personal opinion, beyond the description of Mr Pawson's assistance as 'kind'. He notes how he has used his own time, without expanding on anyone else's activities or on public life.

Diary Writing as a Spiritual Duty

This resemblance between the diaries of a number of northern Presbyterians can be explained by circulation. But there are other reasons why pious diaries from the period might look alike. Diary-writing was a prescribed spiritual task, with specific aims and requirements (see Webster, 1996, and 1997, p. 125, and McGiffert, 1994, ed., for a psycho-theological account of pious diaries earlier in the seventeenth century). Such tasks were formally described as 'duties', and

diary writing was only one of them. The others included prayer, both in solitude and with the household, and bible study. Duties had to be performed daily, and tied the godly to a rigid and demanding timetable. For example, Jeremy Taylor insists that duties should be the first and last activities of the day:

> Every time that is not seized upon by some other duty is seasonable enough for prayer; but let it be performed as a solemn duty morning and evening. (Taylor, ed. Stanwood, 1989, p. 216)

Thoresby's correspondent and fellow diarist Oliver Heywood, a Presbyterian minister working in Manchester, and a prolific author, expected his readers' day to be punctuated by duties, and offered advice for those who sin in between times (they should 'Retire into a corner' and 'bewail it'; Heywood, 1693b, p. 122). Skipping duties was a sign of a hard (or 'adamantine') heart, one which denied God's grace. Thoresby is worried that business or pleasure 'should entrench upon the more practical dutys of Religion' (YAS MS 26, p. 40). He sees his diary not as a recreation or a relief but as an 'irksome task':

> Here I begun, what I had childishly dreaded as too great a restraint, viss a *Diary* by my dear fathers express order … This I knew had been his own constant practise, but was under a great temptation not to head in his steps in this particular, looking upon it as a very irksome task. (YAS MS 26, p. 8)

He felt obliged to take on this onerous obligation because it was necessary for his spiritual health.

The timetable for duties seems to have required rigorous observation. A few days of neglect could reduce the devotee's zeal and he or she would have to strive harder to compensate. When the Scottish diarist, Sir George Maxwell of Pollock, missed a few days of diary-writing in 1656, he reported that setting aside 'the work of self examination' had interfered with his Bible study, inhibiting his response to 'the Word' (20 April 1656; NLS MS 3150, fol. 125). Thoresby also used the duty of diary-writing as an aid to his other duties. Like his father, for example, he used his diary to observe 'the frame of my Soul in duty', watching out for:

> the wandrings of my heart in pray^{e} & interruptions by vain tho'ts, w^{ch}. alas are innumerable in all religious performances. (YAS MS 26, p. 8)

(Such prayers are 'cast back as dung in his face' by a righteous God; 23 June 1683; RLC MS NKS 2935, p. 6).

Duties for Thoresby and for some others of the godly were both a source of and a solace for worry. Those devotees who were anxious about their performance of duties, including Thoresby, could turn to instruction manuals. These books gave advice about form, frequency of performance, the relative importance of different duties, and so on. From some of these texts it appears that two new duties emerged in the seventeenth century: writing diaries and praying in solitude (as opposed to family prayer, or prayer in church).

Books about Duties

Both of these were considered sufficiently novel to require advocacy. At least two books argued that diary-writing was a religious duty. One was Isaac Ambrose's *Media, or the middle things* (1657). This was the second of three books offering instruction in the first, middle, and last things in a Christian's life, where 'first things' means things of the first importance. *Media* is concerned with 'The Means, Duties, ordinances, both Secret, Private and Publicke, for continuance and increase of a Godly life' (Ambrose, 1657, sig. A1r).

Ambrose was a Lancashire minister, whose books sold particularly well among northern Presbyterians (Macfarlane, 1970, p. 7), so it is possible but not certain that Thoresby knew his work. However another book on diaries was well known to Thoresby, and he included quotations from it in the cover of his diary for 1701–1704 (YAS MS 23, inside cover).

This was John Beadle's *The Journal or Diary of a Thankful Christian* (1656). Beadle was sufficiently anxious about the novelty of diary writing to appeal to tradition and precedent. He cites merchants' accounts, physicians' records of experiments, lawyers' journals of cases, and Biblical chronicles:

> as [Moses and the Israelites] had a Journall of all Gods mercies, and why not we a Diary of all God's gracious dealings with us. (Beadle, 1656, p. 13)

Ambrose is equally anxious to establish a tradition for diary-writing:

> To this purpose we read of many Ancients that were accustomed to keep Diaries or Day-books of their actions, and out of them to take an account of their lives. (Ambrose, 1657, p. 87)

Experiences

Neither writer gives instruction about the style or format of diaries; but they do make some suggestions about content. They both think that diarists should record 'experiences' (Beadle, 1656, p. 55, and Ambrose, 1657, p. 164). Experiences were physical manifestations to individuals of God's grace. They usually took the form of brushes with death or injury, from which the writer only just escaped. These experiences of God's grace differed from an intellectual or rapturous awareness that God was gracious, because their impact was on the senses, rather than the spirit or the intellect. Hence their other name: 'experiments'. They were also known as 'evidences' of God's grace. Ambrose's definitions of experience in *Media* are typical:

> Of the Nature of Experiences. *Experience* (say some) *is a knowledge and discovery by sense not evident in it self, but manifested by some event or effect*. This description contains both natural and spiritual experience. (Ambrose, 1657, p. 164)

