

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

ABSTRACT FOR THESIS

Mary Sumner: Religion, Mission, Education and Womanhood 1876-
1921

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Mary Sumner (1828-1921) founded the Anglican Mothers' Union, which originated as a parish mothers' meeting in 1876, and followed the Girls' Friendly Society as the second women's organisation to be sanctioned by the Church of England. By 1921, the Mothers' Union had a membership extending across the British Empire and transnationally. Mary Sumner sought to educate mothers in Christian values and pedagogy so that they might educate their children to be future citizens of empire. Her life trajectory occurred against a context of evangelical religious revival, contest over matters of doctrinal authority, the proliferation of women's philanthropy, the growth of the British Empire and changes in education characterised by state intervention in working-class elementary schooling and the negotiation of educational provision for middle-class girls. This thesis uses primary source material to build on institutional histories of the Mothers' Union to situate Mary Sumner in networks, emphasise gender and class as mediating of opportunity, and envisage her religious 'mission' as educational.

The thesis draws on the thinking tools of Pierre Bourdieu, habitus, field and capital, to analyse Mary Sumner's negotiation of constraint and agency in relation to the fields of religion, mission (understood as religious and philanthropic activism 'at home' and overseas) and education through which womanhood runs as a connecting theme. Bourdieu's concept of reproduction is used to position Mary Sumner in relation to the operation of power across domestic, local and global spaces. The thesis concludes that using Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' highlights how Mary Sumner used opportunities for women within her temporal and socio-cultural context in ways that were complicit with notions of

womanhood reflective of patriarchal domination and accepting of hierarchies of class and 'race', yet were innovative in her achievement of access for an organisation of women within Anglicanism that was recognised for its educational work.

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Abbreviations

BWEA - British Women's Emigration Society

CETS - Church of England Temperance Society

CEZMS - Church of England Zenana Mission Society

CMS- Church Mission Society

GFS - Girls' Friendly Society

HRO - Hampshire Record Office

LEA - Local Education Authority

LPL - Lambeth Palace Library

MIC – Mothers in Council

MU - Mothers' Union

MUJ - Mothers' Union Journal

NUWW - National Union of Women Workers

PNEU- Parents' National Education Union

SACS - South African Colonisation Society

SPCK - Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge

SPG- Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

WDMU – Winchester Diocesan Mothers' Union

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Introduction

Mary Sumner (1828-1921) was a supporter of Anglican denominational education and is remembered as the instigator of the Mothers' Union (MU),¹ which originated as a parish mothers' meeting in 1876.² She drew on religiously sanctioned notions of womanhood to promote the role of mothers as religious educators in the home. The MU motto was 'train up a child in the way he should go'.³ The MU followed the 1875 Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) as the second religious organisation to be established for women, run by women, sanctioned by the Anglican Church of England.⁴ It was adopted as an official organisation by the Diocese of Winchester from 1886,⁵ and by 1921 had a worldwide membership of 391,409.⁶

Mary Sumner sought to educate the populace 'at home' and abroad in Christian values through the dissemination of religious knowledge.⁷ It was her intention to reinforce the existing social order and to improve morality, nationally and transnationally. Mary Sumner drew upon her religious and social network to promote her vision of appropriate behaviour in both men and women and to legitimise her claims to authority. She illustrates what Gail Malmgreen considers 'the central paradox of religion as opiate and embodiment of institutional sexism

¹Henceforward initials will be used unless in quotations, titles or headings.

²Pamela Johnston, 'Sumner, Mary Elizabeth (1828–1921)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38034>, accessed 27 Nov. 2012].

³Mary Sumner, *Home Life* (Winchester: Warren and Son, 1895), 10. MU aims were expressed as 'Objects': Object 2 - 'To awaken in mothers a sense of their great responsibility as mothers in the training of their boys and girls (the future fathers and mothers of England).

⁴Mary Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway; Being the History of the Girls' Friendly Society* (London: Girls' Friendly Society, 1926); Agnes Louisa Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton, 1902). The GFS intended to protect the chastity of girls and young working women by educating them in Christian values and behaviour. Henceforward initials will be used unless in quotations or headings.

⁵Mary Porter, Mary Woodward and Horatia Erskine, *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work and a Short History of the Mothers' Union* (Winchester: Warren and Sons, 1921).

⁶'Obituary of Mary Sumner', *The Times* 12 Aug. 1921.

⁷David Wardle, *English Popular Education, 1780-1970* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), Chapters 1, 2 and 3. The thesis follows Wardle's understanding of popular education as concerned with social regeneration, influenced by political, social and cultural factors and extending beyond formal systems.

and religion as transcendent and liberating force'.⁸ Attention to Mary Sumner in existing Anglican institutional histories of the MU is from a faith perspective.⁹ This thesis considers religion as a socio-cultural construct,¹⁰ a delineator of gendered identities, but also as a source of women's authority.¹¹ It also seeks to build on existing references to Mary Sumner by emphasising the educational dimension of her activism.

The thesis will analyse Mary Sumner's negotiation of constraint and agency¹² and her position in upholding and transacting power across domestic, local and global spaces in relation to the fields of religion, mission and education with womanhood as a connecting theme. The thesis offers a different approach to Mary Sumner's life and work by drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu,¹³ who understands social reality as a relational interplay between agents [persons] and social structures [family, institutions]. It will apply Bourdieu's ideas to analyse the cultural forces, notably, religion and education, nuanced by class and gender that were informative of Mary Sumner's identity, values, horizons of possibility and claims to authority. The thesis will deploy Bourdieu's analytical thinking tools of habitus, capital and field (which will be discussed in Chapter 2) to situate Mary Sumner in her networks and analyse her activism in relation to the values and practices of dominant social, gender and religious categories. Bourdieu's theory of reproduction, which sees dominant groups seeking to maintain their position through the assertion of their preferred values as legitimate, will be applied to locate Mary Sumner as an agent of, or recipient of, domination. Attention will be

⁸Gail Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 7.

⁹Cordelia Moyle, *A History of the Mothers' Union: Women Anglicanism and Globalisation, 1876-2008* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009).

¹⁰Pierre Bourdieu, 'Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field', *Comparative Social Research* 13, no. 1 (1991): 1-44.

¹¹Sue Morgan, *A Passion for Purity: Ellice Hopkins and the Politics of Gender in the Late-Victorian Church* (Bristol: Centre for Comparative Studies in Religion and Gender, University of Bristol, 1999).

¹²Helen Gunter, *Leaders and Leadership in Education* (London: Paul Chapman, 2001).

5. 'Agency is concerned with subjective capability and capacity to control, for example, through the exercise of choice and discretion', Sarah Jane Aiston, 'Women, Education and Agency, 1600-2000 an Historical Perspective' in *Women, Education and Agency*, ed. Jean Spence, Sarah Jane Aiston and Maureen Meikle (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 1-8. Agency is understood as the ability to act notwithstanding a degree of circumstantial constraint towards the realisation of (self defined) goals.

¹³Pierre Bourdieu and Loic J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).

given to the negotiation of women's gendered horizons of possibility, in relation to the reproduction or negotiation of power.¹⁴

The following sections of this introduction provide a biographical outline of Mary Sumner and discuss the nature and limitations of the evidence upon which the thesis draws. The standpoint of the author will be noted and it will outline the use of gender as a lens in relation to Mary Sumner's activism and context.

Mary Sumner: biographical outline

Mary Elizabeth Heywood was born on 31st December 1828 at Swinton near Manchester.¹⁵ Her parents were practising Anglicans but had been prominent members of the influential Manchester Unitarian Cross Street Chapel.¹⁶ Mary's mother Mary Elizabeth Barton (d.1870) was the daughter of John Barton of Swinton, a landowner and also a Unitarian.¹⁷ Her father was Thomas Heywood (1797-1861), the third son of the banker Nathaniel Heywood. He was educated at Manchester Grammar School and in 1818 became a partner in Heywood's bank.¹⁸

In 1833, Thomas Heywood retired from the bank and assumed the life of a country gentleman at Hope End in Herefordshire.¹⁹ It was here that Mary spent

¹⁴Habitus, field and capital are Bourdieu's 'conceptual tools' of analysis. His ideas will be examined in the chapter (Chapter 2) on theoretical stance and methodological approach. The terms reproduction and symbolic violence were introduced by Bourdieu in Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Passeron and Richard Nice, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 1977). The French edition of this work appeared in 1970.

¹⁵To avoid confusion with other members of the Sumner family, following initial references to 'Mary' and 'Mary Heywood', I will refer to 'Mary Sumner' throughout the thesis.

¹⁶Chris W. Sutton and Alan G. Crosby, 'Thomas Heywood (1797–1866)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2010). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13191>, accessed 27 Nov. 2012]; Anita McConnell, 'Heywood, Sir Benjamin, First Baronet (1793–1865)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1317911>, accessed Aug. 2012]; Isabel Mary Heywood and Sir Thomas Percival Heywood, *Reminiscences, Letters and Journals of Thomas Percival Heywood, Baronet. Arranged by His Eldest Daughter (Isabel Mary). With a Preface by the Rev. George Body* (Printed for private circulation: Manchester, 1899), 4-5.

¹⁷Johnston, 'Sumner, Mary Elizabeth (1828–1921)'.

¹⁸Sutton and Crosby, 'Thomas Heywood (1797–1866)'.

¹⁹Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 4-5.

what is recorded as 'a girlhood that was not only happy, but was also characterised by an amount of freedom', with her elder sister Maggie and brother Tom.²⁰ The Heywoods were attentive to their children's religious and cultural education.²¹ Mary was an accomplished musician, spoke several languages and was encouraged to enjoy history by her antiquarian father, an early member of the Chetham's Society and the collector of a library of tracts and pamphlets.²²

Thomas Heywood was committed to philanthropy and education as a means of social improvement. He established a school and funded the Anglican Church in the parish of Wellington Heath.²³ His brother Sir Benjamin Heywood, a noted promoter of Mechanics' Institutes, was also interested in education and philanthropy.²⁴ Benjamin, like Thomas, had joined the Established Church. In 1838, Benjamin was created a baronet in acknowledgement of his parliamentary support of the 1832 Reform Bill. Thomas Heywood likewise achieved public office as Borough Reeve of Salford in 1826, and as High Sheriff of Herefordshire in 1840.²⁵

The Heywoods reinforced kinship ties through marriage to relatives. Mary's elder sister Margaret (d. Jan. 30 1894) married Sir Benjamin's son, her cousin (Sir) Thomas Percival Heywood (MP for Salford) (May 19th 1846). Mary Sumner's daughter Margaret Effie (1849-1916) married Arthur Percival the eldest son of her aunt Margaret in 1872.²⁶

In the winter of 1846 the Heywoods were in Rome with their daughters Margaret and Mary, where they were introduced to George Sumner (1824-1909). George, then aged 22, was enjoying a period of travel after graduating from Oxford and

²⁰Ibid., 5-6.

²¹Mary Sumner, *Account of Her Early Life at Hope End 1828-46*, LPL MU/MSS/2/12.

²²Sutton and Crosby, 'Thomas Heywood (1797-1866)'.

²³Sumner, 'Early Life'.

²⁴McConnell, 'Heywood, Sir Benjamin, First Baronet (1793-1865)'.

²⁵David W. Bebbington, 'Unitarian Members of Parliament in the Nineteenth Century', (2011). [<http://hdl.handle.net/1893/1647>, accessed 20 Aug. 2011].

²⁶Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*: 27-30; Heywood Sumner, 'Memorials of the Family of Sumner from the Sixteenth Century to 1904', (Southampton 1904). Porter, Woodward and Erskine give 1871 as the date for Margaret Effie's marriage in contradiction to other sources.

before taking Holy Orders. George was the son of Charles Sumner (1790-1874), Bishop of Winchester from 1827 until 1867 and the nephew of John Bird Sumner (1780-1862), who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1848.²⁷

Charles Sumner and John Bird Sumner were evangelical in religious outlook and were noted for their administrative abilities as Churchmen.²⁸ George Sumner's career was influenced by the positions held by his relatives. He was the beneficiary of family patronage, first as the chaplain to both his uncle and father and then in securing preferment to the living of Old Alresford near Winchester. George's later posts of Rural Dean, Archdeacon and Suffragan Bishop,²⁹ are illustrative of reforms in the administration of the Church,³⁰ that his relatives had been instrumental in effecting. He later achieved further advancement, through the patronage of friend and kinsman Samuel Wilberforce, who, in turn, had received patronage from Charles Sumner his predecessor as Bishop of Winchester.³¹

On 26th July 1848, Mary Heywood married George Sumner in a ceremony presided over by the bridegroom's father.³² George and Mary Sumner lived for two years at Crawley near Winchester, where George served as curate. Following the death of Jennie, Mrs Charles Sumner, George and Mary moved to Farnham Castle where George acted as domestic chaplain to his father.³³ Their first child Margaret Effie, was born in 1849, their second, Louisa Mary Alice (Loulie), in 1850 and son Heywood, later an artist and archaeologist, in 1853.³⁴ In 1882 Louisa married the Reverend Barrington Gore- Browne, a son of Edward Harold Browne the then

²⁷Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 9-10.

²⁸Joyce Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner Their Life and Times* (Westminster: Sumner Press, 1965), Chapters II to IV.

²⁹Mary Sumner, *Memoir of George Henry Sumner, D.D. Bishop of Guildford: Published for His Friends by Special Request* (Winchester: Warren and Sons, 1910), 54.67.78.

³⁰George Henry Sumner, ed. *Principles at Stake: Essays on Church Questions of the Day* (London: John Murray, 1868), 152.

³¹Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, Bishop Sumner introductory pages, Honorary Canon of Winchester Cathedral 1873; Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 70-72.

³²Sumner, 'Early Life'.

³³Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 8-14.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 22.

Bishop of Winchester. Heywood married Agnes Mary Benson the sister of his university friend the actor Frank Benson.³⁵

In 1851, George Sumner was given the living of Old Alresford by his father, where he and Mary spent the next thirty five years. They moved in upper-class society and were regular guests in local country houses.³⁶ George and Mary involved themselves in philanthropic and educational initiatives in the parish.³⁷ Mary Sumner participated in philanthropic projects in the Winchester district. She was a founding Associate of the GFS (1875) and served as its Diocesan President in 1887.³⁸ The GFS placed Mary Sumner in contact with the Hon. Ellen Joyce, of the British Women's Emigration Association (BWEA) and Charlotte Yonge, the novelist, who from 1891 edited the MU's *Mothers in Council*. Mary Sumner was also President of the Winchester Juvenile Union of the Church of England Temperance Society in 1886.³⁹

Mary and George Sumner were supporters of Anglican denominational education. George was treasurer of the Winchester Diocesan Training College for teachers from 1862, and its secretary from 1870 to 1878.⁴⁰ In 1896 Mary and George Sumner funded All Saints voluntary aided (elementary) school in Winchester.⁴¹

In 1880, George and Mary took an extended tour to Egypt and the Holy Land, which Mary commemorated in a published memoir, entitled '*Our Holiday in the East*'.⁴² They also travelled to Algiers in 1893, where in addition to visiting missionaries, Mary Sumner observed worship in a mosque. These experiences affirmed Mary Sumner's enthusiasm for Christian mission work amongst women overseas.⁴³

³⁵ Heywood Sumner, '*Memorials*', Edward Harold Browne appointed George as Suffragan Bishop of Guildford.

³⁶ Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 23-25.

³⁷ *Account of the Founding of the Mothers' Union and Parochial Work at Old Alresford*: LPL MU/MSS/1/2; *Memoir of George Sumner*, 15-22.

³⁸ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway; Being the History of the Girls' Friendly Society*, 210.

³⁹ Hampshire Chronicle, 'Church of England Temperance Society', *Hampshire Chronicle*, 16 Jan. 1886.

⁴⁰ Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 31.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 101-105.

⁴² Mary Elizabeth Sumner, *Our Holiday in the East* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1881).

⁴³ Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 92-99.

