

Acknowledgments

Publication may be viewed as the birth of a project, as the moment of its public appearance before an audience. Yet the moment of publication also resembles a death, as a project ceases to be a process and becomes a book, an object laid in state for the scrutiny of inquisitive readers. In the seventeenth century, the moment of death demanded an account, a narrative of debts and obligations. This moment of transition in my work on the northern Vale of Gloucester seems to require its own account. I have many debts to acknowledge and many friends to thank.

I must first express my thanks to the several institutions that helped to fund the research for this study. My doctoral work received generous support from a Mellon Fellowship in the Humanities, administered by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. In the last phases of writing the book, a Josephine Berry Weiss Fellowship from the Pennsylvania State University permitted a release from classes in the fall of 1994 to finish the revisions of the manuscript.

This book originated as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago. I thank my dissertation adviser, Mark Kishlansky, for his criticism, advice, and friendship over the years. I thank the other members of my committee, Edward Cook and Bernard Cohn, for perspectives from early American history and historical anthropology. Keith Wrightson's work has been a source of inspiration. He generously read the entire manuscript and offered both challenging criticisms and friendly encouragement. In addition, I thank John Morrill and Conrad Russell for numerous references and for invitations to present the early results of my work in seminars at Cambridge University and the Institute of Historical Research. Sears McGee shared his knowledge of early Stuart religion, introduced me to the Bodleian Library, and offered kind hospitality for a few weeks of summer in Oxford. Finally, I thank Peter Lake for his comments on early drafts of chapters, for his intellectual generosity, and

for many helpful references. Michael Adas and Traian Stoianovich directed my first explorations of early modern social history as an undergraduate at Rutgers University.

Historical research is a collaborative enterprise, and many friends have offered references and archival advice. My debts to the scholarship of others are acknowledged in the notes, but I thank Sabrina Baron, Alastair Bellany, Brian Frith, Paul Halliday, Michael Martin, David Smith, Tim Wales, and Andrew Warmington for their particular contributions to the evidence used in this book.

I had the opportunity to spend two wonderful years in the Gloucestershire archives, and many kind people opened their homes and affections to me. In Gloucester, I thank John Knowles, Rosalind and Ron Lane, Michael Martin, Terry Peters, Phyllis and Brian White, and Graham Whitehead for their friendship and support. I must also express my fond appreciation for the staffs of the Gloucestershire Record Office and the Gloucester City Library. Kate Haslem and the search room staff of the record office took the time to field countless novice questions about Gloucestershire sources. In London, I thank Maria Dowling, Joan Henderson, Julia Merritt, and Stephen O'Connor for many kindnesses and good cheer.

Many more friends than I can name here have helped me to think about the practice (and excessive practice) of history. I thank Emary Aronson, Matt Berg, Antoinette Burton, Dave Goodman, Dan Gordon, Maureen Harp, Tim Harris, Steve Johnstone, Newton Key, Caroline Litzenberger, Cathy Patterson, Steve Pincus, and Joe Ward for their friendship and criticism. I thank Edward Kishlansky for his kind prayers on my behalf at a critical moment.

I have had the benefit of much help and encouragement from my colleagues in the Department of History at the Pennsylvania State University. Paul Harvey, Sally McMurry, Jim Sweeney, and Nan Woodruff have given their time to discuss ideas, read papers, and lend critical support to a project quite distant from their own fields. Phil Jenkins, who read an early draft of the manuscript, offered helpful suggestions and references. I thank the house band, Barry Kernfeld, Dan Letwin, Mary Ann Maslak, On-cho Ng, and Bill Pencak, colleagues and friends, for mixing ideas and music. Thanks also to Patrick Sharbaugh of University Photo/Graphics, who designed the map.

I have made life difficult for friends and family in the ten years this

book has been my sometimes jovial and sometimes cantankerous but always inescapable companion. I thank my parents and my sister and brother for their constant love. Janina Safran is my partner and best critic in everything. I am honored to have Michael and Jane Adas, Deborah Diamond, Greg Eghigian, Mike Kugler, and Paul White as my friends. My thanks are small return for their gifts to me.