Some experiences of grace were unmistakable. John Thoresby's fragment of autobiography describes falling into freezing water while skating as a young boy, and escaping unharmed (RLC MS NKS 2935, fol. 3). Earlier in the century, the New England diarist Thomas Shepherd included several narrow escapes in his spiritual autobiography (McGiffert, ed., 1994, pp. 5–6). Other experiences are less obvious, at least to a modern reader. Some experiences are of things which did *not* happen. For example, Thoresby's diary regularly records thanks for experience of grace on returning safe from a journey, suggesting that God's hand has been active in holding back numberless calamities:

> 10 I went with Mr. Tho: Dic^{s} to *Mecham* to visit Mrs. Dickonson & coz: Judith, and got very well (tho late) home, thro ye good Providence of a gracious God who is abundant in mercy and compassion. (10 October 1677; YAS MS 21, p. 3)

Beadle and Ambrose were not the first to advocate recording experiences, although they were the most vociferous. Sir Thomas Browne was also keen for his readers to:

> Register not only strange, but merciful occurences. Let Ephemerides not Olympiads give thee account of his mercies. Let thy Diaries stand thick with dutiful Mementos and Asterisks of acknowledgment. (Browne, ed. Keynes, 1928, I, 250)

Many diarists took this advice to heart, including the Scots Presbyterian, Sir George Maxwell, and the Puritan vicar of Colne, Ralph Josselin.

Pious diarists like Thoresby could use these records of experiences for a number of reasons. Some ministers encouraged their parishioners to write down their experiences in order to cheer themselves when despondent or unresponsive in prayer, as well as to confound cynics who thought that nonconformist piety was excessive and self-important. Oliver Heywood, mentioned above as one of Thoresby's correspondents, was a Presbyterian minister in Manchester, whose diary Thoresby knew, and whose books he read. Heywood kept a notebook separate from his diary, dedicated exclusively to recording experiences, with each experience dated. In *A Family Altar*, he also advised the reader that experiences should be 'observed' (Heywood, 1693, p. 125). Some such notebooks were printed (Smith, 1989, p. 34), and Thoresby read at least one of them; in one of his MS assortments of quotations and notes, there are long excerpts copied from 'Turner's His: of Remarkable *Providences* 1697' (YAS MS 17, p. 41).

Experiences could also be relished by the diarist's family after his or her death. John Winthrop's diary was actually given the title *Experiencia* (*Winthrop Papers*, Boston, 1925). When Oliver Heywood published a biography of his father-in-law, he included a separate section for '*Experiences collected out of* Mr Angier's *diary*' (Heywood, ed. Axon, 1937, p. 100).

So Thoresby's diary resembles those of other pious diarists in part because the pious were instructed by Beadle, Ambrose and other authorities to include experiences in their diaries. But in other respects the resemblance

between these diaries must be attributed to private instruction by ministers or to circulation. Nothing in Beadle and Ambrose could tell a diarist to split the day into sections, for example, or to eschew personal comment.

Indeed, both Ambrose and Beadle tend to confound diaries with (auto) biographies. For example, Beadle tells his diarist to include his 'age in Christ' (pp. 48 ff; see Webster, 1996, for a review of discussions of Beadle's book). This was an expression for the date on which a Christian experienced conversion, and became convinced of his salvation. Since this event often occurred in adolescence, Beadle's remarks would be more appropriate to an autobiography than to a day-by-day account, whose elements must necessarily be uncertain (Beadle, 1656, Chapter 3). As an aside, this confusion between diary and biography extended beyond diary-writing circles and included a confusion between auto- and other kinds of biography. This is illustrated by the history of the word 'memoir'. A memoir was simply a dated note, just like the entry in a diary, which could be collected into a book either by the author or by his survivors. Hence the OED's first recorded use of the word in 1673 is Evelyn's description of his diary as 'memoirs'.

Private Prayer

There is little evidence that Ambrose or Beadle had an intimate influence on the language and structure of Thoresby's diary entries. However, there *are* connections between private prayer manuals and the diaries in Thoresby's circle. Private prayer, like diary writing, seems to have emerged as a duty in the seventeenth century. Oliver Heywood, the Manchester minister, wrote one of the manuals advocating it, *Closet Prayer* (1671). Thoresby records reading this book in the 1680s (RLC MS NKS 2935, p. 59). Heywood was zealous in his insistence that private prayer is a long-established practice. Like Ambrose and Beadle, he drew on Biblical characters as ancient precedents, describing Jacob's night in the desert as closet prayer (Heywood, 1671, p. 15). Yet at the same time he feels that the status of solitary prayer is sufficiently new to require defence against accusations of modishness:

> Some have scornfully called private devotions, by the derogating title of Chimney-Prayers, and think to confine all religion to publick places. (Heywood, 1671, p. 42)

Like diaries, private prayer was solitary but not confidential. Heywood does not recommend it as a way to confess to God what is too shameful to confess before man. In part, the devotee needed to be alone because solitude created a suitable emotional state for prayer. It helped to create the right mood. For example, Heywood found that the melancholy which Burton attributes to solitude (Burton, ed. Jackson, 1932, p. 246), was appropriate to mourning one's sins (Heywood, 1693, pp. 2, 140): 'the poor Soul can more freely open his heart to God in a closet' (Heywood, 1671, p. 24).