George Sumner became Archdeacon in 1885, which coincided with a move from Old Alresford to The Close in Winchester. In 1888, he was appointed Suffragan Bishop of Guildford.⁴⁴ The move to The Close coincided with the 1885 Portsmouth Church Congress, which is recorded as the catalyst for Mary Sumner's MU becoming a diocesan organisation.⁴⁵ By 1896, the MU was established as a centralised organisation and Mary Sumner served as its Central President until 1909.⁴⁶

After George's death in 1909, Mary Sumner was permitted to remain in his official residence. She continued to serve as Winchester Diocesan MU President until 1915. In 1917, Mary Sumner visited London for the opening of The Mary Sumner House, the new headquarters of the MU. She died in 1921, having lived to see the organisation she founded grow to a substantial transnational membership. Her funeral in Winchester Cathedral was attended by 4,000 mourners.⁴⁷ Her grave is behind the eastern end of the cathedral. She and George are also commemorated by plaques on the cathedral buttresses and in Old Alresford Church. The MU continues as a global Anglican organisation claiming four million members across eighty three countries.⁴⁸

Mary Sumner: primary sources

Mary Sumner was the author of three full length books and a short volume, *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, published in 1888. *Home Life* (1895) was a collection of material from journal articles concerned with promoting the MU.⁴⁹ *Our Holiday in the East* (1881) and *George Henry Sumner D.D. Bishop of Guildford* (1910) were respectively a travel diary and a memoir; both were published for private circulation.⁵⁰ *Our Holiday* presents an account of an extended family tour of the Holy Land. *George Henry Sumner D.D. Bishop of Guildford*, written when

⁴⁴Ibid., 53-55.

⁴⁵Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 21-24.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷The Times, 'Obituary of Mary Sumner'.

⁴⁸Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*; The Mothers' Union, [<http://www.themothersunion.org> accessed 28 July 2012].

⁴⁹Sumner, *Home Life*.

⁵⁰*Our Holiday*; *Memoir of George Sumner*.

Mary Sumner was recently widowed in 1910, eulogises her husband and recounts his career as a clergyman. Mary Sumner is a presence in the narrative, which gives attention to married life and the MU.

Mary Sumner was also the author of pamphlets and speeches. The thesis draws on evidence from the journals *Mothers' in Council (MIC)* dating from January 1891, which was aimed at women of the 'higher classes' who took leadership roles within the organisation and *The Mothers' Union Journal (MUJ)*, dating from January 1888, for members of lower social status. These journals feature articles by Mary Sumner concerned with promoting the aims of the MU. They are collected in the Church of England Record Centre.

The Hampshire Record Office holds the Winchester Diocesan Mothers' Union archive which dates from 1886 and related material including earlier sources on the GFS, relevant to Mary Sumner and to some of her network in the local context.⁵¹ The largest source of evidence relating to Mary Sumner is located in the MU archive in Lambeth Palace Library. The collection comprises material retained by the central organisation of the MU. The bulk of the material consists of minutes of committee meetings but this thesis draws to a greater extent on the manuscript sources, correspondence and printed materials by Mary Sumner and others in the collection.⁵²

The absence of Mary Sumner's personal papers, which were destroyed on her death in 1921, leaves a gap in the evidence. Joyce Coombs comments, 'the attics of the house in The Close were packed with bundles of letters, newspapers, sermons, service papers and notices, accumulated over thirty years or more [...] it was all consigned to the flames'.⁵³ [This was done by Heywood Sumner, Mary

⁵¹ WDMU, HRO 145/M85, also Hampshire Chronicle various editions; Lady Laura Ridding. *An Account Written by Laura E. Ridding of Her Married Life at Winchester 1876-1884*: Selborne Papers 9M68/73/36, HRO 9M68/73/36; Sophia Wickham. c.1894-98, Wickham of Binsted: HRO 38M49.

⁵² Sumner, 'Early Life', are examples from the MU Collection which also includes Central Council Minutes and committee proceedings; 'Founding'; *Letters to Mrs Maude*, 1908-1920: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/4; *Letters to Lady Chichester Central President of the Mothers' Union*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/2; Lady Horatia Erskine, *A History of the Mothers' Union*: LPL MU/MSS/1/5.

⁵³ Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 1; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 34, provides a hint at what was lost in a reference that must refer to shortly before Mary

Sumner's son and executor of the will.] However, some correspondence by Mary Sumner, relating to MU matters, can be found in the Lambeth MU Archive and there are a few letters in the Winchester Diocesan MU Collection amongst which are three that may be considered of a personal nature. Thus the remaining correspondence reflects Mary Sumner in her persona as 'Foundress' of the MU.⁵⁴

Much of the remaining material was also produced to forward the aims of the MU, or to record its development. *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work* and *A Short History of the Mothers' Union*, which were published in the same volume (1921) and *Fifty Years* (1926), fit the latter category and valorise Mary Sumner as the 'Foundress' of the society.⁵⁵ Early published histories of the GFS, *The Girls Friendly Society* (1902, 1905) and *Friendship's Highway* (1926) which pertain to Mary Sumner in her network were produced with a similar promotional agenda.⁵⁶

Evidence from Mary Sumner's family is represented by material by her husband, George and niece, Isobel Heywood. George Sumner's most substantial publications were a memoir of his father, *Life of C. R. Sumner D.D., Bishop of Winchester, During a Forty Years' Episcopate* (1876) and the edited collection of essays on Anglican doctrine, *Principles at Stake* (1868).⁵⁷ Isabel Heywood also contributed to the popular genre of memoir with *Reminiscences, Letters and Journals of Thomas Percival Heywood, Baronet* (1899), her father, who was both cousin and brother-in-law to Mary Sumner.⁵⁸ The genealogy of the extensive Sumner family, which recorded the many clergymen and clergy wives in the family, was compiled in 1904 by Heywood Sumner.⁵⁹

Sumner's death when they note: 'Piles of letters from Miss Yonge showing how closely and harmoniously they worked together'.

⁵⁴For letters as a means of self projection and constructed identities mediated by the audience being addressed, see Rebecca Earle, *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999); Liz Stanley, *The Auto/Biographical I: Theory and Practice of Feminist Autobiography* (Manchester: University Press, 1992), 211.

⁵⁵Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*; Erskine, 'A History of the Mothers' Union'; Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years* (Westminster: The Mothers' Union, 1926).

⁵⁶Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society*; Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway: Being the History of the Girls' Friendly Society*.

⁵⁷George Henry Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner, D.D., Bishop of Winchester, During a Forty Years' Episcopate* (London, 1876); Sumner, *Principles*.

⁵⁸Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*.

⁵⁹Sumner, *Memorials*.

The thesis uses the writings of women who were associated with the MU and GFS, or who linked to Mary Sumner through religious affiliation, or locality. These sources are predominantly in relation to the official account of the early MU, or to Mary Sumner's promotion of MU aims. In addition to material in *'Mothers in Council'*, *'The Mothers' Union Journal'*, *'Friendly Leaves'* and the *'GFS Associates Journal'*, material has been drawn from the novels, journalism and letters of Charlotte Yonge and the diary, speeches and writing of Lady Laura Ridding.⁶⁰ The memoir of Louise Creighton provides a rare source of negative opinion on Mary Sumner, the GFS and the MU,⁶¹ Evidence is also drawn from magazines, local and national newspapers and from reports of speeches delivered at the Anglican Church Congresses from 1885.⁶²

The early official accounts of the MU are considered as primary sources and treated as presenting an authorised perspective. *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work* (written at the instigation of Mary Sumner's daughter) and *A Short History of the Mothers' Union* were prepared from manuscript recollections of Mary Sumner's childhood and the genesis of the organisation, *Account of her Early Life at Hope End 1828-46* and *Account of the Founding of the Mothers' Union and Parochial Work at Old Alresford*,⁶³ and from the notes of her friend and MU activist, Lady Horatia Erskine.⁶⁴

The consistency of 'voice' between Mary Sumner's published materials and correspondence raises issues concerning the interpretation of the presentation of a public agenda. Through drawing upon material produced by, or relating to members of Mary Sumner's networks, the thesis seeks to redress the incompleteness of a record that contains few sources of a private nature by giving

⁶⁰Examples include: Charlotte Mary Yonge, *The Two Sides of the Shield* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1885); Charlotte Yonge, 'Conversation on the Mothers' Union', *The Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Younger Members of the Church of England*, 1 Sep. 1887; Lady Laura Ridding. *Home Duties and Relations of the Educated Woman; an Address to the Wolverhampton Church Congress on Women Workers 1887*: HRO Selborne Papers 9M68/73/7; *The War Chronicles Part I 1914*: HRO Selborne Papers 9M68/95.

⁶¹Louise Creighton, *Memoir of a Victorian Woman: Reflections of Louise Creighton 1850-1936* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994).

⁶²Mary Sumner, *Paper Read at the Church Congress in Hull 1890*: LPL MU/MSS/2/1/4 and George Henry Sumner, *Address at the Church Congress in Hull 1890*, Mothers Union: LPL MU/MSS.2/1/3, are examples.

⁶³Sumner, 'Early Life'; 'Founding'.

⁶⁴Erskine, 'A History of the Mother's Union'.

contextual location to the material. However material (including fiction) produced by members of Mary Sumner's network is also regarded with the agenda of the author in mind. Although the sources provide information relevant to a descriptive analysis which identifies agents and activities, this thesis also uses perspective analysis to interpret a perspectival record weighted towards material produced for public consumption. June Purvis encapsulates the perspective analysis approach which the thesis will bring to interrogation of evidence:

What is important is whether the text is representative of the perspectives of the social categories to which one is assigning the author(s). Once again, the text may well be compared with others, but this time with those produced by other members of that social category.⁶⁵

Standpoint of the author

The historiography of the categories of 'women's', 'feminist' and 'gender' history⁶⁶ and of education demonstrates that historians are, like the subjects they choose for enquiry, time and value bound. Bourdieu uses the concept of reflexivity which calls for 'conscious self-referencing' in an attempt to reduce biases from social origin and references, academic location (power and status) and intellectual assumptions.⁶⁷ This applies to agents and to the disciplinary structures in which they operate and challenges practitioners to address presuppositions systematically in the 'unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought'.⁶⁸ This idea relates to history, as practised by agents, temporally and spatially located, subject to mind set and assumptions of value [habitus] and seeking recognition [symbolic capital]. Bourdieu's concept of reflexivity resonates with Sue Morgan's call for the 'perpetual interrogation of dominant historical concepts and categories'.⁶⁹

⁶⁵June Purvis, 'Using Primary Sources When Researching Women's History from a Feminist Perspective', *Women's History Review* 1, no. 2 (1992): 276.

⁶⁶Susan Morgan, ed. *The Feminist History Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006); Ruth Watts, 'Gendering the Story: Change in the History of Education', *History of Education* 34, no. 3 (2005): 225-241. Joyce Goodman, 'The Gendered Politics of Historical Writing in History of Education', *History of Education* 41, no. 1 (2012): 9-24.

⁶⁷Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 38.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 40.

⁶⁹Sue Morgan, 'Theorising Feminist History: A Thirty Year Retrospective', *Women's History Review* 18, no. 3 (2009): 339.

I follow Bourdieu in recognising that the act of theorising is not a detached activity but an act of practical involvement with the subject and acknowledge my location in respect of Mary Sumner.⁷⁰ Mary Sumner's views on religion, gender roles, sexual morality and social stratification are at some distance to my values, as a secular feminist, formed in the twentieth century. Yet her activism may be interpreted as contributing towards the opening of the horizons of possibility available to me. Her views on parenting and education resonate to some degree with my own beliefs and experience as a teacher.⁷¹ I admire her energy and dedication to a cause and her sense of certainty, affirmative experience of marriage and the recognition she received is also enviable. Her writings reveal glimpses of warmth and humour. Yet, the religious agenda and rhetoric of much of her archive means that her inner life remains intriguingly elusive. Bourdieu's attitude to engagement with the study of a life trajectory encapsulates my intention:

To try to really situate one's mind in the place the interviewee occupies in the social space from necessity by starting to question them from that point, in order to take their part in it in some way [...] is not to project oneself into others in the way that phenomenologists claim. It is to give oneself a generic and genetic understanding of who they are, based on the theoretical and practical command of the social conditions which produced them.⁷²

To this end I follow Bourdieu in being conscious of the fallacy inherent in an unthinking assumption of objectivity and acknowledge his observation that there is no point outside the system from which to gain a neutral disinterested perspective.⁷³ Yet in presenting arguments rooted in evidence I strive to achieve a methodological approach and a theoretical perspective towards understanding Mary Sumner as a woman of her times that is respectful to her and to the disciplinary traditions of historical scholarship.

⁷⁰Craig J. Calhoun, Edward Li Puma and Moishe Postone, eds., *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 6.

⁷¹Mary Sumner, 'Obedience' in *Home Life*, 25-33. This lays out Mary Sumner's views on consistent parenting and the importance of loving and gentle treatment as an aid to education.

⁷²Michael Grenfell and David James, *Bourdieu and Education: Acts of Practical Theory* (London: Falmer Press, 1998), 174.

⁷³Calhoun, Li Puma and Postone, *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, 6.

In the following section I argue for gender as a lens for the scrutiny of Mary Sumner. A later chapter on theoretical stance and methodological approaches provides a framework that aims to reconcile gender with the analytical framework that will be provided by my deployment of Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, field and capital.

Mary Sumner and the lens of gender

This thesis is mindful of the theoretical stances of 'women's history', feminism and gender.⁷⁴ These are distinct but not mutually exclusive categories, as Jane Rendall notes.⁷⁵ They represent a tradition of dynamic scholarship in the on-going project of history as knowledge production, which as organisational and interpretative, always involves theoretical assumptions.⁷⁶ The work of scholars of different theoretical perspectives has informed awareness of key themes and issues in the period in which Mary Sumner was located but work with a focus on gender has been most influential to the stance taken in the thesis.⁷⁷

Mary Sumner was recognised in her life time, valorised by her organisation and has been 'written into' an institutional history of the Anglican Church.⁷⁸ She does not present an obvious case for a reinstatement of an overlooked narrative. Nor, as a woman from a dominant class, who exercised patronage over others, can she be categorised exclusively as an oppressed victim of her biological sex.⁷⁹ Joan

⁷⁴Morgan, *The Feminist History Reader*; Goodman, 'The Gendered Politics of Historical Writing in History of Education'.

⁷⁵Jane Rendall, 'Uneven Developments: Women's History, Feminist History and Gender History in Great Britain', in *Writing Women's History: International Perspectives*, ed. Karen R. Offen, Ruth Roach Pierson and Jane Rendall (London: Macmillan, 1991).

⁷⁶Morgan, *The Feminist History Reader*, 3.

⁷⁷Joan W. Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053-1075; Joan Wallach Scott, 'Gender: Still a Useful Category of Analysis?' *Diogenes* (2010), [<http://dio.sagepub.com/content/57/1/7.refs.html>, accessed 20 Oct. 2010]; Sue Morgan and Jacqueline de Vries, *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, eds (London: Routledge, 2010); Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England, 1760-1860*.

⁷⁸Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*.

⁷⁹Morgan, *The Feminist History Reader*, 3. I interpret Mary Sumner's social status as upper middle class and deploy the usage upper/middle class to refer to the diverse positions amongst the social milieu within which Mary Sumner was located and to which she claimed allegiance. See David Cannadine, *Class in Britain* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1998).

Scott's claim, that the category of 'woman' is insufficiently nuanced to allow exploration of the complexity of social causation and the diversity of situations experienced by different women, is applicable to Mary Sumner.⁸⁰ Drawing on Joan Scott, Joyce Goodman notes that gender, 'draws on work dealing with women, but refers to socially constructed notions of femininity and masculinity, the gendering of concepts, institutions and social orders and new forms of association.'⁸¹ It is not a substitution of woman as a separate category, for gender acknowledges that women's socio-sexual identities are not constructed in isolation in a separate sphere.⁸²

Mary Sumner's identity and her activism were framed within gendered socio-cultural structures which prioritised masculine power and authority. The Established Church was patriarchal in excluding women from positions of power and in asserting biblical authority to legitimise their subordinate position.⁸³ Religion was significant in framing female identities and was drawn on to legitimise activism in philanthropy and education.⁸⁴ Similar exclusions (despite some amendments) were evident in the civil, legal and financial status accorded to women throughout much of Mary Sumner's lifetime. Again, despite an increase in educational provision over the period (1850-1921), access to education and curricula was also mediated by belonging to the category of

⁸⁰Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

⁸¹Goodman, 'The Gendered Politics of Historical Writing in History of Education', 11.

