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William Patten's Friends

Betty Hill

William Patten (see Plate 3), a versatile Tudor Londoner, who lived from about 1510-1512 to 1601, has engaged my attentions before.¹ He once owned Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.52, containing the early Middle English verse *Conduct of Life* and prose *Homilies*, which he glossed in his characteristic semi-phonetic spelling, and he knew other antiquaries including Archbishop Matthew Parker. He also wrote English and Latin prose and verse works, and his first publication in 1548, *The Expedition into Scotla(n)de [. . .] set out by way of diarie [. . .]*, an account of the Pinkie campaign of August to September 1547, in which he and William Cecil took part, illustrates the strong autobiographical element in so much of his work.

I discuss here the content of Patten's still unpublished Latin verse, the *Supplicatio Patteni*, British Library, MS Lansdowne 739, composed in 980 hexameters in 1572, and his later epitaphs on some of his friends mentioned there.² I first establish the context and a more exact dating for the *Supplicatio* by tracing Patten's career to 1572, for which the *Supplicatio* itself, borne out or supplemented by other manuscript and printed material, is a useful source.

By 1543 Patten entered the Inner Temple, London.³ He studied law there for three years (*Supplicatio*, 16b/16-17a/14). Before the Scottish expedition he was secretary at Boulogne to the Earl of Arundel.⁴ Henry Fitzalan (1512-1580), who was raised in the household of his godfather Henry VIII, became the 12th Duke of Arundel in 1543/4. In July 1544 he preceded the King to Boulogne as Marshall of the field and successfully stormed the port in September. In 1556 he acquired from Mary Tudor the Royal Palace of Nonsuch which Henry VIII built near Cheam after the birth of his son in 1537 to mark the continuation of the Tudor family line.⁵

Following the Scottish expedition, Patten was preferred to Exchequer appointments. He became Collector of petty custom and subsidy in the Port of London from July 1549 to 1552, Receiver-General of Yorkshire Revenues in 1558, and Teller of the Receipt of the Exchequer for life in 1562.⁶ Patten's Account Book for

1562 to 1566 is now Foxwell M35 in the Baker Library of Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration at Boston.⁷

Patten prospered. He became the first secular Lord of the Manor of Stoke Newington about 1552,⁸ he married Ann, one of the heiresses of Richard Johnson of Boston in Lincolnshire and Alice his wife, heir of Eynes, Poplar, Middlesex, and had children born and buried in the parish. He was actively concerned with the Grand Christmas at the Inner Temple of 1561/2. In 1561 the Middle Temple tried to appropriate Lyons Inn, which was under the jurisdiction of the Inner Temple. Leicester, then Robert Dudley the Queen's favourite suitor, who entered the Inner Temple in November 1561, frustrated their intentions, by means of his influence with the Queen. In gratitude, for their twelve days of lavish Christmas hospitality in 1561/2, Leicester was elected Palaphilos, Prince of Sophie, High Constable Marshall of the Knights Templar, Patron of the Honourable Order of Pegasus.⁹ At the Christmas festivities Hatton was Master of Game and Patten Chief Butler (*Supplicatio*, 17b/4-5).

That Christmas, on Twelfth Night, the Inner Temple saw its first stage play, *Gorboduc*, the joint work of the Queen's kinsman Thomas Sackville and of Thomas Norton, who had entered in 1554 and 1555. In the great masque after the repeat performance of *Gorboduc* before her at Whitehall on 18 January 1562, Elizabeth enjoyed Christopher Hatton's performance of the galliard. This was a new popular dance in triple time in which after five short steps and a leap in the air, the feet were clapped together. He was not only a skilled courtier but man of affairs. By 1577 he spoke for the Queen as Leader of the House of Commons; and he was a major investor with the Queen and others in Drake's voyage to the West Indies in 1577 in his flagship the *Pelican*, which Drake, on entering the Magellan Straits in 1578, renamed *The Golden Hind*, thereby linking her with Hatton's arms.