There is also some evidence that private prayer was considered more suitable than family prayer for specific individual requests. The Scottish Presbyterian Mrs Veitch set aside specific days to pray for specific causes (NLS MS 34.6.22, p. 50). She also kept dated records of successful prayers, in order to refute the atheists who believed that God did not answer prayers (NLS MS 34.6.22, p. 50). Sir George Maxwell devoted a section of his diary to a list of things 'to be prayed for'. These include success in business and remedies for the 'Ignorance of some of the family' (4 July 1655; NLS MS 3150). This topic looks more suitable to private than family prayer.

If private prayer was not more intimate than family prayer, neither does it seem to have been more casual. For example, physical posture was important as God was thought to be 'watching' even in empty rooms. Prayer manuals give careful instructions on how to hold oneself when praying alone. Even early in the century, before the more detailed manuals on solitary prayer, divines give advice on how to perform brief outbursts of prayer. In *Holy Living*, Jeremy Taylor says that a sudden burst of gratitude does not require kneeling, but it should be accompanied by clasped hands and upturned eyes (Taylor, ed. Stanwood, 1989, p. 216). John Angier (Oliver Heywood's father-in-law) recommends 'Kneeling down, or putting the hat and hand before the face to pray' (Angier, ed. Axon, 1937, p. 139). The pre-war historiographer James Howell describes ejaculations as 'occasional' and 'sudden', yet they never catch him entirely unawares:

> … besides prayers at meals, and some other occasional ejaculations, as upon the putting on of a clean shirt, washing my hands, and at lighting of candles; which because they are sudden, I do in the third person. (Howell, ed. Jacob, 1892, I, 333–7)

Just as physical posture was studied even in solitude, so was language. The language of private prayer seems to have been subject to many of the rules of family prayer. Presbyterians thought it was wrong to write prayers in advance, even if you wrote them for yourself, let alone using a prayer book written by some far away cleric. They called such prayers 'set forms'. In Heywood's *A Family Altar*, the ban on set forms is uncompromising:

> By Form is meant a Mask, Vizor or Appearance opposed to Substance and Reality. (Heywood, 1693b, p. 45)

Prescribed words were bad because they masked the devotee's true feelings. Indeed they actually harmed the devotee, by numbing his heart, allowing him to distance himself emotionally from his words. John Angier quotes this letter from a woman whose 'dissatisfaction concerning the Common Prayer' arose from 'the ineffectualness of forms upon my heart', and who wonders if this excuses her from attending church altogether (the 'penalties' referred to were a Laudian measure):

> All this put together, and duly considered, these Queries I make.
> 1. Whether I ought to hear it, as some press, that it is a sin to forbear? or whether it be not sinful in me to hear it? Or whether I may sometimes, as seldom as I can (to avoid the penalties) hear? Or
> 2. Whether upon these accounts of my forbearance, I may comfortably suffer what may be inflicted, and expect support? or
> 3. If you grant the hearing, whether it may be heard as something by the by, without giving much attention, or with imploying my heart with other thoughts and Ejaculations more edifying? (Angier, ed. Axon, 1937, p. 108)

It appears that the woman is not simply worried that the words of a dead heart will not constitute a prayer. She fears that even to try to pray with a dead heart constitutes a sin. After joining the Church of England, Thoresby felt sufficiently touchy about the subject to include a defence of the Prayer Book in his autobiography, saying that he had found 'experimentally' that deadness of heart was not related to forms (YAS MS 26, p. 185).

The head of the household was required to lead the family in prayer every day, at length and without notes. Many men (they usually were men) found that compulsory improvisation was a heavy responsibility, although proficient performers were highly esteemed. Heywood describes how his father-in-law, John Angier, would begin quietly but build up to a climax which was fervent, even tearful, yet without using inapt or 'wasteful' words (Heywood, ed. Axon, 1937, pp. 72–3, 76). Family prayer was considered so much in the light of a performance that Heywood had to warn against vanity as an excuse for avoiding it, because poor performers were afraid that they would be shown up (Heywood, 1693, pp. 53–4). Thoresby shares his worry, though he expresses it a little less harshly:

> A Religious & good man whose constant & indispencible duty it is to pray to God, need not fear, nor be ashamed to perform it before men occasionally. (YAS MS 26, p. 94)

For such reluctant performers, prayer manuals offered some advice on the art of improvisation. It would seem that devotees were offered a technique like that used by oral poets. This involved recalling phrases which had been memorised from the Bible and sermons and stringing them together spontaneously at the moment of prayer. Heywood advises those who 'know not what to say' when praying, to take ideas and phrases from sermons, as well as lifting language from the Bible: 'God loves to be spoken to in his own language' (Heywood, 1693b, pp. 101–2).

The memories of the pious were well stocked with these expressions, making it difficult to draw a line between their own words, and those which they remembered from sermons and books. For example, many spiritual autobiographies have climactic moments in which God communicates with the writer directly by putting an expression from the Bible into the writer's mind:

> But one morning when I was again at prayer and trembling under the fear of this, that no word of God could help me, that piece of a sentence darted in upon me, My grace is sufficient. (Bunyan, ed. Owens, 1987, p. 53)

> and that word came to my mind Job: 13.15 I will trust in him though he should kill me. ('M[r] james ffrasers life writen by himself', NLS MS Wodrow 34.5.19, p. 37)

> [God] answered my objections by his preaching to my Soul that day from that Scripture Isai: 48.17. (the life of Mrs Katherine Ross, p. 112)

> That word in Daniel was brought into my mind. (the life of Mrs Veitch, NLS MS 34.6.22, p. 54)

These writers' minds were so saturated in the Bible, either through quotations in sermons, or through private and family study, that their minds retrieved phrases automatically at times of stress.