⁸²Linda Kerber, 'Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place; the Rhetoric of Womens' History', *Journal of American History* 75, no. 1 (1988): 9-39; Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres': a Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', in *Gender and History in Western Europe*, ed. Robert Shoemaker and Mary Vincent (London: Addison- Wesley Longman, 1998); Morgan, 'Theorising Feminist History: A Thirty Year Retrospective'.

⁸³Sean Gill, *Women and the Church of England: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1994), 11-38, 76-89.

⁸⁴Frank Prochaska, *The Angel out of the House: Philanthropy and Gender in Nineteenth-Century England* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2002); Morgan and de Vries, *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*; Eileen Janes Yeo, 'Some Paradoxes of Empowerment', in *Radical Femininity: Womens' Self Representation in the Public Sphere*, ed. Eileen Janes Yeo (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

woman.⁸⁵ For Ruth Watts, gender is a relevant factor in what is counted as knowledge and who should possess it.⁸⁶

This thesis acknowledges that patriarchy exists in various forms and that women collectively are likely to be disempowered relative to men within their group.⁸⁷ However, it follows Sheila Rowbotham's rejection of patriarchy as 'a single determining cause of women's subordination'.⁸⁸ This singular theoretical categorisation fails to account for interacting systems of domination such as class, 'race', religion or education. 'Nor [as Rowbotham claims] does it carry any notion of how women might act to transform their situation'.⁸⁹ Sarah Jane Aiston's observation that the negotiation of social and cultural circumstances 'has [sometimes] involved internalizing or performing to received stereotypes', is applied to consideration of Mary Sumner.⁹⁰

Morgan suggests that gender research does not discount patriarchy or male privilege because it addresses the signification of unequal relationships of power.⁹¹ According to Morgan: 'Whereas androcentric methodology has disguised the constituted nature of masculinity by defining it as normative, gender research reveals that men are equally conditioned by their relationships with women and other males.'⁹² Gender research seeks to interrogate these positions.⁹³

⁸⁵Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 112-130; Joan Burstyn, *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

⁸⁶Watts, 'Gendering the Story: Change in the History of Education'; See also Goodman, 'The Gendered Politics of Historical Writing in History of Education', Goodman claims gender has shaped the discipline of the history of education.

⁸⁷Linda McDowell, *Gender, Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies* (London: Polity Press, 1999), 15-25.

⁸⁸Sheila Rowbotham, 'The Trouble with Patriarchy', in *The Feminist History Reader*, ed. Sue Morgan (London: New York: Routledge, 2007), 52.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 53.

⁹⁰Sarah Jane Aiston, 'Women, Education and Agency, 1600-2000: an Historical Perspective', in *Women, Education and Agency*, ed. Jean Spence, Sarah Jane Aiston and Maureen Meikle (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 6.

⁹¹Morgan, *The Feminist History Reader*, 12.

⁹²Morgan, *A Passion for Purity*, 11; John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven, [Conn.] and London: Yale University Press, 2007).

⁹³Morgan, *The Feminist History Reader*, 11.

Scott and Morgan consider gender a tool in an analysis of experience that looks beyond categorisations of oppression to consider the negotiation, replication and transference of power within the fluidities of public and private space.⁹⁴

Mary Sumner's activism is not conceived of in the context of a single sex, nor is it divorced from class and religion. This thesis adopts the stance that although her agency was mediated through her complicity with, and authorisation from, male dominated power structures, her educational mission to reform national life by promoting religiously approved behaviour, articulated notions of manliness, advocated improvement in the conduct of men as well as women and engaged with public issues. The thesis will draw on evidence relating to Mary Sumner's experience of family life and to her writings, which include addresses to husbands and fathers, to illuminate her understanding of masculinity and what she saw as the appropriate relations (and conduct) between men and women.

This thesis will use the lens of gender to explore the making of meaning around sexual difference. Gender is understood as being socially and culturally constructed, negotiable and positional. Gender also permits acknowledgement of 'race', class, affluence, education and religion as mediating factors in access to opportunity or exclusion from power.⁹⁵ Gender embedded in these mediating factors will be used to examine the construction of the identity of agents and the negotiation of power within structures.⁹⁶ However, as Scott observes, the recognition of gender as a category does not explain the negotiation or transformation of power and relationships.⁹⁷ So 'an insight into the structures of domination' will be sought in order to illuminate the position of Mary Sumner.⁹⁸ The thesis will consider gender as a mediating factor within an examination of the interplay of agents and structures, adopting the theoretical position and conceptual tools of Bourdieu in analysing the negotiation or transformation of relationships in relation to power.

⁹⁴Morgan, *Women, Religion and Feminism in Britain, 1750-1900* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 11.

⁹⁵Joan Scott, *Feminism and History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3.

⁹⁶Scott, 'Gender: Still a Useful Category of Analysis?'

⁹⁷Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*.

⁹⁸John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005), 7.

Chapter 1 - Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter argues that existing material relating to Mary Sumner gives room for a further analysis of her location in networks in relation to the formation of her identity and negotiation of agency;¹ an analysis which emphasises gender as a mediator of opportunity, considers religion as a social construct and seeks to locate her as a popular educator.² Through an analysis of existing material the chapter will also show that the life and activism of Mary Sumner has not been considered from a perspective that accounts for the relational interplay of agents and structures in constructions of authority and transactions of power. The following chapter will explore ways in which the ideas of Bourdieu inform the theoretical stance and methodological approach of the thesis.

This chapter will analyse existing works concerned with Mary Sumner. It will discuss the utility of locating an individual life in the context of other agents and references to members of Mary Sumner's kinship and social networks will be noted. Mary Sumner will be related to literature dealing with religion as informative of the wider context which framed her views and activism. Material on the status of women in the (Anglican) Church and themes of spiritual womanhood and motherhood will be considered. Philanthropy will be discussed with reference to identity and agency. The idea of mission and motherhood in the imperial context in relation to women's identities will also be noted. The implications of the religious construction of women's identities will be considered in relation to education and educational activism. The chapter will end by identifying ways in which this thesis builds on existing work relating to Mary Sumner.

¹Gunter, *Leaders and Leadership in Education*, 5. For Gunter identity is a dynamic 'socialised and socialising process' that concerns positioning of the self; Aiston, 'Women, Education and Agency, 1600-2000 an Historical Perspective', 1-8.

²Wardle, *English Popular Education*; Harold Silver, 'Knowing and Not Knowing in the History of Education', *History of Education* 21, no. 1 (1992): 97-108. I follow Wardle in considering education to include socialisation beyond institutional provision and Silver in seeing religion as a mediator in educational initiatives.

Mary Sumner: existing literature

There is no scholarly biography exclusively devoted to Mary Sumner. Cordelia Moyses's *A History of the Mothers Union: Women, Anglicanism and Globalisation 1876-2008*, (2009), is the only scholarly work to date exclusively devoted to the history of the MU. Prior to this major work the MU published Moyses's pamphlet, *The Mothers' Union 1876-2001: 125 Years of Caring for the Family*.³ The 2009 work is authoritative on the development of the organisation and in its reference to official archival sources, which have, since its publication become available in the Lambeth Palace Library MU Archive. Moyses recognises Mary Sumner as a dominant presence in the early development of the organisation and acknowledges her social milieu and clerical connections.⁴ The work refers to education with reference to a corporate response to the Education Acts of 1870, 1902 and 1944. However, Moyses's interest is in the development of the whole organisation and she takes a focus on the spiritual empowerment of MU members worldwide and their achievement of a space within the Anglican Church.

This thesis takes a different approach by putting Mary Sumner at the centre and exploring further the contextual circumstances of kinship, class and education that contributed to her religiously legitimised gendered identity and views. It also emphasises Mary Sumner as an educator and explores her views on childhood, childrearing and the implications of these for the education of mothers and for society.⁵

The earliest account of Mary Sumner and the MU, *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work*, was published in 1921 in conjunction with *A Short History of the Mothers' Union*.⁶ Canon John Vaughn's pamphlet, *A Short Memoir of Mary Sumner, Founder of the Mothers' Union*, appeared the same year.⁷ Five years later, *Fifty Years*, which was largely similar to the previous *Short History of the Mothers' Union*, was published, without authorial attribution, by the MU to celebrate the half

³*The Mothers' Union, 1876-2001: 125 Years Caring for the Family* (London: MU, 2001).

⁴*History of the Mothers' Union*, 28, 29,32.

⁵*Ibid.*, 70, 139, 187.

⁶Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*.

⁷John Vaughan and Mary Elizabeth Sumner, *A Short Memoir of Mary Sumner, Founder of the Mothers' Union [with Portrait.]* (Winchester: Warren & Son, 1921).

centenary of the organisation.⁸ A second edition of *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work* was published in 1928 to mark the centenary of Mary Sumner's birth. These early publications present officially authorised, valorous accounts of Mary Sumner and the MU and as noted in the introduction, are considered as primary sources.

Later publications which reference Mary Sumner were also written by MU activists. In 1958, Violet Lancaster produced *A Short History of the Mothers Union*, advocating the aims of the organisation and aimed at MU officials.⁹ The centenary of the MU in 1976 and the publication of *New Dimensions*, a re-evaluation of MU organisational objectives in response to perceived social pressure on family life,¹⁰ provided the catalyst for Olive Parker's *For the Family's Sake: a History of the Mothers' Union, 1876-1976*.¹¹ Parker provides a synthesis of the previous histories of the organisation, articulated for an audience of contemporary MU members. The chapter headings and cover emphasise the worldwide presence of the organisation. However, Parker's observation that Mary Sumner was a woman of her time, intent on preserving the values of her class remains pertinent.¹² A further short account of the MU, *Mission Unlimited; the Story of the Mothers' Union* by Florence Hill was published in 1988.¹³

Joyce Coombs, a former London Diocesan President of the MU, gives a sympathetic narrative of Mary Sumner and her husband in *George and Mary Sumner Their Life and Times*.¹⁴ This locates the careers, religious views and family life of George's relatives, his uncle John Bird Sumner, Archbishop of Canterbury and father, Charles Sumner, the Bishop of Winchester, in a historical context. Coombs includes Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, the distant kinsman of the Sumner family and identifies the links of patronage between them. Coombs does not attribute her sources, some of which are anecdotes from anonymous

⁸MU, *Fifty Years*.

⁹Violet Lancaster, *A Short History of the Mothers' Union* (London: MU, 1958).

¹⁰Bishop of Willesden, *New Dimensions: The Report of the Bishop of Willesden's Commission on the Objects and Policy of the Mothers' Union* (London: S.P.C.K., 1972).

¹¹Olive Parker, *For the Family's Sake: A History of the Mothers' Union, 1876-1976* (Folkestone: Bailey and Swinfen, 1975).

¹²Parker, *For the Family's Sake*, 21.

¹³Florence Hill, *Mission Unlimited* (MU, 1988); Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*.

¹⁴Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*.

eyewitnesses.¹⁵ Some references to Mary Sumner and the MU may be traced to the materials in the Lambeth Palace MU archive, previous accounts of the MU and writing by Mary Sumner, including *Our Holiday in the East* and *George Henry Sumner D.D. Bishop of Guildford*, the memoir of her husband.¹⁶

The significance of Mary Sumner's views in informing the aims and practice of the MU is noted by both Sean Gill and Brian Heeney in their perspectives on women in the Church of England.¹⁷ Brian Harrison has referred to Mary Sumner as a significant participant in the leadership of the Anglican Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) (from 1875), which in structure and religious aims, provided both inspiration and an organisational model for the MU.¹⁸ In Owen Chadwick's extensive *Victorian Church*, attention to Mary Sumner and the MU is confined to two pages and his assertion that Mary Sumner was 'wholly without patronage' invites interrogation.¹⁹

Mary Sumner is given attention in two MA theses which engage with themes examined in this thesis. Gary Wilson's 'To What Extent was Mary Sumner's Mothers' Union (1876-1909) Anti-Feminist', engages with Mary Sumner's conservative interpretation of female roles and notes the social stratification manifest in the MU despite its claims to be socially inclusive.²⁰ Barbara Miller's 'Moral Purity and the Servant Problem: The Interaction of Winchester Ladies and Winchester Women Circa 1884-1910', takes the investigation of class as its perspective and focuses on the social status and religious identities of local Anglican women philanthropists, including Mary Sumner.²¹

¹⁵Ibid., 88. Coombs notes the contribution of Mrs Carlyon Evans, the daughter of Mary Sumner's daughter Louisa Gore Browne.

¹⁶*Our Holiday; Memoir of George Sumner*.

¹⁷Brian Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England, 1850-1930* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988); Gill, *Women and the Church of England*.

¹⁸Brian Harrison, 'For Church Queen and Family: the Girls' Friendly Society 1874-1920', *Past and Present* 61(1973): 107-138.

¹⁹Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901* (London: A. and C. Black, 1972), 192-193.

²⁰Gary Wilson, 'To What Extent Was Mary Sumner's Mothers' Union (1876-1909) Anti-Feminist?' (MA thesis Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, 1992).

²¹Barbara Miller, 'Moral Purity and the Servant Problem: the Interaction of Winchester Ladies and Winchester Women Circa 1884-1910' (MA thesis King Alfred's College University of Southampton 2001).

Mary Sumner is the subject of two journal articles relevant to the thesis enquiry which focus on her as an educator. 'Mary Sumner and Maternal Authority: From the Rectory to the Homes of the Nation' engages with the sources of authority she drew upon to legitimise her message. 'A 'Mission to Civilise': The Popular Educational Vision of the Anglican Mothers' Union and Girls' Friendly Society 1886-1926', considers how the aims of the societies were informed and the strategies that were drawn upon to put them into practice.²²

The significance of networks

Mary Sumner can be linked with numbers of significant individuals through kinship, social milieu or affiliation to interest groups.²³ This thesis locates Mary Sumner within her networks in terms of her identity and views networks as mediating of her horizons of possibility and as instrumental in forwarding her aims. It follows Barbara Caine in looking at individuals in the context of their familial and social networks to illuminate the intersecting boundaries of private lives and public action. Caine maintains a collective approach is useful for dealing with gender and religion as cultural constructions, mediated by personal associations, as informative of identities, opportunities and sense of purpose. For Caine, this avoids the potential distortion of a focus on an individual exceptional subject detached from context and contributes to an understanding of the circumstances applicable to the collective experience of women.²⁴ Eileen Janes Yeo sees women's friendship and kinship networks as significant in the establishment and organisation of philanthropic projects.²⁵ Jane Martin and Joyce Goodman also demonstrate the value of situating women within their personal

²²Sue Anderson-Faithful, 'Mary Sumner and Maternal Authority: From the Drawing Room to the Homes of the Nation', *History of Education Researcher* 89(2012): 18-26; Susan Anderson-Faithful, 'A 'Mission to Civilise': The Popular Educational Vision of the Anglican Mothers' Union and Girls' Friendly Society 1886-1926' [Uma 'Missão para Civilizar': a Visão de Educação Popular do Sindicato de Mães Anglicanas e da Sociedade de Amigas das Moças (1886-1926).] *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação* 11, no. 1 [28] (2012): 15-43.

²³Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 29.

²⁴Barbara Caine, 'Feminist Biography and Feminist History', *Women's History Review* 3, no. 2 (1992): 247-260.