Elizabeth's infatuation with Robert Dudley, to whom she gave the Manor, Lordship and Castle of Kenilworth in 1563 and whom she created Earl of Leicester in 1564, is well known. He was a notable patron of letters and drama. In 1571 his company of players performed before the Queen and three years later Leicester received the first royal patent granted to actors on behalf of his actor servants with Burbage at their head. Although these of Patten's friends renowned for dancing and drama were in Royal Favour, by mid-1572 Patten was thoroughly out of it and in dire straits. In respect of his public offices he had been found short of nearly eight thousand pounds, a debt to the Queen not repaid as sufficiently nor quickly as required. In July 1568 he forfeited his post of Teller of Receipt of the Exchequer and in 1570 his Receiver-Generalship of Yorkshire Revenues,¹⁰ though about 1569 he had relinquished his lease

of Stoke Newington.¹¹ By 25 February 1570 he had paid part of the remaining debt to the Marquis of Winchester, and Walter Mildmay, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who conveyed it to the Queen in writing on 16 May 1572, but it was found insufficient.¹²

As we learn from the *Supplicatio*, Patten had already been banished from Court and shackled in prison for twenty months as the Queen's debtor, and he needed the Queen's clemency. Those who might have assisted him, Arundel, Leicester, and Hatton, had just taken part in the Ridolfi plot and were out of the Queen's favour. Only Cecil, his fellow-expeditioner to Scotland, was blameless.

The *Supplicatio* is a petition to Queen Elizabeth to set up a Royal Commission of enquiry to clear his name of infamy for the sake of his children and free him from prison so that he can conduct his affairs in person and pay off his debts. He eulogizes the Queen and her court, including her Privy Council, and shows he knows not only the offices of the Court but how the Court works. In relating his past, Patten (*Supplicatio*, 15b/16-16b/2) refers to his ancestry, and in particular his father and his father's uncle William Patten, alias Waynflete, Chancellor of England and founder of Magdalen College, Oxford, to indicate how his family have been bound in Royal service to the Queen and her ancestors. Later in the *Supplicatio* (31b/6) he states that had things been otherwise he would not seem such a disgrace to his ancestors; but Patten's account of his father and his relationship to Waynflete are not borne out by recent research.¹³

In the *Supplicatio*, which is seen to be Patten's way of attracting the Queen's attention to his plight, he reveals (26a-27b) how his success came about. Some five months before, his wife attended the Queen's progress in the country. It is necessary to identify the time and place of this progress because it indicates the probable conception of the *Supplicatio* and the date when Patten began to write it. The Queen kept her arranged stay at Havering Bowre in July 1572, from where she did not progress, as formerly intended, to Enfield. Instead she changed her route to stay from 22-25 July 1572 at Theobalds with William Cecil, who in that month succeeded the late Marquis of Winchester as Lord High Treasurer of England, before continuing to Gorhambury.¹⁴

At Theobalds Ann Patten addressed one Brodbent (mentioned by name) who took her to his wife (not mentioned by name). She was Dorothy Brodebelt, a name interchangeable with Broadbent, and a Gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber.¹⁵ At the first opportunity she interceded with the Queen and then approached Thomas Gorges (mentioned by name: see also Plate 4) who took pen and ink and furthered Patten's suit. In *oratio recta* Patten reminds his wife of all this, appreciative of her friendship

and support, and assures Ann that all now needed is the signature of the Queen, whose generosity cannot be denied.

The *Supplicatio* which William composed, probably between the end of July and mid-November, ten-year-old Thomas copied out and Ann presented to Elizabeth at Hampton Court on 16 November 1572, was the Patten family gift of service to their Queen. Elizabeth, whose fondness for young children was one of her most endearing features, may well have been impressed by Patten's anxiety about his seven children (*Supplicatio*, 20a-21b) and especially about the future prospects of ten-year-old Thomas who, so marvellously skilled in copying, including foreign script which he could not understand, had drawn for her, on page 21a, a map of her three kingdoms. As we are told in a prose passage on page 77^v, sig. V 4^v of Patten's *Calender of Scripture* published anonymously in 1575,¹⁶ the *Supplicatio* was accepted by the Queen to whom all services, vows, prayers, and thanks, are eternally due. The enquiry was set up, Patten's name was cleared and the culprit, Patten's deputy, who had behaved dishonestly ever since Patten had first become Receiver-General of Yorkshire Revenues in 1558, was pardoned.¹⁷

By 17 July 1573 Patten's financial situation was satisfactory,¹⁸ and in 1575 he was present and welcomed Elizabeth with his own Latin verses at England's grandest party at Leicester's Kenilworth.