Prayer in Diaries

Advice on posture suggests that solitary prayer was not intended to be casual and informal. It is possible therefore, that the same methods of composition were used in solitude as before the family. Certainly, the necessarily solitary prayers composed as diary entries by Thoresby use a formulaic method; and prayer constitutes the most important part of many diaries.

From the noblewoman Anne Clifford to the clergyman Ralph Josselin, prayers are found in almost every entry of some diaries, including Thoresby's (Clifford, ed. Clifford, 1988; Josselin, ed. Macfarlane, 1976). Mary Woodforde finished most of her entries with a prayer, whether the subject of the entry was religious or not (Woodforde, ed. Woodforde, 1932). In *Media*, Isaac Ambrose explains how his own diary, begun in 1641, proved to be an invaluable vehicle for prayer:

> 1. Hereby he [the diarist] observes something of God to his soul, and of his soul to God 2. Upon occasion he pours out his soul to God in prayer accordingly, and either is humbled or thankful. (Ambrose, 1657, p. 87)

The prayers in Ralph Josselin's diary are very similar to those recommended by Jeremy Taylor. The most obvious resemblance between the manual and the diary is in ejaculations, which might have been thought alien to the written word. Some of Taylor's recommended ejaculations do not specify God as the addressee. The implication is that dialogue with God is constant in all activities, so that a brief outburst requires no formal recognition:

> Keep me from sin and death eternal: and from my enemies visible and invisible. (Taylor, ed. Stanwood, 1989, pp. 51–3)

> Keep me, O lord, from the destroying Angel, and from the wrath of God. (p. 126)

The same brevity, and the same syntax of imperatives, are found throughout the diaries of Josselin and Thoresby:

> Lord, heare and bee gracious, god good to mee in the word. the lord watch over me for good. (Josselin, ed. Macfarlane, 1976, p. 526)

Indeed, prayers of this kind were so formulaic, so predictable, in spite of their sometimes passionate content, that a number of diarists reduced them to abbreviations. Thoresby used the same brief prayer whenever he recorded a death in his diary: 'Lord sanctify all mementoes of mortality'. But for the greater part of the diary, this is abbreviated to 'Lord sanctify &c…'. Another common abbreviated tag is 'Lord pity &c', which is short for 'Lord pity and pardon all offences'.

It is important to understand that 'formulaic' here does not mean 'scripted'. Prayers in Thoresby's diary, however fossilised, and however influenced by sermons and the Bible, were fashioned in the first instance by Thoresby himself, even though frequent repetition led to their abbreviation. Prayer manuals, at least those read by Presbyterians and other descendants of Puritanism, gave advice about the method of spontaneous composition only (Henry Hammond's *Private forms of Prayer*, 1660, is less severe, and writes out prayers for the reader's use in full, but then Hammond was stoutly conformist).

In some pious diaries, including Thoresby's, prayer and report are sometimes indistinguishable. It is impossible to tell in many passages whether diarists are writing down facts for a human audience; whether they are merely exclaiming to themselves; or whether they are praying. There is no reason to believe that the diarists always knew themselves. For example, the quotation above from Josselin's diary is highly ambiguous:

> Lord, heare and bee gracious, god good to mee in the word. the lord watch over me for good. (Josselin, ed. Macfarlane, 1976, p. 526)

The expression 'god good to mee in the word' is a formulaic report on the success of Josselin's daily Bible reading, and the omission of 'was' after 'god' is routine. But sandwiched as it is between a direct address *to* God, and an expression *about* God, it takes on the colour of prayer.

Such statements seem even more ambiguous in the light of the prayer manuals. Some of Taylor's model prayers consist merely of strings of statements. Without an initial apostrophe it is impossible to categorise these statements as addresses to God in the second person, or exclamations about God in the third person:

> O Lord God Almighty, thou art our Father, we are thy children, thou art our Redeemer, we thy people purchased with the price of thy most precious blood, be pleased to moderate thy anger towards thy servants, let not thy whole displeasure arise, lest we be consumed and brought to nothing.
>
> (Taylor, ed. Stanwood, 1989, p. 291)

When transferred to a diary, it is impossible for the reader to untangle second from third person in these long strings:

> The lord good to mee in leading mee up unto Christ as my soules releif under the experience of the working of corruption, god good to mee in the word, accept mee in Christ, my heart went along with the notes of faith, as true in my soul blessed bee god. (Josselin, ed. Macfarlane, 1976, p. 527)

Without the initial 'O Lord God Almighty' used by Taylor, it is very hard to tell whether this is a prayer or a record. In the end, it is impossible to maintain a distinction between addressing God directly and recording one's religious observations.

The Inflexibility of Pious Diaries

So Thoresby's diary belonged to a genre of the pious diary, a genre he shared both with acquaintances (such as Heywood) and strangers (such as the northern Presbyterian minister James Clegg). The generic nature of Thoresby's diary is due first of all to the fact that diaries in his circle were circulated and the diarists knew this. Secondly, the contents of his diary were influenced by spiritual manuals and possibly private instruction; for example, Thoresby is one of a number of diarists who regularly record 'experiences' of God's grace. Thirdly, Thoresby's diary was closely related to the duty of private prayer. This meant that it consisted substantially of prayer formulae which were composed using the method recommended for prayer.

