mention this, but only the support of the Paul Mellon Centre and Foundation could produce such a book, as the costs of permissions and reproductions are prohibitive for other publishers and organizations. Without relaxation, or at least regularization, of the schedule of costs for permission and reproduction, books in the growing field of visual culture will be very hard to publish. And the conventional format of academic books, with illustrations printed on isolated pages, will not suit the kind of detailed analysis of visual artifacts that should be produced in the future. Publishers and copyright-holders must work together to bring down barriers that will prevent the free flow of knowledge about visual culture, both in the past and in the present.

KATHERINE ACHESON, *University of Waterloo*

Michael C. Questier.

Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion, c.1550–1640.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xxii, 559.

At the centre of this book is the story of three or four generations of one major Catholic family, the Brownes of Cowdray in Sussex. Sir Anthony Browne was an intimate friend of Henry VIII, whom he survived by a year, dying in possession of nearly twenty thousand acres in southern England. His son Anthony was ennobled as Viscount Montague (or Montagu) on the marriage of Mary Tudor to Philip of Spain, spoke against the Supremacy Bill in Elizabeth I's parliament of 1559, mustered men to defend the realm against Spain in 1588, and died in bed in 1592. It was said of Montague's second wife, Magdalen Dacre, that "the priests everywhere did extol her as the worthy patroness of the holy faith and the singular ornament of the Catholic religion in England"; she was the subject of a hagiographical life by Richard Smith, a member of her household and subsequently vicar apostolic of the Catholic church in England. Montague's grandson inherited the viscountcy and the family fortune, and despite some awkward moments—Guy Fawkes had briefly been one of his servants, and he was imprisoned briefly after the Gunpowder Plot—he lived and died undramatically. Questier describes his unpublished "Apologeticall Answer," a 701-page defence of Richard Smith against his Catholic opponents, as surely "in the running for a prize for the most boring book ever written," which makes one want to go out and read at least part of it (the manuscript is at Downside, and there is a microfilm in the West Sussex Record Office, so the work is accessible, but cannot be

taken up on a whim). The story of the Brownes is not, then, a particularly glamorous one, and there is no substantial family archive from which its details can readily be mined. So why tell it in a book of more than five hundred pages?

The answer is suggested by the title of the book. *Catholicism and Community* is not simply about the Brownes but about their numerous connections: servants like Guy Fawkes, clients like Richard Smith, cousins and in-laws like the Dormer and Roper families. Questier reconstructs this network, or “entourage” as he calls it, and follows it through the decades, with attention to its internal dynamics, particularly in the relationships of clergy and laity; its part in the survival and the factionalization of Catholicism in Elizabethan and Jacobean England; and its relationship with non-Catholic society. The last point is particularly important: the title *Catholicism and Community* echoes that of John Bossy’s *English Catholic Community 1570–1850* (1975), but Bossy chose not to discuss the relationship of the Catholic minority with the majority. There was a closer echo in the working title which Questier previously had in mind for his book, *An English Catholic Community?* The new title is more interesting and truer to the book as it stands, because it leaves the sense of “community” open. The community of Catholics? Communities within Catholic England? The wider community of non-Catholic England, or of England as a whole? Questier examines all of these, remarking that “by indulging myself in telling a story about a specific bit of the early modern Catholic community ... I hoped to be able to narrate something which was not only about that community.”

The story duly proceeds through the Brownes’ emergence as a Catholic dynasty and the first viscount’s management of critical moments such as the 1569 rebellion and less dangerous ones such as his grand entertainment of the queen at Cowdray, to the emergence of the second viscount as a Catholic leader, his role in the controversies of Jacobean Catholicism, and the development of English Catholicism in the 1630s. At every point, the actions of a wide range of Montague dependents and connections contribute to the overall picture, shedding light for instance on the political potential of Catholicism in England after 1605 or the importance of lay patrons’ support in the internecine struggles of the English Catholic clergy in the 1620s. The balance of details and their wider implications which this procedure calls for is one of the admirable achievements of this book. Questier uses a rich body of archival material from various sources, and presents the vitality of the Catholicism of the Montague entourage with a fine sense of narrative.

The place of the entourage in this book does raise questions of presentation and analysis. There are points at which the genealogical forest grows thick: we are told, for instance, that Sir Alexander Culpeper was both the brother-in-law of the second

wife of the second earl of Cumberland and the brother-in-law of Lady Montague, but the relationship is not, as far as I can see, explained in the text or the family trees at the back of the book (in fact Culpeper married Mary Dacre, sister of Lady Cumberland and Lady Montague). More fundamentally, Questier acknowledges that it is difficult to know how meaningful a given relationship was in every case: distant marriage connections were apparently “an intense and immediate reality” for the recusant Thomas Meynell of North Kilvington, but how characteristic was he? The Brownes were related through the Dormers to the martyr St Sebastian Newdigate, and this is noted without further comment: how intense and immediate was their sense of that relationship? The same question applies to Isaac Oliver’s large miniature of the second viscount and his brothers, who stand in a loose embrace, identically dressed, to the left of the picture. On the right and slightly behind them is a fourth figure, wearing contrasting clothes. Who is he? Nobody seems to know. He can be taken as an emblem of the way in which the membership and workings of a large group of people can be enigmatic. And that being the case, there is a danger that using the story of the Montague entourage to cast light on larger questions is a matter of *obscurum per obscurius*.

But these are questions thrown out by a splendid, learned, challenging book. The pace of the writing is brisk enough for the small details of cousinhood and acquaintance not to delay the reader unduly—and because the book has footnotes rather than endnotes, the reader who does want more information at a particular point can usually get it expeditiously rather than keeping one finger in the text and one in the endnotes while consulting the family trees or the excellent index. And although the entourage is sometimes a cloudy entity, so are many communities, not least those defined by faith. Questier’s change of title reflects his prefatory remark that “I have not previously acknowledged sufficiently the coherence of the early modern Catholic community,” and this book deserves a wide readership not only because it is extremely well written and tells an important specific story, but also because it is an object lesson in examining a historical community, and in asking what a community is.

JOHN CONSIDINE, *University of Alberta*