The extraordinary nature of the *Supplicatio*, which achieved its aim, lies, I think, in the mingled themes of Patten's factual life and acquaintances, the repetitive misery of his personal rejection and his fervent eulogy of the Queen, as part of the Cult of Elizabeth. Presented on 16 November, on the Eve of Accession Day, it is a unique celebration of Elizabeth's greatness.

For his elegy on Arundel, who died on 24 February 1580, Patten used English verse in semi-phonetic spelling.¹⁹ Since the publication was licensed to John Allde on 28 March 1580, only six days after Arundel's burial, it preceded the English prose life of Arundel written shortly after his death (probably by his chaplain)²⁰ and the description of Nonsuch (from about 1585) by Anthony Watson, Rector of Cheam. Patten's choice of English and his use of obsolete words²¹ was deliberate, since Arundel had an aversion to foreign tongues and new-fangled terms or late-invented phrases, whether literary or oral. Patten writes of Arundel's moral qualities, line 70, 'In frendship firm for ony change or chauns', and of his material possessions, lines 58-60:

His Jewelz, Antiquiteez, so many rare & ritche
His Tablz, Cloks, & his symmetricall
Billdingz, so sumptuously adouorned in every part,

of which I regard 'Antiquiteez' as a reference to Arundel's library, the largest private collection in Elizabethan England. To his books acquired at the Dissolution as his godfather's Lord Chamberlain, he added Archbishop Cranmer's library, shortly after Mary Tudor's accession in 1553. He left his library to Lumley, widower of his eldest daughter Jane, who died in 1576/7, who passed it on to Prince Henry. It became the core of the Royal Library and through George III it reached the British Museum.²²

For his elegy on his old friend William Wynter, a member of the Inner Temple from 1561, knighted in 1573, who died on 20 February 1589, Patten reverted to Latin verse.²³ Wynter, a fellow-expeditioner to Scotland, was like Patten a small shareholder in the Mines Royal;²⁴ Patten mentions Wynter as capacious in friendship, beloved by his equals and respected by the common people. The unfading glory of his people, he opened up trade routes and brought the fleet safely home from many actions at sea. He was sixty eight at his death and was buried on 10 March on his estate at Lidney in Gloucestershire.

Hatton, so famous for his galliards, remained a dancer almost to the end of his life on 20 November 1591. As Thomas Gray wrote of him in 1750 in 'A Long Story':

Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My grave Lord-Keeper led the brawls;
The Seal and Maces danced before him.

His bushy beard and shoe-strings green,
His high-crowned hat and satin-doublet,
Moved the stout heart of England's Queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.²⁵

Patten's sixty-eight-line Latin elegy on Hatton²⁶ includes praise of Hatton, elevated by Royal Favour, as ever constant to those he had counted among his friends, possessed of a good physique, character, and intelligence, a patron of the muses and devotee of music and a diligent Lord Chancellor. But there were others to take his place. More important is the safety of the Queen with whom our safety rests.

Thomas Gorges, without whom sixty-year-old Patten would have remained chained in oblivion, survived him by fewer than ten years. It is perhaps somewhat ironic that Gorges with his ancient lineage, discretion, modesty, Yorkist affiliations and distinguished service, was the benefactor of Patten, who mistakenly thought he had that kind of family background on which he based his conduct and aspirations.²⁷

Thomas Gorges was the fifth son of Sir Edward Gorges of Wraxall near Bristol. His grandmother Anne Howard, who was wife of Sir Edmund Gorges and eldest daughter of John Howard, Yorkist Duke of Norfolk, killed at Bosworth in 1485, was great-aunt of Catherine Howard and Anne Boleyn.

In September 1565 Cecilie, wife of the Prince and Margrave of Baden (sister of Eric, King of Sweden, now at war with Denmark, who had been an unsuccessful suitor before Elizabeth's accession), came to England to have her child. In her train was fifteen-year-old Helena Snakenborg. After the christening of the child, the Queen's godson, a tourney with jousts and barriers was proposed, and one of the first takers was Thomas Gorges, a squire from the West Country. When Cecilie departed by May 1566, Helena stayed behind and became Gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber. By her marriage in May 1571 to the Marquis of Northampton, brother-in-law to Henry VIII, who survived only briefly, she became close to royalty and took precedence over all other peeresses. In December 1571 Gorges became Groom of the Privy Chamber. Thomas and Helena married about 1577, much to the Queen's displeasure. Helena was banished from Court but they were reconciled by the exchange of New Year's gifts in 1578.