The pious diary as used by Thoresby was, moreover, a rigid genre, one which resisted adaptation to other functions. This can be seen by the way he records traumatic or emotional events. He does not deviate from the regular formula to express his emotions. Either he fits his emotions into regular prayer, or else abstains from writing altogether until his emotions are under his control.

Both strategies are evident at the time of his father's death in 1679, when Thoresby was twenty-two. For two days he was too deeply moved to write. Yet when he returned to his diary, he did not record the death at all, but continued his routine of sermon notes and prayer unbroken. Instead of writing an entry about his feelings, he fits expressive language into conventional reports of success or failure in duties:

> 5 novemb^{e} 1679 M^{r}. Sharp from 124 Psalm 6 vers shewd very well y^{t} we have infinite reason to bless God for his wonderfull & miraculous deliverances to this poor sinfull nation … [quotes sermon] … But alas alas these great national mercys for w^{ch}. I desire to bless God, are all imbittered by my personal Affliction, y^{t} amazing stroke, y^{t} heavy dispensation w^{ch}. even presses me down to y^{e} very pitt, I find y^{e} sence of my loss daily greater & greater insomuch y^{t} without y^{e} help of an omnipotent God, it is impossible to be supported und^{e} it, O lord God do thou gratiously

> assist mee, help me to carry my self und^{e} this severe affliction as becomes a Christian, humble mee thorowly for my heinous Provocations y^{t} have procurred such a lamentable affliction y^{t} have laid my greatest superlatively greatest comfort in the dust. O Lord God do thou graciously make up (for thou alone art able, and thou oh Lord art sufficient, thou hast promised + I trust wilt perform) this inexpressible loss in y^{e} happy fruition of the fountain whence all those desireable happinesses did proceed oh Lord God I am in some degree sensible of this amazing stroke (the dread where of overcomes even sorrow itself) but do thou more & more humble mee for those particular sins y^{t} have been so displeasing to thee & enable me to overcome them all, alas Lord I find by miserable experience y^{t} I can do nothing that is good of my self (for only to do evil is present with mee) but thou canst do all things, thou madest my j & thou canst mend it, oh y^{t} thou wouldst do it for thy mercys sake, give mee a more heavenly disposition of soul & wisdome to imitate in some measure y^{e} Graces y^{t} my entirely beloved & now blessed & glorious tryumphing Parents derived from thee. (YAS MS 21, p. 77)

He starts the entry as he always does when he has been to church, naming the preacher, using the formula 'shewed very well…', and giving the text. Often, when he has completed his sermon notes, he adds a prayer that God will help him to benefit from the sermon, or else he laments his inability to do so and his hard heart. Here he uses this practice as a cover for the naked expression of grief which has no other place in the diary. Hence he introduces his feelings with 'I find', as though making a report on his spiritual progress as usual, rather than breaking down (see Webster, 1996, p. 49, for the frequency of expressions like 'I find' in early seventeenth-century diaries). Before long the outburst turns into prayer, another routine component of diary entries. This in turn is slowly transformed, from a prayer asking for help in time of suffering, into a prayer about the greatness of God's grace in comparison with his own weakness. This subject, the diarist's lowliness, was *de rigeur* in pious devotions. So for all the emotion of this entry, the regular format of the diary is not disturbed by the momentous event of bereavement. Even great and unexpected sorrow is contained by sermon notes, conventional prayers, and reports on spiritual progress.

Death of a Genre?

Thoresby's reading and comments on diaries would suggest that pious diaries were relatively common among Presbyterians. Does this suggest that the genre may have died out with Presbyterianism? Presbyterianism was expiring even within Thoresby's lifetime (1658–1725). Thoresby left the Presbyterians and conformed before 1700, and he was not alone:

> In 1660 the English Presbyterians were a formidable body, exceeding all other Nonconformists in learning, numbers, and influence … There was nothing to suggest that within fifty years their discipline would have collapsed, and that the reformed

> tradition in theology, which they had championed would have disintegrated or evolved … into a liberal unorthodoxy, while many of their churches turned to Calvinist congregationalism or embraced Unitarianism. (Rupp, 1986, p. 108)

Northern Presbyterians could not always even pay their ministers properly, and some ministers had to bolster their incomes by other means. James Clegg, for example, was a Presbyterian minister working in Northumberland in 1708. To make up his income he practised medicine (Clegg, ed. Doe, 1978, p. xiii). He was an eloquent witness to the decline of his community, writing that:

> Religion decays and dwindles among the dissenters and wickedness is at a provoking height everywhere. (p. 3)

Since Presbyterianism itself was in decline it would not perhaps be surprising if pious diaries such as Thoresby's also started to die out. But some Presbyterians were neglecting the genre even while they adhered to their community and its theology. One example is the diarist Sir David Hamilton. Hamilton was physician to Queen Anne and a life-long Presbyterian. As well as writing a diary, he published two anonymous spiritual tracts.