²⁵Eileen Janes Yeo, 'The Creation of 'Motherhood' and Women's Responses in Britain and France 1750-1914', *Women's History Review* 8, no. 1 (1999): 201-221.

and organisational networks as a means to explore transactions of power in the context of women and education.²⁶

Peter Cunningham, writing in the context of progressive educational reformers, traces the emergence of Froebelian organization from the collaboration of a number of powerful women.²⁷ He asserts the significance of agents occupying positions of power and having relationships to structures invested with authority, a notion that the thesis applies to Mary Sumner who secured recognition for the MU, nationally and transnationally, from the Anglican Church.²⁸ Cunningham suggests prosopography as a tool for examining individuals within contextual networks as representative of a common category or characteristics common to the group. He claims that prosopography is useful in assembling 'the experiences, the attitudes and the manner of their subsequent recollection and reconstruction for a significant feature of networks is that they act to produce the non-material resource of knowledge'.²⁹ The thesis draws on this approach to analyse Mary Sumner's identity and agency and to see her as exemplifying group characteristics or as potentially innovative.³⁰

Characteristics of what Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink's categorise as 'advocacy networks' include a belief that individuals with common goals can make a difference. Characteristics also include the use of information and the employment by non-governmental actors of political strategies.³¹ Keck and Sikkink identify campaigning as an attribute of advocacy networks: 'They seek to maximize their influence or leverage over the target of their actions.'³² In asserting religious values, drawing support from like minded contacts and producing informative literature, Mary Sumner exhibits characteristics that can be

²⁶Jane Martin and Joyce Goodman, *Women and Education 1800-1980* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004):7-26.

²⁷Peter Cunningham, 'Innovators, Networks and Structures: Towards a Prosopography of Progressivism', *History of Education* 30, no. 5 (2001): 441.

²⁸Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 24, 30.

²⁹Cunningham, 'Innovators, Networks and Structures', 451.

³⁰The following chapter will argue that this is compatible with the analysis which deploys Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus (informative circumstances), field (spheres of action) and capital (values and valued attributes and knowledge).

³¹Margaret Keck and Kathryn A. Sikkink, *Advocacy Networks in International Politics, Activists Beyond Borders* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 2-3.

³²*Ibid.*, 3.

located within this analysis.³³ The thesis considers Mary Sumner in relation to Keck and Sikkink's notion that:

Network actors bring new norms ideas and discourses... In so doing they contribute to changing perceptions that both state and societal actors may have of their identities, interests and preferences, to transforming their discursive positions and ultimately to changing procedure, policies and behaviour.³⁴

Eckhardt Fuchs also sees networks as communicative structures which link horizontally between individuals, groups or corporate actors with similar interests. He suggests that networks determine social relations and generate economic and social power.³⁵ Fuchs identifies 'exchange theory', which assumes that organisations establish voluntary relations for the transfer of desired resources, as in the case of Keck and Sikkink's category of advocacy network and the contrasting 'power dependency theory' which asserts that relations are based on competition for advantage and thus involve conflict and power.³⁶ For Fuchs, a key purpose of the study of networks is to illuminate the interaction between individuals and structures and the unofficial social interactions which consist of less well documented or quantifiable data. He uses the term social capital to distinguish the characteristics of networks as sustaining to individuals and as authorising values.³⁷ The thesis applies these notions to examine Mary Sumner's negotiation of agency and claims to authority in relation to the Anglican Church and in a gendered and socially stratified social context.

The notion of networks as producers of knowledge has been addressed in the context of education by Ruth Watts.³⁸ Such knowledge can be formal, as in publications, or through informal means such as correspondence. Mary Sumner was both a copious letter writer and producer of published material³⁹ and made

³³Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 27-34.

³⁴Keck and Sikkink, *Advocacy Networks*, 2.

³⁵Eckhardt Fuchs, 'Networks and the History of Education', *Paedagogica Historica* 42, no. 2 (2007): 185.

³⁶Ibid.; Keck and Sikkink, *Advocacy Networks*, 8-10.

³⁷The following chapter will define this term as understood by Bourdieu and in relation to the analysis used by the thesis.

³⁸Ruth Watts, 'Some Radical Educational Networks of the Late Eighteenth Century and Their Influence', *History of Education* 27, no. 2 (1998): 1-14.

³⁹Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 27.

use of her contacts transnationally and in imperial colonies.⁴⁰ Stephanie Spencer identifies the extensive use of correspondence made by Charlotte Mason (1842-1923) (who influenced Mary Sumner) as essential to the success of her 'Parents' National Educational Union'.⁴¹ Similarly, Tanya Fitzgerald shows how women in the colonial context networking through the exchange of letters, used these accounts to give authority to their experiences.⁴² These accounts point to analysis of Mary Sumner's use of correspondence to disseminate her views.

For Joyce Goodman, the spatial dimension of the transnational transfer of ideas is of key interest.⁴³ The category of transnational, understood as extending or operating across national boundaries, is deployed in the thesis to accommodate discussion of Mary Sumner's engagement with, and communication across, diverse 'overseas' spaces which extended beyond British colonial rule. Catherine Hall and Sonia Rose follow the theme of networks as producers of knowledge by noting the impact of empire as imagined; constructed and embedded in identity in the metropole. They identify the inclusion of those 'at home' in the missionary project through intersecting with networks on the periphery and locate various media in this process.⁴⁴ Clare Midgley's identification of the significance of international networks amongst women motivated by religion is affirmed by Moyses's claim that MU growth overseas drew on the involvement of interested

⁴⁰ Clare Midgley, 'Women, Religion and Reform', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. Sue Morgan and Jacqueline de Vries (London: Routledge, 2010); Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 79.

⁴¹ Stephanie Spencer, 'Knowledge as the Necessary Food of the Mind': Charlotte Mason's Philosophy of Education', in *Women, Education and Agency, 1600-2000*, ed. Spence, Aiston and Meikle (London and New York: Routledge, 2010). Spencer also notes the spread of Mason's ideas across the empire amongst women trying to home school their children.

⁴² Tanya Fitzgerald, 'Cartographies of Friendship: Mapping Missionary Women's Educational Networks in Aotearoa/New Zealand, 1823-40', *History of Education* 32, no. 5 (2003): 513-527; 'Archives of Memory and Memories of Archive: CMS Women's Letters and Diaries, 1823-35', *History of Education* 34, no. 6 (2005): 657-674. See also Rebecca Earle, *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999); Liz Stanley, *The Auto/Biographical I: Theory and Practice of Feminist Autobiography* (Manchester University Press, 1992), 211.

⁴³ Joyce Goodman, 'Social Change and Secondary Schooling for Girls in the 'Long 1920s': European Engagements', *History of Education* 36, no. 4-5 (2007): 497-513; 'Working for Change across International Borders: The Association of Headmistresses and Education for International Citizenship', *Paedagogica Historica* 43, no. 1 (2007): 165-180.

⁴⁴ Catherine Hall and Sonia O. Rose, eds., *At Home with the Empire Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

women in various locations.⁴⁵ The thesis analyses the role of Mary Sumner in this process and examines her views as mediated by religion in relation to 'women's mission', 'race' and empire.

Mary Sumner's network: bishops; bishops' wives; Anglican activists

Members of Mary Sumner's networks exhibit shared interests in religion, philanthropy and mission, which in seeking to influence popular behaviour may be perceived as educational.⁴⁶ Members of her networks also have class affiliation and frequently clerical milieu and geographical location as common attributes. Mary Sumner and numbers of individuals closely associated with her are recognised in the Dictionary of National Biography (DNB). Amongst other male relatives, the DNB features her father Thomas Heywood,⁴⁷ her father-in-law Bishop Charles Sumner⁴⁸ and her son Heywood Sumner (1853-1940).⁴⁹ The DNB also has entries for Samuel Wilberforce (1805-1873),⁵⁰ his son Ernest (1840-1907),⁵¹ the temperance enthusiast and husband of Emily Wilberforce (MU Central President from 1916-20) and Edward Harold Browne (1811-1891).⁵² Samuel Wilberforce, as representative of the energy and organisational reform characteristic of bishops following the stimulus of evangelical revival, has received

⁴⁵Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 78.

⁴⁶ Popular education as understood in the thesis will be explored later in the chapter.

⁴⁷Sutton and Crosby, 'Thomas Heywood (1797–1866)'.

⁴⁸W. P. Courtney and W. R. Ward, 'Sumner, Charles Richard (1790–1874)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26784, accessed 20 July 2012]

⁴⁹Jane Barbour, 'Sumner, (George) Heywood Maunoir (1853–1940)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38033, accessed 26 Nov. 2012]. Mary Sumner's uncles, nephew and grandson have entries as does George Sumner's uncle John Bird Sumner.

⁵⁰Arthur Burns, 'Wilberforce, Samuel (1805–1873)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2009).

[http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29385, accessed 26 Nov. 2012].

⁵¹George Herring, 'Wilberforce, Ernest Roland (1840–1907)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

[http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36892, accessed 26 Nov. 2012].

⁵²J. R. Garrard, 'Browne, Edward Harold, (1811–1891)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3672, accessed 7 Aug. 2012].

much attention.⁵³ Wilberforce was also instrumental in the genesis of the GFS.⁵⁴ Ernest Wilberforce, the Bishop of Newcastle (1882) and Chichester (1895) is similarly acknowledged in relation to the MU.⁵⁵ Bishop Edward Harold Browne (Winchester 1873-1891) a patron of George Sumner is noted by Knight for his promotion of 'women's work' and Janet Grierson discusses his innovative appointment of a stipendiary deaconess.⁵⁶ His wife Elizabeth was active in the founding of the GFS and the MU, and it was during his episcopate that the MU was adopted as a diocesan organisation.⁵⁷

The women that the thesis will demonstrate were linked with Mary Sumner through philanthropic Anglican activism, noted in the following paragraphs, also have references in the DNB. Mary Townsend (1841-1918),⁵⁸ the founder of the GFS, is included, as is another Winchester resident, the Hon. Ellen Joyce (1832-1924),⁵⁹ (like Mary Sumner a GFS Associate).⁶⁰ Brian Harrison's analysis of the GFS draws attention to the roles of both Charlotte Yonge and Mary Sumner in the organisation and identifies its similarities to the MU in religious aims, class composition and attitudes to society.⁶¹ Ellen Joyce has received attention from

⁵³David Newsome, *The Parting of Friends: A Study of the Wilberforces and Henry Manning* (London: Murray, 1966), Newsome deals with the conversions to Roman Catholicism of Wilberforce's friends and kinsmen; Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, contains numerous references to Wilberforce; Arthur Rawson Ashwell and Reginald Garton Wilberforce, *Life of the Right Reverend Samuel Wilberforce, D.D: Lord Bishop of Oxford and Afterwards of Winchester, with Selections from His Diaries and Correspondence* (London: John Murray, 1880); R. K. Pugh, *The Letter Books of Samuel Wilberforce, 1843-1868* (Oxford: Oxford Record Society, 1969).

⁵⁴Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society*, 4.

⁵⁵Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 22-24.

⁵⁶Frances Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church and English Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 197; Janet Grierson, *The Deaconess* (London: CIO, 1981), 24; Pugh, *The Letter Books of Samuel Wilberforce, 1843-1868*, gives an insight into Wilberforce's connection with the Sumners.

⁵⁷Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society* 7; MU, *Fifty Years*, 7; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 30.

⁵⁸G. M. 'Townsend, Mary Elizabeth (1841-1918)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/56691>, accessed 14 July 2011].

⁵⁹Julia Bush, 'Joyce, Ellen (1832-1924)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/74348>, accessed 26 Nov. 2012].

⁶⁰The BWEA (1884) developed from the GFS Emigration Department, see *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000).

⁶¹Harrison, 'For Church Queen and Family'.

Lisa Chilton, Cecile Swaisland and Julia Bush⁶² as a pioneer of female emigration and for her advocacy of the role of Christian women in the development of empire: themes that will receive attention later in this chapter and in Chapter 4, 'Mary Sumner and Mission'.

Suffragist Lady Laura Ridding (1849-1939) was the co-founder, with Louise Creighton (1850-1936) and Emily Janes (1846-1928), of the National Union of Women Workers (NUWW), an association which aimed to coordinate the work of philanthropic societies.⁶³ She receives attention for her position in the NUWW from Serena Kelly,⁶⁴ and Moyses notes her role in the MU and in its affiliation to the NUWW.⁶⁵ Laura Ridding's enthusiasm for empire and her location in familial and women's pro-imperial networks is documented by Bush, who also draws attention to the diversity of positions held on suffrage and politics by imperialist women.⁶⁶ An example is provided by Louise Creighton, a friend of Laura Ridding and her co-worker in the NUWW, who was initially anti suffrage.⁶⁷ However as a writer, moral reformer, advocate of empire and wife of a bishop she has much in common with her friend. She was also involved in the GFS and MU, but James Thane Covert discusses her ambivalent attitudes to these organisations and to Mary Sumner.⁶⁸

⁶²Lisa Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930* (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Cecillie Swaisland, *Servants and Gentlewomen to the Golden Land: The Emigration of Single Women from Britain to Southern Africa, 1820-1939* (Oxford: Berg, 1993); Julia Bush, 'The Right Sort of Woman': Female Emigrators and Emigration to the British Empire, 1890-1910', *Women's History Review* 3, no. 3 (1994): 385-409; 'Edwardian Ladies and the 'Race' Dimensions of British Imperialism', *Women's Studies International Forum* 21, no. 3 May-June (1998): 277-289.

⁶³Serena Kelly, 'Ridding, Lady Laura Elizabeth (1849-1939)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50713>, accessed 12 Aug. 2011]; James Thayne Covert, 'Creighton, Louise Hume (1850-1936)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38640>, accessed 9 Aug. 2012]; Serena Kelly, 'Janes, Emily (1846-1928)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50710>, accessed 12 Aug. 2011].

⁶⁴Serena Kelly, 'A Sisterhood of Service: The Records and Early History of the National Union of Women Workers', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 14, no. 2 (1993): 167-174.

⁶⁵Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 34, 68, 120.

⁶⁶Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 39, 78-79, 162, 113-116, 176-177.

⁶⁷Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 65.

⁶⁸Creighton and Ridding were friends, married respectively to Mandel Creighton, Bishop of Peterborough and London and George Ridding, Headmaster of Winchester College and Bishop of Southwell. Creighton was also a friend of Mary Ward and supported her anti-suffrage petition in *The Nineteenth Century* but in 1906 she publicly asserted her change

Charlotte Yonge's religious vision of subordinate domesticated womanhood and her significance to the MU is noted by Heeney, Gill and Moyse.⁶⁹ Since her 'uneventful life' was recorded in Georgina Battiscombe's 1943 biography, Charlotte Yonge has undergone a revival which mirrors the recognition of religion as a significant factor in women's lives.⁷⁰ Barbara Dennis scrutinises Charlotte Yonge's novels for their presentation of religious belief,⁷¹ and Susan Walton engages with constructions of gendered identity in her analysis of Charlotte Yonge's notions of manliness.⁷² Catherine Vaughn-Pow considers the theme of emigration.⁷³ Walton, Kristine Moruzi, Teresa Huffman Traver and Susan E. Colón, in a dedicated edition of the journal *Women's Writing*, consider aspects of Charlotte Yonge as a popular religious educator and as an enthusiast for missionary work.⁷⁴ Talia Schaffer's 'Taming the Tropics: Charlotte Yonge takes on Melanesia', also discusses the motivation for, and commitment to, mission, which was manifest in Yonge's funding of the missionary ship the Southern Cross.⁷⁵ These works are consistent in interpreting religion as informative of gendered identities and as a mandate for imperialism and transnational contact as a civilizing mission: notions that the thesis analyses in relation to Mary Sumner, Charlotte Yonge's co-worker in the GFS and MU. The thesis also explores production of mission literature in terms of the educational dissemination of ideas through MU publications to which Charlotte Yonge was a significant contributor.

of view. Covert, 'Creighton, Louise Hume (1850–1936)'; James Thane Covert, *A Victorian Marriage: Mandell and Louise Creighton* (London: Hambledon, 2000); Creighton, *Memoir of a Victorian Woman*.