Gorges, who was knighted in 1586/7, was very frequently absent from Court as the Queen's executive in a range of duties. He was ambassador to Sweden in 1582, trusted as a go-between for Elizabeth and Leicester, and brought Hatton back to Court after his sulks over Walter Raleigh. He saw Dr John Dee at Mortlake about his pension, and went to Plymouth to make an inventory of Drake's very rich prize from the East Indies captured in the Azores. From the mid 1570s he had the monopoly of writing and engrossing writs of subpoena in the Court of Chancery, and the public records from 1595 show the tremendous confidence placed in Gorges's abilities. In 1601 when the Earl of Essex plotted the seizure of Whitehall and overthrow of the Queen, the Privy Council virtually placed the safety of London in the hands of Gorges. Helena, as is clear from Spenser's eulogy of her as *Mansilia* in 'Colin Clouts Come Home Againe', was a worthy ornament of the English court:

Ne lesse praise worthie is *Mansilia*,
Best knowne by bearing up great *Cynthiaes* traine: [. . .]
She is the paterne of true womanhead,
And onely mirrhor of feminitie:
Worthie next after *Cynthia* to tread,
As she is next her in nobilitie.²⁸

Thomas and Helena completed their house, Longford Castle, not far from Salisbury, in 1591, and were renowned for combining royal service with exemplary private lives. Helena was the chief mourner at Elizabeth's funeral. Gorges was given the post of Gentleman Usher of the Privy Chamber and was appointed to take an inventory of Elizabeth's jewels.

Thomas Gorges died in 1610 at the age of seventy four, a well-known benefactor to his poorer neighbours. After Helena's death in 1635 their eldest surviving son Edward, Lord Gorges, Baron of Dundalk, erected an elaborate tomb with their effigies under an ornate canopy of sculptured figures in the east end of the north-choir aisle in Salisbury Cathedral. If you pass there, pause for a moment, not in sad remembrance, but in recognition of William Patten's friends.

NOTES

¹ 'Trinity College, Cambridge MS B.14.52, and William Patten', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 4 (1966), 192-200. 'William Patten: A Tudor Londoner', *Essays and Studies*, n.s. 36 (1983), 14-26, where I discuss the canon of Patten's works, the *Expedicion* and Patten's life and family.

² Mr R. L. Thomson has generously helped throughout with the paraphrasing, ambiguities, and punctuation problems of Patten's Latin. Reference to the *Supplicatio* is by page and line.

³ Inner Temple Library, MS 154. Admissions to the Inner Temple, I (1954). Typescript compiled by R. L. Lloyd, p. 52. The name first appears in the Acts of Parliament (the formal minutes of the Governing Body) in 1543 as William Patten or Pattent. Both (1) Paten and (2) Patent are recorded in Certificates of residence, (1) Public Record Office, E115/303/111, and (2) E115/294/121 for Patten. Mr Breem and Miss Parnham kindly facilitated my access to MS 154. I welcome this opportunity of formally thanking the Council of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society Ltd for a grant towards my work in London.

⁴ In addition to my general reading on the period, I have consulted the *Dictionary of National Biography*, FITZALAN, HENRY, HATTON, SIR CHRISTOPHER, WINTER, or correctly, WYNTER, SIR WILLIAM; *A Calendar of the Inner Temple Records*, ed. by F. A. Inderwick (and R. A. Roberts) 5 vols (London: Masters of the Bench, Chiswick Press, 1896-1936), I, espec. pp. lxii-lxxii. *Students admitted to the Inner Temple 1547-1660*, ed. by W. H. Cooke (London: Clowes and Sons, 1868).

⁵ See Lalage Lister, *Nonsuch: Pearl of the Realm* (Sutton: Sutton Leisure Services, 1992) and John Dent, *The Quest for Nonesuch* (London: Hutchinson, 1962).

⁶ *Calendar of Patent Records (CPR)*, 1547-53, pp. 336, 385. 1557-58, p. 427. 1560-63, p. 340.

⁷ Barbara M. Dailey, Reference Archivist in the Baker Library, kindly informs me that Foxwell M35, in a vellum cover, frequently refers to Sir I. Gresham and the Company of Merchant Adventurers and includes a number of warrants copied out at the end. Some folios, probably blanks, have been torn out at the end.