These tracts were entirely conformist to Presbyterian thinking. The title of *The Inward Testimony of the Spirit of Christ* (1701) recalls spiritual autobiographies or conversion narratives. Yet Hamilton's diary is quite different from the pious diary as described above, and Hamilton was aware of this. This is an excerpt about his diary from his spiritual autobiography:

> [I was] Trained up with the continued Example of performing all the Duties of Hearing, Reading, and Praying, with that powerful influence, that publick or private Devotion were seldom neglected … my natural disposition inclining me more to Observation, than to much talk in Conversation, led me not only to observe the Discourse and Actions of others, but even to remark the Events attending my Life, with Reflections thereupon, without any regard to it as Duty, or productive of the knowledge of Divine Things, but purely as the effect of natural Curiosity, inducing me both to observe and to record them with great pleasure in reviewing them. (*The Private Christian's Witness*, 1697, pp. 2–3)

He separates his diary entirely from his religious life, opposing 'the effect of natural Curiosity' to 'the knowledge of Divine Things'. Like Thoresby, he sees that a certain kind of diary can be a religious duty ('an irksome task' in Thoresby's words). But unlike Thoresby he does not think that this is the only kind of diary he ought to be engaged in.

Given Hamilton's piety, why did he turn away from the Presbyterian diary? Living as he did in the midst of court life, he may have been more sensitive to general scorn of Nonconformists than Thoresby was. There is certainly a suggestion of ridicule towards pious diaries in a series on diaries run by the *Spectator* in 1712. In the first of these, a man very similar to Thoresby is introduced: 'bred to Trade', but retiring into other pursuits. What is more, a

previous editor's footnote informs the reader that the real life target was probably a Nonconformist:

> This honest man being of greater Consequence in his own Thoughts, than in the Eye of the World, had for some years past kept a Journal of his Life … Since the Occurrences set down in it mark out such a Road of Action, as that I have been speaking of, I shall present my Reader with a faithful Copy of it …
> MONDAY, Eight a Clock. I put on my Cloaths and walked into the Parlour …
> TUESDAY, BEING HOLLIDAY, Eight a Clock. Rose as usual …
> WEDNESDAY, Eight a Clock. Tongue of my Shooe Buckle broke. Hands but not Face …
>
> [1]"It is said that this journal was a banter on a member of a congregation of Independents. A Mr. Nesbit … was the minister of this congregation, and was constantly consulted on every subject by the journalist.' (Nichols)
>
> (*Spectator*, ed. Bond, 1965, III, 153–6)

The satire is tellingly accurate. The entries structured round times of day; the banal repetitive subject matter; the absence of personal opinion – all these are found in Thoresby's diary. If this tone of ridicule were widespread it might go some way to explain Hamilton's neglect of Presbyterian diary-writing in favour of a different kind of diary.

Hamilton is an example of a Presbyterian who knew about Presbyterian diaries and was self-conscious about keeping a different kind of diary. So by the late 1690s the Presbyterian diary was perhaps losing favour even among Presbyterians. By 1715 it would seem that some Presbyterians were unaware of the genre altogether. Dudley Ryder, a Presbyterian law student living in London at that time, kept a very different kind of diary from Thoresby's, and showed none of Hamilton's self-consciousness about doing so. Indeed Ryder's diary is in many ways precisely opposed to a diary like Thoresby's. Thoresby's diary is not confidential. Ryder's diary, on the other hand, abounds with confidential reports about his failures in love (see for example June 12–14, 1716; Ryder, ed. Matthews, 1939, pp. 256–7). Thoresby's diary laments time wasted in mere recreation (he describes evenings of jollity as 'dry drunkeness', YAS MS 26, p. 140) while Ryder records without guilt his secular pleasures. Thoresby's diary limits expressions of feeling and opinion to formulaic lamentations for sin, and to prayer. To Ryder, however, it is entirely natural to confide his feelings in his diary, and his religious failings are expressed easily and colloquially:

> I was very much displeased with myself that I could not be much affected with such a posture of affairs, that the death of a relation made so little impression upon me and I did what I could to raise a little concern in me.
>
> (Ryder, ed. Matthews, 1939, p. 91)

Where the Presbyterian diarist is content with notes and formulae, Ryder makes serious attempts to polish his style:

> I find I am apt to be at a loss for words to express my thoughts and I thought it would be of great help to me in this respect to translate polite authors: it would give me a *copia* of words and make them flow easier from me.
>
> (p. 258; elsewhere he resolves to model his letters on Addison's, p. 2)

Thoresby and his peers began diaries under instruction, and for explicitly religious purposes. Ryder, on the other hand makes no mention of religious motive when he discusses diary-writing. He began to keep a diary on a friend's 'hint' when he was twenty-four (p. 5), and there is no suggestion of exclusively religious content. Even when he comes across a much older diarist, Ryder is not shocked to hear that the old man finds it 'diverting', rather than mortifying, to recall his past doings:

> He [a friend's grandfather] told me he kept a constant diary from his going from Oxford to the end of his life which was writ in longhand and is now with him. He says it is very diverting to read the younger part of his time, for he used to take notice of many little simple trifling occurrences in his life, especially in the time of his courtship of which there is a very particular account. (p. 177)

From their diaries it would seem that Ryder and Thoresby came from radically different backgrounds. Yet Ryder's spiritual and theological background was similar to Thoresby's. His entries make it apparent that family prayers and sermons were as regular and emotional as those described in Leeds (pp. 113, 166, 275, 331). He engages in arguments about Calvinist theology:

> Mr Owen lay at our house and at night he and I had some little dispute about predestination. (p. 177)

He also felt a loyalty to the dissenting community at large, and established a dissenters' club:

> Our club is set up with a design to encourage the dissenters … a weekly paper in defence of them and whatever tended to encourage those true Protestant principles of private judgement and liberty of conscience.
>
> (p. 362; in later years Ryder, like Thoresby, conformed to the Anglican church.)