⁶⁹Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England*, 7-9; Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 80; Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 27, 39.

⁷⁰Morgan, *Women, Religion and Feminism*, 1-4.

⁷¹Barbara Dennis, *Charlotte Yonge (1823-1901): Novelist of the Oxford Movement: A Literature of Victorian Culture and Society* (Lewiston: Mellen, 1992).

⁷²Susan Walton, *Imagining Soldiers and Fathers in the Mid-Victorian Era: Charlotte Yonge's Models of Manliness* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2010).

⁷³Catherine J. Vaughan-Pow, 'A One-Way Ticket? Emigration and the Colonies in the Works of Charlotte M. Yonge', in *Imperial Objects: Victorian Women's Emigration and the Unauthorized Imperial Experience*, ed. Rita Krandidis (New York: Twayne, 1998).

⁷⁴Susan Walton, 'Charlotte Yonge: Marketing the Missionary Story', *Women's Writing* 17, no. 2 (2010): 236-254; Kristine Moruzi, 'Never Read Anything That Can at All Unsettle Your Religious Faith': Reading and Writing in the Monthly Packet', *Women's Writing* 17, no. 2 (2010): 288-304; Teresa Huffman Traver, 'The Ship That Bears through the Waves', *Women's Writing* 17, no. 2 (2010): 255-267; Susan E. Colón, 'Realism and Reserve: Charlotte Yonge and Tractarian Aesthetics', *Women's Writing* 17, no. 2 (2010): 221-235.

⁷⁵Talia Schaffer, 'Taming the Tropics: Charlotte Yonge Takes on Melanesia', *Victorian Studies* 47(2005): 204-214.

Mary Sumner: religious context

Mary Sumner: networks and doctrinal diversity

Members of Mary Sumner's network represented a diversity of doctrinal interpretation, attention to matters of conscience and controversy over issues of faith, which are encapsulated in the term religious revival.⁷⁶ The Sumner family exemplify evangelical enthusiasm within Anglicanism, the religious denomination of the Established Church of England. Within Anglicanism there were different emphases on the interpretation of doctrine, Low Church understanding was closer to the Protestantism of Methodists and other Nonconformist denominations, whereas High Church (Anglo- Catholic) positions were closer to Roman Catholic practice. Evangelicalism was a movement across denominations. Mary Sumner's parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Heywood, were Anglican converts but had been prominent Unitarians, whereas her sister took the controversial step of converting to Roman Catholicism. Charlotte Yonge was an Anglo -Catholic. The thesis chapter 'Mary Sumner and Religion' will examine these factors in relation to Mary Sumner's stance on doctrine.

Anglicanism and evangelicals

At the time of the inauguration of the GFS (1875) and the parochial genesis of the MU (1876), the Established Church had negotiated the challenge to its authority and identity posed by the increase of non-Anglican denominations (as revealed in the 1851 census) and their increasingly favourable treatment in law.⁷⁷ The Church of England encompassed a broad range of positions and interpretations on doctrine and ritual. According to Gerald Parsons, it had achieved:

⁷⁶Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 286-299. Revival relates to the active outreach of denominations seeking support but is also applied generally to the attention to matters of belief and controversy on matters of doctrine.

⁷⁷Key legislation included the Repeal of the Test and Corporations Act 1828, Catholic Emancipation Act 1829 and Irish Disestablishment 1871. See Nigel Scotland, *John Bird Sumner: Evangelical Archbishop* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1995), 67-80, for details of other legislation on the financial status of the Church and Sumner's response to social legislation.

...reform of the structure, organization and administration of the Church of England; revival of its spiritual, theological, pastoral and liturgical life; and realignment of both its internal structure and relationship to (and place within) national life and the religious community as a whole.⁷⁸

According to Owen Chadwick, 'the clergy in 1860 were more zealous and better informed than their 1830 counterparts'.⁷⁹ However, Anthony Lentin maintains that the Church of England retained its constitutional status, due to a perception of its utility to the political fabric of the nation.⁸⁰ E. R. Norman considers that the social attitudes of the Church were informed by, and representative of, ruling class values and notes that bishops remained political appointees and sought social reconciliation and the upholding of the existing order rather than its reconstruction.⁸¹ Norman's observation that patronage remained of significant importance⁸² and often involved kinship networks is demonstrated in the relations between the Sumner, Wilberforce and Browne families noted earlier.⁸³

Knight sees the revival and reform of the Established Anglican Church expressed in the instigation of Church Congresses and views the trend towards hymn singing illustrating moves towards more active lay participation in religious activity, if not church governance. The thesis will note Mary Sumner as a Church Congress speaker and parish organist, activities which illustrate this trend. Knight also draws attention to the increase in the frequency of communion and the inclusion of baptism in Sunday services.⁸⁴ Moyse claims the influence of the MU as instrumental in this aspect of religious revival.⁸⁵ For Heeney and Gill, who note that the majority of congregations were composed of women, Mary Sumner's MU was an expression of laywomen's aspirations to participation in Church affairs.⁸⁶

⁷⁸Gerald Parsons, *Religion in Victorian Britain, Vol.1, Traditions* (Manchester University Press in association with the Open University, 1988), 7, 8, 17.

⁷⁹Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 241, 127.

⁸⁰Anthony Lentin, 'Anglicanism, Parliament and the Courts', in *Religion in Victorian Britain Volume II Controversies*, ed. Gerald Parsons (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 103.

⁸¹E. R. Norman, *Church and Society in England, 1770-1970: A Historical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 96.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 153.

⁸³Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 71, 72, 75, 77, 88, 106, 142-143.

⁸⁴Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 89, 92-94.

⁸⁵Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 60.

⁸⁶Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England*, 18 - 19; Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 105 - 106.

Frank Turner sees evangelical revival as significant in stimulating the examination of belief and practice by Anglicans faced with the need to justify the established status of their Church in the context of the numerical increase of other denominations.⁸⁷ Mary Sumner's father-in-law, Bishop Charles Sumner (1790-1874) and his brother, Archbishop John Bird Sumner (1780-1862),⁸⁸ are considered highly influential evangelicals; representative of what Chadwick considers 'the strongest force in British life'. Evangelicalism was significant because in inspiring religious enthusiasm across a range of denominations it affected the conduct of public affairs.⁸⁹ Parsons concludes that Victorian Britain was 'a profoundly religious society'.⁹⁰

The evangelical tradition had its roots in the emotionally experienced religion of John Wesley and the influence of Claphamite, William Wilberforce (1759-1833). The evangelical tradition of Wilberforce was firmly within the Anglican Church⁹¹ and was exemplified by his relatives the Sumners and other members of Mary Sumner's kinship network. Its potential influence invites investigation in relation to accounts of Mary Sumner's life and in the aims of the MU.⁹² Chadwick notes the vigour with which evangelicals asserted the need for the reform of public morals. He considers that their attribution of social ills to moral failings was expressed in anti-vice campaigns, the promotion of temperance, dislike of gambling and concern for decency.⁹³ beliefs that will be discussed in relation to the rules on Mary Sumner's MU membership card.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Frank Turner, 'The Victorian Crisis of Faith and the Faith That Was Lost', in *Victorian Faith in Crisis*, ed. Richard J. Helmstadter and Bernard Lightman (California: Stanford, 1991).

⁸⁸ Respectively Bishops of Winchester and Chester 1821-1848, Canterbury 1848-1862).

⁸⁹ Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part I, 1827-1859* (London: A. & C. Black, 1966), 5. See also; Kenneth Hylson-Smith, *Evangelicals in the Church of England, 1734-1984* (London: T. & T. Clark, 1988); D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain; a History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1988).

⁹⁰ Parsons, *Religion in Victorian Britain, Vol.1*, 8.

⁹¹ David M. Thompson, *Nonconformity in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972). Clapham Church was a well known venue for evangelical worship.

⁹² Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*.

⁹³ Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 463-464. Both John Bird and Charles Sumner campaigned against the Sunday opening of the Crystal Palace in 1851 and for fig leaves to be placed on nude statues.

⁹⁴ Sumner, *Home Life*, 6.

Yeo identifies evangelicals in the Church of England as 'the moral vanguard of the ruling classes'.⁹⁵ Similarly, Ian Bradley considers that the emphasis on taking personal responsibility for public morality made evangelicals keen to convert persons of high social status, including royalty, to set a positive example of right living to the lower orders. He notes the evangelical upbringing of Queen Victoria and John Bird Sumner's chaplaincy to George IV.⁹⁶

Evangelicals believed that in order to achieve salvation the depravity of man and the sacrifice of Christ as atonement for sin must be accepted. Bradley considers the doctrine of atonement as significant in influencing views on social issues and in shaping attitudes to empire and colonisation. He also suggests that evangelical believers sought a purposeful and worthy life in order to be able to give a satisfactory account of their lives at judgement day.⁹⁷ This imperative for accountability encouraged a sense of mission which was frequently realised through philanthropic activity or educational initiatives.⁹⁸ Brian Dickey considers that charity was not only a religious duty but the social obligation of the upper classes to their inferiors.⁹⁹ He also suggests that scarcity was seen as representing a challenge from God which allowed the exercise of the moral virtues of thrift and forbearance.¹⁰⁰

Tractarianism and Roman Catholicism

Charlotte Yonge (1832-1901), the 'novelist par excellence of the country parish',¹⁰¹ exemplifies the High Church beliefs of Anglo-Catholic Tractarianism.¹⁰² The thesis will discuss how Mary Sumner, as an evangelical Anglican and Charlotte Yonge, as

⁹⁵Eileen Janes Yeo, *Radical Femininity; Womens' Self Representation in the Public Sphere* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 3.

⁹⁶Ian Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness; the Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1976), 35.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 21.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 119.

⁹⁹Brian Dickey, 'Evangelicals and Poverty', in *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society 1780-1980*, ed. John Wolffe (London: SPCK, 1995), 38-59.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 43-45.

¹⁰¹Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 214, considers that Hursley, Keble's living near Winchester represented the ideal parish.

¹⁰²Georgina Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge the Story of an Uneventful Life* (London: Constable & Co., 1943).Yonge had John Keble an original instigator of the 1833 Tractarian Oxford Movement as her friend and spiritual mentor.

an Anglican Anglo-Catholic found common cause through the GFS (from 1875) and later in the MU. The doctrinal positions they represent had, however, been the focus of bitter controversy in which Mary Sumner's kin were directly involved. Although Knight suggests that a focus on divisions tends to overlook the lived continuity of the majority of lay members of the Church and the experience of religion at the local parish level,¹⁰³ doctrinal controversy provided a context for informing Mary Sumner's personal experience of religion and for shaping the aims and practices of the Anglican organisations in which she was active.

According to Kathryn Gleadle, Tractarianism, as in the case of evangelical Low Church views, was a stimulus to religious revival in its reaction against lack of rigour in religion and morals. Oxford scholars John Keble, Richard Hurrell Froude, William Palmer and John Henry Newman, the instigators in 1833, through the '*Tracts for the Times*', of the Tractarian movement, were motivated by a desire to defend the priestly authority of the clergy against government intervention and to revitalise, purify and beautify the Anglican Church of England.¹⁰⁴ Knight claims the Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism asserted by Tractarians, challenged the Protestant ascendancy of the reformation and stimulated scrutiny of the core Anglican beliefs of apostolic succession, the sacraments of baptism, communion, marriage and the use of the Book of Common Prayer. This attention to identity involved the taking of frequently hostile 'party' positions amongst Anglicans.¹⁰⁵

The evangelical party (notably Archbishop John Bird Sumner and Bishop Charles Sumner) perceived Tractarianism as a threat to the authority and unity of the Church of England.¹⁰⁶ Tractarian belief in transubstantiation (the objective presence of the body and blood of Christ in the mass), the sacrificial role of the priest, priestly authority and baptism as automatically regenerative was close to Roman Catholic doctrine.¹⁰⁷ The High Church Anglo-Catholicism of Tractarianism

¹⁰³ Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 3, 24.

¹⁰⁴ Kathryn Gleadle, *The Early Feminists: Radical Unitarians and the Emergence of the Women's Rights Movements, 1831-51* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), 183. Church building was also a manifestation of philanthropy.

¹⁰⁵ Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 2.

¹⁰⁶ Scotland, *John Bird Sumner*, 81-94. Scotland explains Sumner's strong opposition to Tractarian ideas.

¹⁰⁷ Michael Chandler, *An Introduction to the Oxford Movement* (New York: Church Publishing, 2003), 99-106.

associated with a scrutiny of conscience did culminate, in several cases, to conversion to Roman Catholicism.¹⁰⁸ Yeo considers that despite the relaxation in legal restrictions to denominational participation in public institutional life there remained intense anti-Roman Catholic suspicion. Whilst the prevalence of Roman Catholicism in the urban lower orders might be attributed to deficiencies of education, class or 'race', when practised by the ruling classes, it was a cause of social and political, as well as spiritual unease because it asserted the authority of the Pope as transcending national boundaries.¹⁰⁹ Clerical celibacy was also a focus for concern because it challenged the patriarchal governance of the family: an institution regarded by Anglicans and evangelicals, including Mary Sumner,¹¹⁰ as divinely ordained and a bulwark of social order.¹¹¹

Unitarianism

Mary Sumner's parents, although Anglican converts, had been prominent members of the Unitarian Manchester Cross Street Chapel, yet neither *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work* nor *George and Mary Sumner their Life and Times* refer to this.¹¹² Although Coombs acknowledges the Nonconformist tradition of the family her assertion that the Heywoods all 'returned to the Church of England' is incorrect.¹¹³ References to Unitarianism in Mary Sumner's background are not

¹⁰⁸Notably the prominent Anglicans (and future RC cardinals) John Henry Newman and Henry Manning and Henry, William and Robert Wilberforce, the brothers of Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, 13; Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 51. Coombs explains Charles Sumner's position on Roman Catholicism. Mary Sumner's sister also converted but this is not addressed by Coombs.

¹⁰⁹ For the hysterical reaction of a lady passenger to seeing Pugin crossing himself whilst on a train; 'Guard, guard, let me out!' and for the attitude of the Unitarian Samuel Gaskell to the threat of his daughter converting, see Eileen Janes Yeo, 'Protestant Feminists and Catholic Saints', in *Radical Femininity: Womens Self Representation in the Public Sphere*, ed. Eileen Janes Yeo (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 127.

¹¹⁰ Mary Sumner, 'Marriage Address 2', in *Home Life 18-24* (Winchester: Warren and Son, 1895), 20, 'The Home is God's own institution, ordained and founded by Him at the Beginning'.

¹¹¹Carmen M. Mangion, 'Women and Female Institution Building', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. Morgan and de Vries (London: Routledge, 2011); Yeo, 'Protestant Feminists and Catholic Saints'.

¹¹² Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, preface xi,xii, 4-8.

¹¹³ Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 37; M. C. Curthoys, 'Heywood, James (1810–1897)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/56315>, accessed 26 Nov. 2012]. James

explored in Moyses's *History of the Mothers' Union: Women, Anglicanism and Globalisation 1876-2008*.¹¹⁴ This thesis will note resonances with Unitarian characteristics with regard to Mary Sumner's identity, attitudes and activism, particularly in relation to women and education, which will be the focus of a following chapter.

Unitarians did not believe in the virgin birth or the doctrine of the Trinity, nor did they use the Book of Common Prayer. They were also distinctive in denying the doctrine of original sin. For Unitarians, Jesus was not divine but represented the most perfect human, thus humanity was envisioned as perfectible and living religion as an application of reason to improve the individual and society. Katherine Gleadle considers these beliefs significant in influencing attitudes to the spiritual status, role and education of women.¹¹⁵

Mary Sumner's Heywood relatives have received attention from Ruth Watts as significant representatives of the Unitarian emphasis on philanthropy, education and culture.¹¹⁶ According to Gleadle, the Unitarian concept of fraternal spiritual ties connecting the whole human race gave impetus to their enthusiasm for civic improvement, philanthropy and education. However, she considers that this served to promote middle-class values for middle class benefit. As in the evangelical tradition within Anglicanism, social ills were seen as attributable to bad habits and the remedies were to be sought in personal improvement.¹¹⁷

Watts and Gleadle also note what Helen Plant encapsulates as 'the quest by Unitarian men to achieve 'gentleman' status and occupy the positions of leadership within the new urban middle class to which their growing affluence seemed to entitle them'.¹¹⁸ David Bebbington gives further insight into Unitarians

Heywood kept his Unitarian faith and sources relating to Mary Sumner do not provide evidence that there was contact between Mary and James.