⁸ *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Middlesex*, 10 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, for The Institute of Historical Research, 1969-1995), Vol. VIII ed. by T. F. T. Baker (1985), p. 177.

⁹ See John Nichols, *The Progresses [. . .] of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols, 2nd edn (London: John Nichols and Son, 1823), I, 131-41, on the Grand Christmas of 1561/2 and general procedures at Grand Christmasses at the Inner Temple.

¹⁰ *CPR*, 1566-69, no. 1867, 1569-72, no. 15.

¹¹ *VCH: Middlesex*, VIII, 185.

¹² *CPR*, 1572-75, no. 145.

¹³ Patten's description of his father's offices in the Clothworkers' Company is at variance with the Company's records. The archivist, Mr D. E. Wickham, kindly informed me that though Richard Patten entered the Company at a very high level, he was never a Warden. He was a member of the Company's Court but died in 1536 before he may have been elected Master. Virginia Davis, *William Waynflete: Bishop and Educationist*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, 6 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1993), p. 6 and n. 2, states that Waynflete had only one brother. His supposedly second brother, Patten's grandfather, Richard Baselow of Derbyshire, occurs in the eighteenth-century pedigree of Thomas Patten of Bank Hall. Yet Patten's connection with Waynflete was fully accepted by his contemporaries, and no more fraudulent than the pedigrees of the heralds for the new men, including Hatton and Cecil.

¹⁴ Nichols, I, 307-08.

¹⁵ In 1561/2 she gave the Queen a New Year's gift (Nichols, I, 116) and on 26 April 1566, for her services, she was given a sixty-year lease of the site and Manor of Wyngham Barton, Kent (*CPR*, 1563-66, no. 2130).

¹⁶ S. Halkett and J. Laing, *A Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publications in the English Language*, 3rd edn rev. by John Horden (Harlow: Longman, 1980-), I, 1475-1640, entry C4.

¹⁷ *CPR*, 1572-75, no. 478.

¹⁸ *CPR*, 1572-75, no. 145.

¹⁹ 'A moorning diti vpon the deceas of the high and mighti Prins Henry Earl of Arundel [. . .]', STC 19120.7, transcribed in Herbert L. Collmann, *Ballads and broadsides chiefly of the Elizabethan period*, Roxburghe Club, 146 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1912), no. 47, pp. 132-35.

²⁰ BL, MS Royal 17 A ix, in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 103: 2 (London: John and Henry James Parker, 1833), pp. 10-18, 118-24, 209-15, 490-500, to which I refer in my text by page.

²¹ For example, for lines 29, 'vnderfong', 73, 'orgulioously', 98, 'Childerz children', see *OED* † **Underfo**, *v. Obs.*, † **Orgulously**, *adv.*, **Child**, *sb. A.B.*

²² See *The Lumley Library: The Catalogue of 1609*, ed. by Sears Jayne and Francis R. Johnson (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1956).

²³ *In Mortem W. Wynter Equitis Aurati* [. . .], London, 1589, STC 19477. University Microfilms Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, Reel 348, item 3. On the last leaf Patten signs himself *Olim socius* [. . .] *Amicus semper* [. . .].

²⁴ According to PRO, SP 12/144/32-33, which shows Patten's characteristic signature, of the twenty-four shares Patten had half a share and Wynter a quarter share.

²⁵ 'A Long Story', in *The Complete English Poems of Thomas Gray*, ed. by James Reeves (London: Heinemann, 1973), pp. 66-71 (p. 67, ll. 9-16).

²⁶ *Luctus consolatorius* [. . .], London, 1591, STC 19120.3. The Folger Shakespeare Library. Purchase Order No. PH 24485-86. It is signed on the last leaf *Suae dignitati devotus & devinctus Cliens W.P.G.*

²⁷ On Gorges and his wife see Charles A. Bradford, *HELENA Marchioness of Northampton* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1936). Raymond Gorges, *The story of a family through eleven centuries, illustrated by portraits and pedigrees, being a history of the family of Gorges* (Boston: Privately printed [D. B. Updike, the Merrymount Press], 1944).

²⁸ *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. by William A. Oram and others (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 517-62 (p. 545, ll. 508-09, 512-15).