The unselfconscious absence of piety from Ryder's diary may suggest that pious diaries like Thoresby's were in decline among Presbyterians *before* their community expired. If so, it is worth noting that the decline was probably more advanced in London than in the north. James Clegg, quoted earlier, was a Presbyterian minister working in Northumberland while Ryder studied in London. All of the defining features of Thoresby's diary are found in Clegg's diary of the 1720s. Like Thoresby, Clegg divides each entry into three parts; includes only occasional anecdotes amidst routine entries; describes emotional affairs indirectly; explicitly excludes politics; laments his sins in formulaic language; and includes experiences of grace:

> This Day by the [Lord's] goodness I and my dear wife had a great deliverance, a headstrong horse boggled and ran away with us in a very dangerous way … yet

> neither of us Received the least harm. Adored be infinite goodness!
>
> (December 1709; Clegg, ed. Doe, 1978, p. 2)

On birthdays and at New Year, Thoresby usually laments wasted time. So does Clegg:

> 20. This is my birthday, I am now 31 years old, so long hath a mercifull God spared an useless creature and hitherto he hath helped me; oh! may I study to make more suitable returns than I ever have done. (20 October 1710; p. 3)

So the Presbyterian Dudley Ryder, living in London, showed no knowledge of pious diaries like Thoresby's, while his contemporary Clegg, living in the north, adhered faithfully to the traditional type.

A New Generation of Diarists

Thoresby's diary is different from his friend de la Pryme's in Hull partly because the two diaries belong to different genres. But different though they are, they have this in common: both are functional rather than recreational. Thoresby's has a spiritual function, de la Pryme's is a chronicle of the times. But with the younger Ryder's diary at the start of the eighteenth century we see a change from both de la Pryme's chronicle of public affairs and Thoresby's dutiful spiritual record. This could be seen as a move from diary writing for a purpose to diary writing as a recreation. There is a change in the assumed reader: Thoresby assumes a reader interested in what is recorded; Ryder's generation assumes a reader who is emotionally engaged with the recorder.

This distinction is apparent if Ryder's diary is contrasted with one of Thoresby's and de la Pryme's mutual acquaintance, William Nicolson. Nicolson, like de la Pryme, was an Anglican clergyman who knew Thoresby through antiquarian circles. This is his diary entry for the time of his instalment as Bishop of Carlisle in 1702:

> Nov. 18. *Wednesday*. I took the Oaths, and my place, in the House of Lords. An Appeal lodged; and adjourned. In the House of Commons Sir J. Packington's friends Voted the Bishop of Worcester Unchrist[i]an, Malitious, &c. and ordered an Address to Her Majesty to remove him from being Almoner. His Son (Mr Lloyd) to be prosecuted by the Attourney Generall when his priviledge of Convocation is out. Archdeacon Hutton dined with me; resolveing to be good.
>
> (Nicolson, ed. Jones and Holmes, 1985, p. 128)

There are some clear and perhaps predictable differences from Thoresby's diary. Thoresby usually omits the first person pronoun, where Nicolson starts with 'I took the Oaths'. Like de la Pryme and unlike Thoresby, Nicolson presupposes an interest in public affairs. Thoresby and Nicolson are writing different kinds of diaries, just as Thoresby and de la Pryme are writing

different kind of diaries. Yet all three share one negative characteristic which is missing from the next generation, as represented by Ryder: none creates a relationship with the reader.

To illustrate this distinction, the entry from Nicolson's diary can be compared with an excerpt from Ryder's diary:

> Saturday, June 11. went after dinner to John's Coffee House. Met with Mr. Witnoons and Jackson and Smith and two or three more. Discoursed about the impeachments. (p. 32)

Nicolson lists the events of his day without creating a sense of story: 'Nov. 18. *Wednesday*. I took the Oaths, and my place, in the House of Lords'. He does not create a time-line for the day, and locate his actions on it. But Ryder assumes a reader whose chief interest is Ryder himself, rather than the events of that particular day. So he tells his reader he went to the Coffee House 'after dinner', a fact of no importance unless we are imaginatively engaged with the diarist. He includes details which would be redundant to a reader whose chief interest is in a public chronicle; why would such a reader need to know that it was John's Coffee House where Ryder went? Ryder assumes that his readers will know who Jackson and Smith are. That is, he assumes a reader who is intimate with Ryder himself. Nicolson does not. On the contrary, he feels he must record that the Bishop of Worcester's son is called Mr Lloyd.