¹¹⁴ Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 19.

¹¹⁵ Gleadle, *The Early Feminists*, 26.

¹¹⁶ Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England, 1760-1860*, 91. Mary Sumner's parents were Thomas Heywood (1797-1866) formerly of Heywood's Bank in Manchester and Mary Elizabeth Barton (d 1870).

¹¹⁷ Gleadle, *The Early Feminists*, 4, 178, 183. Samuel Smiles the advocate of 'Self Help' is noted as a Unitarian.

¹¹⁸ Helen Plant, 'Ye Are All One in Christ Jesus': Aspects of Unitarianism and Feminism in Birmingham, C. 1869-90', *Women's History Review* 9, no. 4 (2000), 723.

and power in his discussion of Unitarian members of parliament including Mary Sumner's uncles, James Heywood (1810-1897) and Sir Benjamin Heywood (1793-1865). Bebbington attributes the latter's conversion to the established church to the attraction of liturgy rather than status but the conversions of Benjamin and Thomas Heywood did coincide with advances in their social and political position.¹¹⁹

Turner points to Unitarianism as having a significant impact on Anglicanism in fostering rational enquiry and the imperative for 'improvement'.¹²⁰ Chadwick attributes the acceptance of 'higher criticism' (a historical and metaphorical reading of the Bible) by moderate Anglican Churchmen such as Charles Kingsley and Archbishop Temple, Sumner acquaintances, who no longer felt the need to defend the literal word of the Bible and regarded scientific enquiry as the search for God's truth, to be reflective of the influence of Unitarianism.¹²¹ Moyes notes the acceptance of this position by the MU, despite its emphasis on the Bible as a sacred inspirational text.¹²²

Spiritual womanhood, purity and motherhood

Jenny Dagers suggests that although the expressions 'true womanhood' and 'cult of domesticity', are widely used in describing ideals of Victorian womanhood the term 'spiritual womanhood' is a better expression of the significance of Protestant Christianity in constructions of femininity derived from the supposed superior moral sensibility of good women.¹²³ Heeney explains the patriarchal theology, drawn from Genesis and the Epistles of St Paul, articulated in

¹¹⁹Bebbington, 'Unitarian Members of Parliament in the Nineteenth Century'. 12.[accessed 20 Aug. 2011]; McConnell, 'Heywood, Sir Benjamin, First Baronet (1793–1865).'; M. C. Curthoys, 'Heywood, James (1810–1897).' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2009), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/56315, accessed 26 Nov. 2012].

¹²⁰Turner, 'The Victorian Crisis of Faith.'

¹²¹Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 23,26. Chadwick notes Frederick Temple as a proponent of Higher Criticism and notes his Bampton lecture in 1896 giving the view that 'evolution is an accepted axiom'. Chadwick notes 'liberal divines found it easy to welcome Darwin'.

¹²² Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 58 - 60.

¹²³Jenny Dagers, 'The Victorian Female Civilising Mission and Women's Aspirations Towards Priesthood in the Church of England', *Women's History Review* 10, no. 4 (2001): 651-670.

justification for the Anglican subordination of women, which the thesis will argue Mary Sumner and Charlotte Yonge upheld.¹²⁴ Biblical authority asserted that women and men had been endowed by the Creator with different but complementary characteristics, not only biologically but emotionally, intellectually and even spiritually, which suited them for the performance of different roles.¹²⁵ According to Gill, Mary Sumner supported views on gender in accord with patriarchal Anglican theology, which, whilst denying women authority, acknowledged their moral sensibility and utility as Church workers, but envisaged womanhood in terms of marriage and motherhood.¹²⁶ Patricia Grimshaw likewise considers womanhood to be conflated with maternalism in the Church.¹²⁷ For Gill, the MU was 'one of the most significant institutional embodiments of conservative Christian constructions of womanhood'.¹²⁸ Lucy Bland interprets the MU as the agency for Anglican containment of women's power within the Church.¹²⁹

The significance of the evangelical tradition in asserting the separate natures of men and women is noted by Yeo and Deborah Gorham.¹³⁰ Similarly, Gill and John Tosh¹³¹ identify the influence of the evangelical Anglican, William Wilberforce, in asserting a heightened religious sensibility in women, which was thought to suit them to the sphere of home, as providers not only of physical respite but a moral refuge from the competitive masculine world of work and public affairs.¹³² Gorham sees the qualities of the 'Angel in the House', a phrase originating from Coventry Patmore's poem extolling loving domesticity and used by Mary Sumner, as encapsulating this conception of spiritual womanhood.¹³³ The evangelical focus on the home as a site of religious observance, far from suggesting a division of

¹²⁴ Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England*, 7-9. Heeney notes Charlotte Yonge's belief in the inferiority of woman as articulated in her 1877 work 'Womankind'.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 9; Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 91.

¹²⁶ *Women and the Church of England*, 103.

¹²⁷ Patricia Grimshaw, 'In Pursuit of True Anglican Womanhood in Victoria, 1880-1914' *Women's History Review* 2, no. 3 (1993): 331-347.

¹²⁸ Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 103.

¹²⁹ Lucy Bland, 'Purifying the Public World: Feminist Vigilantes in Late Victorian England', *Women's History Review* 1, no. 3 (1992): 397-412..

¹³⁰ Yeo, 'Some Paradoxes of Empowerment', 4; Deborah Gorham, *The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), 3.

¹³¹ Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*.

¹³² Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 29-31.

¹³³ Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 7-9. Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner: 8; Sumner, 'Early Life'*.

separate spheres, involved greater emphasis on domestic relations. The negotiation of marriage and the role of fathers in domestic life, issues that Mary Sumner addressed in much of her writing, have received increased attention from writers focusing on gender, notably Tosh and Stephanie Olsen.¹³⁴

Yeo points to the paradox between constructions of woman as spiritual and as Eve the temptress, which reflected the evangelical attitude to original sin and the emphasis on the need for atonement.¹³⁵ So, an essential attribute of the spiritual woman and a pillar of her reputation was chastity. There was an absolute division between the 'fallen' woman who had lost her sexual innocence without the rite of marriage and the 'pure' woman.¹³⁶ The thesis will discuss the dedication of the MU and the GFS to preserving the purity and 'respectability' of their members.¹³⁷ Mary Sumner considered upholding 'the sanctity of marriage' essential for preserving the status of women and the morals of society.¹³⁸ Her association of divorce with social breakdown is noted by Gill.¹³⁹ Moyse gives extensive attention to the campaigns of the MU in opposition to legislative reform intended to facilitate divorce.¹⁴⁰

According to Yeo, the religious role of the wife and mother in the Christian home became a 'hegemonic and a dominant discourse'. She contends that the language of motherhood was a language of power, related to class and applicable to unmarried as well as married women.¹⁴¹ The thesis will examine Mary Sumner's

¹³⁴Evangelical Christianity was a domestic religion'[which] 'articulated a new masculine norm against which men's conduct has been measured ever since', Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*, 6, 11; see also Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 41. Knight notes the large volume of religious publication as evidence for the home as a site of religious observance; Stephanie Olsen, 'The Authority of Motherhood in Question: Fatherhood and the Moral Education of Children in England, c. 1870–1900', *Women's History Review* 18, no. 5 (2009): 765–780.

¹³⁵Yeo, 'Some Paradoxes of Empowerment', 8.

¹³⁶Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 25, 125.

¹³⁷For a discussion of respectability as demarking social status see Cannadine, *Class in Britain*, 92–94.

¹³⁸Sumner, *Home Life*, 10, Objects of the Mothers' Union: To uphold the sanctity of marriage; [Mothers should] lead their families in purity and holiness of life; Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 90.

¹³⁹*Women and the Church of England*, 94.

¹⁴⁰Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 69–77, 116–126, 170–181, 188–194, 230–113.

¹⁴¹Yeo, *Radical Femininity: Womens' Self Representation in the Public Sphere*, 4. The 1834 Poor Law required the mother only to support an illegitimate child. Implicit in the 1833

deployment of the rhetoric of spiritual womanhood in terms of Yeo's claim that women, particularly from the upper and middle classes, mobilised the language of motherhood to legitimise their identities as activists.¹⁴² Yeo identifies empowering motherhood and the disciplining or protecting motherhood that may operate by trying to assimilate others into the approved cultural pattern.¹⁴³ For Yeo, the notion of empowerment relates not only to the ability to act towards achievement of self-directed aims, as in the notion of agency, but also relates to the claims of value relating to activities and qualities women may draw on to validate their actions and identities.¹⁴⁴ Empowerment in this sense relates to that which is sustaining to self-worth and the negotiation of horizons of possibility.¹⁴⁵ These notions will be explored in relation to Mary Sumner as a woman of conservative social views, who aimed to educate mothers in religiously sanctioned behaviour, yet could claim, on the basis of the numbers of women in her organisation, to represent a substantial body of opinion.

'Women's mission': philanthropy and society

In the period coinciding with Mary Sumner's life trajectory and activism there was a proliferation of philanthropic activity. David Cannadine, in his exploration of *Class in Britain*, argues that, in the context of nineteenth century, perceptions of rapid social change, concern about social division and aspirations for the improvement of society, the language of class was used increasingly. He considers that 'most members of the governing elite still believed that society was hierarchical and that hierarchy was to be defended and asserted'.¹⁴⁶ However, Cannadine sees class as more nuanced and permeable than the three tier categories of working, middle and upper class: 'it is misleading to think of a homogenous middle and upper class, with a clear division between them. Both encompassed great ranges of income, from magnates, to lesser gentry, merchant

Factories and 1842 Mines Acts was the view that work demeaned femininity. The 1857 Divorce Act allowed adultery as grounds only to men.

¹⁴²'Some Paradoxes of Empowerment', 13.

¹⁴³'The Creation of 'Motherhood' and Women's Responses in Britain and France 1750-1914'.

¹⁴⁴Yeo, 'Some Paradoxes of Empowerment'.

¹⁴⁵Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930*.

¹⁴⁶David Cannadine, *Class in Britain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 60, 87.

bankers to shop keepers'.¹⁴⁷ Cannadine argues a similar diversity in relation to working and middle class status and identifies the notion of respectability as a social demarcation that was variously applicable across classes and not necessarily the preserve of those of higher social status.¹⁴⁸ Mary Sumner's attitudes to social stratification and the notion of respectability will be explored in the thesis.

The tensions accruing to philanthropy as a vehicle for agency, social control, empowerment, citizenship and the intersections of public and private space is a recurring theme in recent scholarship.¹⁴⁹ Constraint and empowerment are not fixed positions, as Morgan demonstrates in the context of purity campaigner Ellice Hopkins.¹⁵⁰ These tensions and fluidities are manifest in Mary Sumner's MU, in which religious values define and legitimise the understanding of gendered identities and prescribe women's roles as maternal. Moyses considers that, 'The MU with its espousal of Christian womanhood has not only constrained women but has also empowered them by giving dignity and status to their domestic lives and often sacrificial choices'.¹⁵¹ The notion of 'choice' points towards an examination of the circumstances (not necessarily of their own making) such as social structures, locations of power and situations that mediated women's 'horizons of possibility'.¹⁵²

Philanthropic endeavour was both prolific and diverse.¹⁵³ Moyses argues that the MU 'had to fight hard for allegiance due to the vast number of competing and self-help societies'.¹⁵⁴ Yet many Anglican activists, including Mary Sumner, in the

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 91.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., 92-94.

¹⁴⁹Mary Wollstonecraft and 200 Years of Feminisms (London: Rivers Oram, 1997); Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women*; Gill, *Women and the Church of England*; Morgan and de Vries, *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, provide examples.

¹⁵⁰Morgan, *A Passion for Purity*; 'Faith Sex and Purity: The Religio-Feminist Theory of Ellice Hopkins', *Women's History Review* 9 no. 1(2000): 13-34.

¹⁵¹Moyes, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 8.

¹⁵²Jane Martin and Joyce Goodman, *Women and Education, 1800-1980* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 12.

¹⁵³Susan Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. Morgan and de Vries (London: Routledge, 2010), 56.

¹⁵⁴Moyes, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 30.

Winchester locality, showed sustained commitment to a number of religious and philanthropic causes 'multiple service being the rule rather than the exception'.¹⁵⁵

Religion, given stimulus by the evangelical revival, which crossed denominational boundaries, was 'the moral engine' for reform.¹⁵⁶ Susan Mumm claims that almost all philanthropy was organised along denominational lines.¹⁵⁷ Bradley considers philanthropic activity to have been particularly appealing to ladies seeking to be useful and an opportunity to realise the evangelical imperative of seeking converts to 'vital religion'.¹⁵⁸ Frank Prochaska documents the amount of philanthropic enterprise engaged in by women and he considers that the MU fitted into an existing tradition of philanthropic social patronage exercised by 'ladies'.¹⁵⁹ Gill sees the religiously authorised maternal qualities attributed to women being perceived as a mandate for social action.¹⁶⁰ The notion of women as civilizing agents is also reflected in Simon Morgan's view that the presence of women added respectability to public occasions.¹⁶¹ The negotiation of the fluidities of domestic roles and public engagement legitimised by religion and class will be considered in relation to the activism of Mary Sumner.

Jane Jordan and Sue Morgan respectively have explained the religiously motivated reforming ambitions of 'spiritual women', Josephine Butler and Jane Ellice Hopkins, in seeking equal moral standards between men and women:¹⁶² a theme that will be identified in Mary Sumner's aims for the MU. According to Mary Ryan, 'It is to the domain of the public that women turn to achieve and protect

¹⁵⁵ Miller, 'Moral Purity and the Servant Problem; the Interaction of Winchester Ladies and Winchester Women Circa 1884-1910', 24.

¹⁵⁶ Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England*, 19.

¹⁵⁷ Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures'.

¹⁵⁸ Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, 119.

¹⁵⁹ Frank K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980); Prochaska, *The Angel out of the House*.

¹⁶⁰ Gill, *Women and the Church of England*: 84. See also ; Dagers, 'The Victorian Female Civilising Mission and Women's Aspirations Towards Priesthood in the Church of England'.

¹⁶¹ Simon Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place: Public Culture in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 160, 168.

¹⁶² Jane Jordan, *Josephine Butler* (London: John Murray, 2001), 207. Butler, although not in the MU as she concentrated on opposing the Contagious Diseases Acts and organised prostitution, considered Mary Sumner her 'good friend and neighbour' in Winchester; Morgan, *A Passion for Purity*. Hopkins wrote on behalf of the MU. See Appendix 2.

their private as well as public objectives', an analysis that will be highlighted by the MU's engagement in legislation on moral issues.¹⁶³

Lucy Bland draws attention to the application of a moral agenda to material aspects of social improvement in attempts to modify working class culture, notably with regard to temperance, an interest that will be traced in Mary Sumner's MU agenda.¹⁶⁴ Mumm also identifies rectifying social disorder as a motivating element in philanthropy.¹⁶⁵ Jessica Gerard interprets the exercise of philanthropy by the upper/middle 'landed classes', as legitimising the inequality of a stratified society.¹⁶⁶ Diana Kendall likewise sees a tradition of benevolence upholding social stratification.¹⁶⁷

Mumm concedes that the privilege of female philanthropists informed their assumption of class as a mandate for patronage of the lower classes but in her consideration of the GFS, refutes the notion that all philanthropy was disempowering for recipients.¹⁶⁸ Moyse similarly acknowledges that Mary Sumner's attitudes reflected the assumption that the upper /middle classes had a mandate for, and an obligation to, lead a stratified society towards reform. Yet she asserts the social inclusivity of the MU as distinctive, a paradox that invites further investigation.¹⁶⁹ Catriona Beaumont's claim that the MU validated women's identities by celebrating their contribution to society as mothers,¹⁷⁰ and Anne O'Brien's view that the MU affirmed women's sense of worth, reflect the

¹⁶³Mary P. Ryan, 'The Public and the Private Good across the Great Divide in Women's History', *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 1 (2003): 10-57. For divorce see Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*: 69-77, 116-126, 170-181, 188-192, 230-233.

¹⁶⁴Bland, 'Purifying the Public World: Feminist Vigilantes in Late Victorian England'. See also Nigel Scotland, *Squires in the Slums: Settlements and Missions in Late Victorian Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), 253-254.

¹⁶⁵Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', 64, 57; See also Eileen Janes Yeo, 'Some Contradictions of Social Motherhood', in *Mary Wollstonecraft 200 Years of Feminisms*, ed. Eileen Janes Yeo (London and New York: Rivers Oram Press, 1997).

¹⁶⁶Jessica Gerard, 'Lady Bountiful Women of the Landed Classes and Rural Philanthropy', *Victorian Studies* 30, no. 2 (1987): 183-210.

¹⁶⁷Diana Kendall, *The Power of Good Deeds: Privileged Women and the Social Reproduction of the Upper Class* (Boston: Rawman Littlefield, 2002).

¹⁶⁸Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', 56.

¹⁶⁹Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 8, 30.

¹⁷⁰Catriona Beaumont, 'Citizens Not Feminists: The Boundary Negotiated between Citizenship and Feminism by Mainstream Women's Organisations in England, 1928-39', *Women's History Review* 9, no. 2 (2000): 411-429; Catriona Beaumont, *Housewives and Citizens Domesticity and the Women's Movement in England, 1928-64*, Gender in History (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

possibility of simultaneous constraint and empowerment which reflect Yeo's analysis of discourses of motherhood.¹⁷¹

Mumm suggests that philanthropy run by women presents opportunities for investigating female leadership. She considers that there is more room for exploring women's religiously inspired action, in order to better understand the social function of such groups and the context in which they operated.¹⁷² Mary Sumner, as the leader of a religiously motivated organisation that drew in an upper/middle class Anglican leadership and large numbers of members from a wider class range, nationally and transnationally, forms in Mumm's terms, a candidate for investigation.

Empire, Church, mission and womanhood

Andrew Porter suggests that British imperial pre-eminence reflected assumptions of cultural and racial superiority and that the 'improvement' of less civilized and unchristian societies was perceived as an obligation.¹⁷³ Bebbington follows a similar theme in relating Church endorsement of the imperial project to evangelical views on the need to atone for previous exploitation perpetrated overseas.¹⁷⁴ Rendall also identifies the evangelical impulse as a factor in stimulating missionary activity¹⁷⁵ and Stephen Maughan and Brian Stanley consider the use made of missions by Church and state in relation to both legitimising and drawing authority from, imperial expansion.¹⁷⁶ For Gill, Mary

¹⁷¹Anne O'Brien, 'Militant Mothers: Faith Power and Identity in the Mothers' Union in Sydney 1896-1950', *Women's History Review* 9, no. 1 (2000): 35-53.

¹⁷²Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', 57.

¹⁷³A. N. Porter, *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003), 2.

¹⁷⁴David W. Bebbington, 'Atonement, Sin and Empire 1880-1914', in *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914*, ed. Andrew Porter (Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2003), 5, 9.

¹⁷⁵Jane Rendall, 'The Condition of Women, Women's Writing and the Empire in Nineteenth Century Britain', in *At Home with the Empire Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonia O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 108.

¹⁷⁶Steven Maughan, 'Imperial Christianity? Bishop Montgomery and the Foreign Missions of the Church of England, 1895-1915', in *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions 1880-1914*, ed. A. N. Porter (Grand Rapids Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003); Brian Stanley, 'Church State and the Hierarchy of 'Civilization: The Making of the World

Sumner is 'representative of a Late Victorian Anglicanism that benefitted from the upsurge of imperialist sentiment'.¹⁷⁷ Moyses documents the transnational expansion of the MU and comments on its conscious strategy of developing itself as an imperial organization.¹⁷⁸ Bush similarly identifies the GFS as an organisation which put imperial ideology into practice through the establishment of colonial branches.¹⁷⁹ The thesis will examine these issues with regard to Mary Sumner's views and the position of the MU as both a Church and imperial organisation.

The influence of the periphery in the construction of identities in the metropole, demonstrated by Hall and Rose as a relational transaction bound up with religion¹⁸⁰ is evident in the work of Judith Godden, Jane Haggis and Tanya Fitzgerald on missionary identities.¹⁸¹ Susan Thorne considers missionary intelligence to be a distinguishing feature of Victorian culture and makes the association with religion, mission and empire by noting that 'Victorians learned much of what they knew about empire in church'.¹⁸² The exercise of philanthropy at home is seen by Alison Twells not only to draw on the metaphor of foreign mission but to be part of the same project and informative of middle-class identity and culture.¹⁸³ Porter suggests that missionary enterprise was drawn on 'as a source of renewal for metropolitan Anglicanism'.¹⁸⁴ Bebbington sees the valorous missionary as 'a metropolitan construction for a metropolitan readership'¹⁸⁵ as exemplified in Charlotte Yonge's novels, which feature missionary enterprise with

Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910', in *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914*, ed. A. N. Porter (Grand Rapids Michigan WM B. Eerdmans, 2002).

¹⁷⁷Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 104.

¹⁷⁸Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 80-86.

¹⁷⁹Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*.

¹⁸⁰Hall and Rose, *At Home with the Empire*, 2, 5, 6; Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002); Susan Thorne, 'Religion and Empire at Home', in *At Home with the Empire Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonia O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹⁸¹Judith Godden, 'Containment and Control: Presbyterian Women and the Missionary Impulse in New South Wales, 1891-1914', *Women's History Review* 6, no. 1 (1997): 75-93; Jane Haggis, 'A Heart That Has Felt the Love of God and Longs for Others to Know It': Conventions of Gender, Tensions of Self and Constructions of Difference in Offering to Be a Lady Missionary', *Women's History Review* 7, no. 2(1998): 171-193; Tanya Fitzgerald, 'Archives of Memory and Memories of Archive'.

¹⁸²Thorne, 'Religion and Empire at Home', 145.

¹⁸³Alison Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The 'Heathen' at Home and Overseas* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 5.

¹⁸⁴Porter, *Imperial Horizons*, 2.

¹⁸⁵Bebbington, 'Atonement, Sin and Empire 1880-1914', 9.

the intention of inspiring religious behaviour.¹⁸⁶ Ruth Watt's identification of the embeddedness of empire in educational material adds a further layer to Hall and Rose's assertion of the impact of the periphery on the consciousness of those 'at home'.¹⁸⁷

Elizabeth Prevost, who gives substantial attention to the MU in her work on colonial Africa, sees mission as 'a crucial vector by which Britons experienced the non-western world'. She also considers that religion was the framework by which women conceptualized, articulated and challenged other social categories'.¹⁸⁸ Jane Rendall, too, sees gender identities related to imperial identities. She argues that British women used the zenana as a powerful symbol of women's oppression in heathen society, which was seen as evidence of the cultural superiority of Christian values and by implication to vindicate imperial rule.¹⁸⁹ Paradoxically, the constraint of zenana women provided white women with the opportunity to occupy a role exclusive to women in missionary societies.¹⁹⁰ Mary Louse Pratt and Billie Melman discuss perceptions of 'otherness' by European travellers and constructions of identity drawn from them by travellers and their audiences.¹⁹¹ Melman's analysis of the responses of women travellers provides insights towards exploring Mary Sumner's first hand observations of zenana life in the 'East' reported in her published accounts.

Bush emphasises the symbolic significance of maternal discourse as central to imperialism.¹⁹² For Bush, Queen Victoria embodies the notion of the mother country and the association of the domestic family with the family of empire.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁶Schaffer, 'Taming the Tropics: Charlotte Yonge Takes on Melanesia'; Huffman Traver, 'The Ship That Bears through the Waves'; Walton, 'Charlotte Yonge: Marketing the Missionary Story'.

¹⁸⁷Ruth Watts, 'Education, Empire and Social Change in Nineteenth Century England', *Paedagogica Historica* 45, no. 6 (2009): 773-786.

¹⁸⁸Elizabeth E. Prevost, *The Communion of Women: Missions and Gender in Colonial Africa and the British Metropole* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 159.

¹⁸⁹Rendall, 'The Condition of Women, Women's Writing and the Empire in Nineteenth Century Britain', 104; See also Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 122. Bush comments on the association of assumptions of cultural superiority with gendered racial attitudes.

¹⁹⁰Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 181-197.

¹⁹¹Mary Louse Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992); Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918: Sexuality, Religion and Work* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995).

¹⁹²Bush, 'The Right Sort of Woman', 399-400.

¹⁹³Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 69.

Bush identifies Ellen Joyce, who saw the emigration of Christian women as a civilizing influence on male colonists and the indigenous population, as an exponent of imperial motherhood.¹⁹⁴ Moyses comments on the way the MU drew on the notion of 'divine patriotism', which associated imperial rule with Christian service, to validate and inspire responsible mothering.¹⁹⁵ She also notes the association of the organization with a 'positive eugenics' that linked imperial greatness with quantity and quality of the population. The conduct of the good moral mother was associated with the physical as well as moral fitness of the future citizen.¹⁹⁶

Prevost considers that despite not being an official missionary organisation, the MU promoted missionary enterprise through reinforcing Christian values, upholding purity and offering protective education.¹⁹⁷ It also supported missionary workers and in common with the GFS reported on missionary enterprise in its publications.¹⁹⁸ Both O'Brien and Heeney point to the remarkable expansion of the MU in the imperial context. 'With its roots in a tradition of English philanthropy, revived by late nineteenth century fears of social disorder, the MU's growth worldwide in the thirty years before the first world war was phenomenal'.¹⁹⁹ Further investigation of Mary Sumner's views on the role of Christian mothers in relation to nation and empire and the strategies she pursued in extending the MU overseas will be considered in the thesis in order to increase understanding of this phenomenon.

¹⁹⁴ 'The Right Sort of Woman': Female Emigrators and Emigration to the British Empire, 1890-1910'; 'Edwardian Ladies and the 'Race' Dimensions of British Imperialism'; *Edwardian Ladies*; Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930*. Chilton emphasises the networking of women involved in emigration through the BWEA and GFS.

¹⁹⁵ Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 79-86.

¹⁹⁶ Anna Davin, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', *History Workshop* 5(1978): 9-66. Davin notes the eugenic motivation for the education of working class mothers in St Pancras. For further discussion of morality and eugenics see Lesley Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change in Britain since 1880* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).

¹⁹⁷ Prevost, *Communion of Women*.

¹⁹⁸ Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 83-86.

¹⁹⁹ O'Brien, 'Militant Mothers', 37; Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England*, 44, 45.

Education: popular education, religion, philanthropy and women

In locating Mary Sumner in relation to education, this thesis interprets her as a popular educator. For Alejandro Tiana Ferrer the concept of popular education 'should be taken as the whole set of educational activities aimed at providing education for popular classes'. His definition of popular classes refers to social groupings that overlap with the notions of 'working' and 'lower' class a definition that accommodates Mary Sumner's initiatives directed towards a wide section of the populace, encompassing but not, (as the thesis will explore), exclusively confined to, those of 'lower class'.²⁰⁰ Sjaak Braster's exploration of notions of popular education similarly includes initiatives directed towards and arising from, attempts to educate both by formal and informal means.²⁰¹ These understandings which encompass provision by groups or individuals with philanthropic or religious allegiance also accommodate the initiatives towards proliferating knowledge and modifying behaviour that the thesis will explore in relation to Mary Sumner.

David Wardle, whose interest includes the development of state intervention in education, places more emphasis on the broader notion of popular education as education of the people. Yet, philanthropy as a civilizing mission (whether at home or overseas), is compatible with David Wardle's understanding of popular education as initiatives towards socialisation.²⁰² John Hurt interprets popular educational initiatives in the period covered by the thesis as a response to fears of social disorder. He identifies the dissemination of religious knowledge as a civilising initiative.²⁰³ Harold Silver makes an explicit claim for attention to religion as contributory to a broader context of ideas and social movements influential to

²⁰⁰ Alejandro Tiana Ferrer, 'The Concept of Popular Education Revisited - or What Do We Talk About When We Speak of Popular Education', *Paedagogica Historica* 47, no. Nos. 1-2 (2011): 27.

²⁰¹ Sjaak Braster, 'The People, the Poor and the Oppressed: The Concept of Popular Education through Time', *Paedagogica Historica* 47, no. Nos. 1-2 (2011): 1-14..

²⁰² Wardle, *English Popular Education*. However the role of women as educators through philanthropy is not given attention.

²⁰³ John Hurt, *Education in Evolution: Church, State, Society and Popular Education 1800-1870* (London: Rupert Hart- Davis, 1971).

developments in education.²⁰⁴ These themes will be explored in relation to Mary Sumner's educational activism.

The relationship of Church and state in the provision of education and the contested negotiation of secular and denominational provision (notably in the era of the Board Schools which coincided with the establishment of the GFS and the MU) is discussed by James Murphy.²⁰⁵ W.B. Stephens's analysis of the development of the education system in Britain which evolved during the nineteenth century towards systemic state provision, notes the leading role of the Church in the provision of elementary education 'attributable to Anglican parochial infrastructure' and highlights the funding of training colleges by bishops.²⁰⁶ According to Terence Copley, it was as providers of education that the churches exercised a degree of social influence and control.²⁰⁷ Stephens recognises this analysis but notes, 'this is not to be interpreted as malicious or deliberate'.²⁰⁸ However, Hurt's identification of the apprehension felt by Anglicans at the prospect of state education that was secular rather than religious,²⁰⁹ is indicative of contested values concerning curricula, a concern that will be explored in Mary Sumner's Church school patronage and her engagement in upholding a religious element in state education.²¹⁰

Mumm, writing in the context of the GFS, notes that much religiously inspired philanthropy was educational.²¹¹ Sunday school teaching may be located in this analysis and seen as an opportunity for women to extend their maternal educative role beyond home into the sphere of public education.²¹² Mumm's observation that philanthropic activity reshaped the identities of those engaged in

²⁰⁴Silver, 'Knowing and Not Knowing in the History of Education'.

²⁰⁵James Murphy, *Church, State and Schools in Britain 1800-1970* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971).

²⁰⁶W. B. Stephens, *Education in Britain, 1750-1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 6.

²⁰⁷Terence Copley, *Spiritual Development in the State School : A Perspective on Worship and Spirituality in the Education System of England and Wales* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 17.

²⁰⁸Stephens, *Education in Britain, 1750-1914*, 17.

²⁰⁹Hurt, *Education in Evolution*, 20.

²¹⁰Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*.

²¹¹Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures'.

²¹²Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 192. Charlotte Yonge taught at Sunday School from the age of seven as part of her own education in philanthropic service.

its delivery, suggests that it performed an educative function for patrons as well as the patronised.²¹³ Georgina Brewis pays specific attention to this in her analysis of philanthropic activism as part of the educational experience of middle-class girls.²¹⁴

Religion mediated women's educational experience in several ways. It framed gendered assumptions on women's spiritual, emotional and sexual nature and intellectual capacity: it legitimised domesticated roles and the notions of restraint and service. In so doing it framed responses to the purpose and practice of education for women.²¹⁵ It also informed notions of women as educators. The significant influence of Anglican Hannah More (1745-1833) in this tradition has been identified by Anne Stott.²¹⁶ Although seeing Hannah More as reformist in asserting the need for mothers to be educated in order to fulfil the role of religious home educator, Jane Nardin notes that More's agenda was negotiated within existing social and religious gendered identities.²¹⁷ The thesis will examine Mary Sumner's exemplification of these characteristics.²¹⁸

Until the latter years of the century education for most women of the middle and upper classes was not only for home but largely undertaken at home. Despite this, some girls were able to achieve a high standard of learning in 'papa's study'.²¹⁹ Reading was of central importance here but was also the medium for less intellectual education for adults and the young. Gorham identifies the proliferation of advice, both spiritual and practical, that became available from

²¹³Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures', 56.