The contrast between Nicolson's diary and Ryder's is mirrored by the contrast between Sir David Hamilton's (discussed earlier) and the woman who transcribed it, Lady Mary Cowper. Hamilton belonged to Nicolson's generation, Cowper to Ryder's. Mary, Countess Cowper, was a lady-in-waiting to Queen Anne. For one year, 1714, her diary overlaps with Hamilton's. In method and in avowed intention, their diaries are very similar:

> 1714 The perpetual Lies that One hears have determined me, in spite of my Want of Leisure, to write down all the Events that are worth remembering whilst I am at *Court*; and although I find it will be impossible for me to do this daily, yet I hope I shall be able to have an Hour or two once a Week and I intend this only for my own Use, it being a rough Draft. (Cowper, ed. Cowper, 1865, p. 1)

Like Hamilton, Cowper's method is to make notes as she goes along, and write them up regularly. Like Hamilton, she is motivated to write by her privileged position at court, although she centres her account not on the queen but on the Princess of Wales. But in its approach to the imaginary reader, her account is much more like Ryder's. It is reminiscent of a novel in its portrayal of the continuum of emotional exchange through minute physical detail:

> In the morning, by Eleven, I waited upon the *Princess*. I found the Duchess of *St. Albans* in the outward Room upon the same Errand. She went in first and kissed the *Princess's* Hand, and I followed. The *Princess*, when I had done it, took me up and embraced me three or four times, and said the kindest Things to me – far beyond the Value of any Riches. (Cowper, ed. Cowper, 1865, p. 7)

Unlike Hamilton, she considers this novelistic observation of her mistress to be central to a historical account. Nor does she exclude her own personal feelings from that account, as in her comment 'far beyond the Value of any Riches'. This is a moral judgement, but it is inspired by affection rather than a generalised expression of public morality. It also takes the form of a personal opinion.

This conversational style is, incidentally, consonant with the values Cowper betrays. Conversation implies friendship, and Cowper places a high value on friendship. For example, in the entry above, the Princess's friendship takes the form of 'saying the kindest thing', and that friendship is praised as 'beyond the Value' of wealth. Both the style and the ideology of Hamilton's diary are quite different:

> Complimenting Her [the queen] Upon the Dutch coming into the Peace, I wish'd Smiling Providences might accompany so Pious a Life as Hers. For if otherways it was satisfy'd it was from the failure of others about Her and not from Her Self, to which she said she hop'd in Time that satisfaction would be brought about to every body. (30 December 1712; Hamilton, ed. Roberts, 1975, p. 47)

Hamilton puts a subordinate clause at the start of the sentence, so that the personal pronoun and main verb are less prominent than the abstraction 'complimenting'. In content, this opening is not so different from Cowper's. Both report the praise of a royal mistress. But in style, it could not be further from 'The *Princess* … said the kindest things to me'. Hamilton's formal compliment embodies an ideology of deference rather than of affection. His style reflects that ideology, for he puts the first person pronoun in second place in the clause. He includes a personal comment only as a conclusion to a minute record of exact words. Cowper reverses these priorities, submerging exact words in opinion, as in 'the kindest things'. The older diarist erases his personal life in submission to his sovereign and to history. The younger one serves both history and her sovereign by a narrative of her own feelings and opinions.

At least one of Lady Cowper's nineteenth-century readers felt this friendly relationship intuitively:

> a charming Diary of the second Lady *Cowper* … It remains in MS, but it well deserves to be printed, for it gives a more lively Picture of the Court of *England* at the commencement of the *Brunswick* Dynasty than any I have ever met with. (Lord Campbell, who used the diary to write his own history of Queen Anne's reign; Cowper, ed. Cowper, 1865, p. v)

Lord Campbell has come a long way from Thoresby's hope that the diary of an exemplary clergyman might be printed for the sake of pious inspiration. 'Charming' suggests not only that the diary should be read for recreation, but also that the reader has an affectionate, personal relationship with the diarist, that it is the writer's personality, rather than her value as spiritual example or historical witness, which makes her worth knowing.

'Charming' is not a word one can imagine being used for Nicolson, de la Pryme or Thoresby.

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Note on transcriptions

Transcriptions from Thoresby's diary and other manuscripts are made with as few alterations as possible. For example abbreviations such as 'y^{e}' have not been expanded. Diaries were on the whole written without the printing press in mind, and variations in such detail as spelling and abbreviations can yield useful information. Many of the manuscripts used, including Thoresby's, have numbered pages; these, instead of folio numbers, are used wherever they are accurate.

Bibliography

Manuscripts

Abbreviations

NLS National Library of Scotland
YAS Yorkshire Archaeological Society
RLC Royal Library of Copenhagen
CL Chetham's Library, Manchester
YML York Minster Library.

NLS MS Wodrow 43.5.19 Volume containing spiritual autobiographies, including those of Mr John Livingstone, James Fraser and Katherine Ross; late seventeenth century.
NLS MS 3150 The diary of Sir George Maxwell of Pollock, 1655–56.
NLS MS 34.6.22 The autobiography of Mrs Veitch, late seventeenth century.
NLS MS Wodrow 34.5.19 Volume containing copies of various religious documents, including letters and confessions of faith. Compiled about 1715.

RLC MS NKS 2935	Thoresby's diary, 1683–84, 1695–97, with a short memoir in his father's hand.
YAS MS 17	Miscellanea in Thoresby's hand, including a catalogue of Thoresby's museum; extracts from MSS of Castilion Morris; extracts from printed books, including John Locke; topographical notes on Yorkshire.
YAS MS 21	Thoresby's diary, 1677–83.
YAS MS 22	Thoresby's diary, 1691–95.
YAS MS 23	Thoresby's diary, 1701–04.
YAS MS 25	Thoresby's diary, 1719–24.
YAS MS 26	Thoresby's autobiography, written in 1714.
CL MS Mun A2.140	The diary of Henry Newcome, 1661–63.
YML MS Add 21	Thoresby's Diary, 1712–14.

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