²¹⁴Georgina Brewis, 'From Working Parties to Social Work: Middle Class Girls' Education and Social Service 1890-1914', *History of Education* 38, no. 6 (2009): 761-777.

²¹⁵Dale Spender, *The Education Papers: Women's Quest for Equality in Britain 1850-1912* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), 10-31; Burstyn, *Victorian Education*, 99-118; Carol Dyhouse, *Girls Growing up in Late Victorian and Edwardian London* (London: Routledge, 1981); Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 18-19, 78-79.

²¹⁶Anne Stott, 'A Singular Injustice Towards Women': Hannah More, Evangelicalism and Female Education', in *Women, Religion and Feminism in Britain, 1750-1900*, ed. Sue Morgan (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

²¹⁷Jane Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Rhetoric of Educational Reform', *Women's History Review* 10, no. 2 (2001): 211-228.

²¹⁸Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 105-106.

²¹⁹Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 21, 22-24. Mary Sumner is in this category; Sumner, 'Early Life'.

the mid nineteenth century which she considers reflective of changing notions of childhood and an increased emphasis on active mothering.²²⁰

Increasing literacy in men and women was reflected in the expansion of the mass production of popular media.²²¹ Knight, Morgan and Sarah C. Williams have identified the prodigious amount of improving religious literature produced in the period of interest to the thesis.²²² Rebecca Styler has noted the use made by women writers of secular material to communicate their ideas on religious themes in a way which allowed them to circumvent the notion that authority in theological matters was the province of men and by so doing construct female religious identity.²²³ The thesis will locate Mary Sumner within this analysis as a pamphleteer and writer of articles for the MU's two journals.²²⁴ Styler's observations are exemplified by Charlotte Yonge whose work as a journalist, novelist and writer for children, was motivated by her religious faith and belief in the educational power of reading. Judith Rowbotham's identification of the role of fiction in reinforcing gendered notions of 'good' womanhood is demonstrated in Charlotte Yonge's heroines who exemplify feminine piety in their moral scruples, self-restraint and self-sacrifice in the interest of home duty.²²⁵ Moruzi also addresses the theme of reading and scrutinises Charlotte Yonge's response to the widely held concern that reading inappropriate material might corrupt innocence, a view that the thesis will explore in Mary Sumner's MU membership card.²²⁶

²²⁰Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 65-80.

²²¹Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998); David Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

²²²Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 37; Sarah C. Williams, 'Is There a Bible in the House?' Gender Religion and Family Culture', in *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, ed. Morgan and de Vries (London: Routledge, 2011), 23. Williams notes 'a burgeoning mass market of commercial religious publication'.

²²³Rebecca Styler, *The Contexts of Women's Literary Theology in the Nineteenth Century* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 3-18.

²²⁴Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*.

²²⁵Judith Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives: Guidance for Girls in Victorian Fiction* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

²²⁶Moruzi, 'Never Read Anything That Can at All Unsettle Your Religious Faith': Reading and Writing in the Monthly Packet.'; Sumner, *Home Life*, 6. Member's Card Rule 5 'Be careful that your children do not read bad books or police reports'.

Sarah Delamont notes the pervasive influence of a gendered domestic ideology in informing notions of appropriate curricula for girls²²⁷ and Gorham observes that even after the expansion of more intellectually aspirational schooling for girls that developed from the 1860s, the rationale for and rhetoric of, girls' education continued to legitimise education as preparation for women's mission as good wives and mothers.²²⁸ Bush draws attention to conservative anti-feminist women, including Louise Creighton of the MU and GFS, validating aspirations to intellectual activity and university access for women, as a means to enhance spiritual identities and abilities within the distinctive sphere of womanhood.²²⁹

Access to education was also mediated by class. Knight has noted the Anglican Church as a key provider of education and the provision of schools an outlet for philanthropy and suggests that religious education was drawn on in the interests of securing social compliance.²³⁰ Similarly, June Purvis understands Sunday schools as a mechanism for the social control of the working classes and Meg Gomersall identifies class as a determining factor in the educational experience of girls.²³¹

The theme of compliance and the knowledge deemed appropriate for certain categories of people is made in relation to gender by Burstyn, who points to the ambivalence amongst Anglican clergy to women's aspirations for education. Whilst it was seen as desirable for women to be educated to support domestic roles, too much intellectual knowledge was thought to compromise femininity and challenge the paternal authority vested in Church and family.²³² Gill sees this anti-intellectualism reflected in the novels of Charlotte Yonge and in the MU

²²⁷Sara Delamont, 'The Domestic Ideology and Women's Education', in *The Nineteenth-Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World*, ed. Sara Delamont and Lorna Duffin (London Croom Helm, 1978).

²²⁸Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 105-109.

²²⁹Julia Bush, 'Special Strengths for Their Own Special Duties': Women, Higher Education and Gender Conservatism in Late Victorian Britain', *History of Education* 34, no. 4 (2005): 387-405.

²³⁰Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 191.

²³¹Meg Gomersall, *Working-Class Girls in Nineteenth-Century England: Life, Work and Schooling* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997); June Purvis, *A History of Women's Education in England* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991), 16-18.

²³²Burstyn, *Victorian Education*, 99; See also Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 101-105.

publication *MIC*,²³³ which Moyses attributes to a reluctance to engage in matters of theology as the province of masculine clerical authority.²³⁴

Not all denominations were uncomfortable with women's intellectual activity. Quakers and Unitarians both acknowledged the mental abilities of women.²³⁵ Plant claims 'Unitarians occupied a foremost place in positing new ideas about the equal intellectual capabilities of women and men and advocating a liberal, rational education for both sexes'.²³⁶ However Unitarians were in accord with Anglicans and the durable influence of Hannah More's 1799 *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*,²³⁷ in conceptualising this as being within the contemporary social roles occupied by women within the family.²³⁸ The negotiation of the obstacles and possibilities presented by a tradition of emphasis on women's education in relation to domesticity and mothering is a connecting theme addressed by Mary Hilton and Pam Hirsch, and Jane Martin and Goodman in their attention to the achievements of women educators.²³⁹ Aiston suggests that by virtue of their exclusion from most formal educational structures women's educational activism was realised through a range of 'extra institutional' initiatives, a perspective that the thesis will apply to Mary Sumner.²⁴⁰

Existing literature indicates that the exercise of philanthropy may be interpreted as a category of educational practice. It affirms religion as informative of

²³³Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 116-118; Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy* also notes the suspicion of intellectual activity on the part of women as likely to undermine domestic harmony.

²³⁴Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 19, 58-59.

²³⁵Camilla Leach, 'Quaker Women and Education from the Late Eighteenth Century to the Mid- Nineteenth Century' (PhD thesis King Alfred's College University of Southampton, 2003); Gleadle, *The Early Feminists: Radical Unitarians and the Emergence of the Women's Rights Movements, 1831-51*; Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England, 1760-1860*. Quakers were distinctive in acknowledging the religious ministry of women.

²³⁶Plant, "'Ye Are All One in Christ Jesus': Aspects of Unitarianism and Feminism in Birmingham, c. 1869-90', 722.

²³⁷H. More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education: With a View of the Principles and Conduct Prevalent among Women of Rank and Fortune* (Printed for T. Cadell, Jun. and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1799).

²³⁸Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England, 1760-1860*, 8; Gleadle, *The Early Feminists: Radical Unitarians and the Emergence of the Women's Rights Movements, 1831-51*, 4, 24, 97.

²³⁹Mary Hilton and Pam Hirsch, eds., *Practical Visionaries Women, Education and Social Progress 1790-1930* (Harlow: Pearson, 2000); Martin and Goodman, *Women and Education, 1800-1980*.

²⁴⁰Aiston, 'Women, Education and Agency 1600-2000 an Historical Perspective', 2-5.

gendered identity and of educational practice and raises questions concerning the relationship of religious educational initiatives to agendas of social control mediated by both class and gender. Conversely educational religious philanthropy may represent opportunity for empowerment.²⁴¹ Morgan sees education as:

A major vehicle through which nineteenth-century religious women could seek to achieve social, moral and political transformation, particularly the achievement of a rational education for women that might better equip them for the vital responsibilities of motherhood and citizenship.²⁴²

The thesis considers Mary Sumner in relation to the theme of education in line with Morgan's analysis.

Conclusion

The literature examined identifies references to Mary Sumner in the context of the MU in relation to philanthropy and mission. She has been associated with spiritual womanhood, discourses of motherhood and with religion as a mediating element in gendered identity. Mary Sumner's location, adjacent to authoritative figures within the Church of England and association with an upper class social milieu, suggest she is a fitting agent for consideration in the context of networks and that she is representative of class as a mediating factor in opportunity. She has been associated with themes in a tradition of scholarly enquiry into empowerment and constraint that seeks to understand the negotiation of agency against a horizon of possibilities mediated by class, gender and religion.

Literature directly relating to Mary Sumner acknowledges her emphasis on mothers as moral exemplars but allows for further investigation into her views on the purposes of education and the relationship of religious education to social stratification. Her experience of education and its relationship to the contextual characteristics of the period also presents an opportunity for analysis. In particular Mary Sumner's views on the nature of childhood and pedagogy have received little attention. The thesis will explore Mary Sumner as a popular educator and

²⁴¹ Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 191; Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures'.

²⁴² Morgan, *Women, Religion and Feminism*, 5.

will seek to locate her educational ideas in context and to analyse the strategies she deployed in the dissemination of her educational message. The thesis will also examine Mary Sumner's notions of the educated Christian woman in relation to nation, 'race' and empire. In addressing the gaps in existing literature this thesis:

- Puts Mary Sumner at the centre and locates her values, aims and activism in the context of networks of other agents and associations both formal and informal.
- Envisages religion as a socio-cultural construct, related to sites of power and permeably informative of assumptions of value and belief and contingent understandings of and hierarchies of, knowledge.
- Sees religion as mediating of authority, identity and opportunity and relates religion to education, gender, class and race/nation.
- Deploys a lens of gender to analyse of the construction of identities and the negotiation of agency in relation to the themes of religion, mission and education.
- Regards Mary Sumner as a popular educator according to a definition of education that encompasses philanthropy and the dissemination of materials exercised with the intention to change behaviour amongst the populace.
- Locates Mary Sumner within a framework that seeks to draw on Bourdieu's theoretical stance and methodological approach, to theorise the upholding and transaction of power through an analysis which draws on horizons of opportunity, claims to authority and strategic manoeuvres

in the negotiation of agency across the gendered themes of religion, mission and education in local, national and transnational space.

Chapter 2 - Theoretical Stance and Methodological Approach: the Conceptual Tools of Pierre Bourdieu

Introduction

The literature examined in the previous chapter highlights the dualities of constraint and agency as a theme of enquiry in seeking to understand women's lives in the period covered by the thesis. This theme will be applied to Mary Sumner. The literature also suggests that identity and action are negotiated in relation to other agents and to social structures in which power is invested, such as the family, religion and education. This chapter examines Pierre Bourdieu's conceptual tools as an approach to the analysis of the interplay of agents and structures, as they played out for Mary Sumner in terms of identity, authority and agency.¹ The chapter relates Bourdieu's conceptual tools to the socio-cultural fields of religion, mission (including philanthropic activity) and education, which are understood as structuring locations in which power is invested and negotiated.² It argues that Bourdieu's conceptual tools can be applied to locate an individual life trajectory within networks of agents and structures.³ Bourdieu's analysis also encompasses class and gender as socially constructed mediators of identity and opportunity.⁴ The chapter will demonstrate how Bourdieu's conceptual tools will be operationalized to analyse spheres of action and

¹Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 7-26. This work explains agency as informed by dispositions of habitus (probabilities of behaviour informed by circumstantial influences) and negotiated within fields (social structures). Capital concerns the 'assets' agents in fields have at their disposal.

²Bourdieu, 'Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field', 112-126. Appendix; Remarks on the Economy of the Church, 124-126 ; *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998); Terry Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion: Imposing Faith and Legitimacy* (London: Equinox, 2007); Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: Sage, 1990).

³Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Biographical Illusion', in *Identity: A Reader* ed. Paul Du Gay, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman (London: Sage, 2000).

⁴Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*; Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001). Gender and class are seen by Bourdieu as mediating of advantage and bound up with domination; Toril Moi, *'What Is a Woman?' And Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Beate Kraus, 'Gender and Symbolic Violence: Female Oppression in the Light of Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Social Practice', in *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma and Moishe Postone (Cambridge: Cambridge Polity Press, 1993).

networks of association and authority in relation to Mary Sumner and the (gendered) socio-cultural themes of religion, mission and education.

Pierre Bourdieu: theory, practice and epistemological position

Pierre Bourdieu's ideas were initially framed within the disciplines of anthropology and sociology, drawing upon the work of Weber, Durkheim and Marx on the objective structures of society.⁵ In particular the ideas of Marx were a stimulus towards Bourdieu's conception of an economy of symbolic 'goods'.⁶ As an anthropologist Bourdieu was also responsive to, but also critical of, Levi-Strauss's ideas concerning the generating rules of the structures in society. He also reacted against the existentialism of Sartre as inadequate in accounting for the objective structural realities and the pragmatism inherent in the negotiation of the social world.⁷

Bourdieu was influenced by Merleau-Ponty's ideas on understanding the social world as inscribed and embodied in persons,⁸ and drew on the ideas of Gaston Bachelard concerning the contextual relation of epistemology in time and space and in the location of the thinker.⁹ Ervin Goffman's notions of dramaturgy, which concern self-presentation by the individual as mediated by the situations in which they are located, also influenced Bourdieu's understanding of the transaction between the person and social structures.¹⁰

Bourdieu's quest to understand agents in relation to social situations led him to consider how persons acquire their sense of knowing the social world; their beliefs, motivation, opportunities and negotiation of life chances. He also wanted

⁵Richard Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu* (London: Routledge, 1992), 18, 19.

⁶Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 183; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 74-76. The symbolic economy in which assets are accumulated and exchanged for advantage will receive further elaboration in later paragraphs.

⁷Michael Grenfell and Cheryl Hardy, *Art Rules: Pierre Bourdieu and the Visual Arts* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), 21-23.

⁸*Ibid.*, 25.

⁹*Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁰Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu*, 19.

to account for the durability of social structures which may serve to uphold the interests of some groups to the disadvantage of others. This led Bourdieu to envisage power and authority as vested both in persons and social structures (institutions). His theoretical position on how power is upheld and transacted suggests that individuals, organisations or interest groups seek to maintain dominance.¹¹

Bourdieu's conceptual tools: habitus, field and capital

Bourdieu describes his approach as 'a philosophy of action' which is 'condensed in a small number of fundamental concepts - habitus, field, [and] capital and at its cornerstone is the two way relationship between objective structures (those of social fields) and incorporated structures (those of habitus)'.¹² This overcomes simplistic oppositions of freedom or constraint and dominance or submission and will be applied to analyse how Mary Sumner occupied and negotiated these different positions.¹³

The category of capital pertains to valued attributes, their deployment and negotiation towards securing advantage. Bourdieu makes frequent use of the analogy of game playing when explaining his ideas and theoretical interpretation of how society works.¹⁴ This encapsulates his interest in agents as 'players' who seek advantage (capital) on the (structural) field of play within the constraints of the 'rules of the game'. This will also form an aspect in analysis of the assets and strategies that Mary Sumner drew upon in forwarding her aims.

Habitus concerns the subjective understanding of social reality vested in the 'player' or collectively in 'players' that informs practice. Habitus can be related to those unthinkingly assumed habits of mind that the individual acquires through socialisation within their contextual background. Habitus concerns the practical, situational negotiation of life. For Bourdieu, the concept of habitus was intended to:

¹¹Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*: x-xii, 31-32, 38-39, 10-11.

¹²Bourdieu, *Practical Reason*, vii.

¹³Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 23-24.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 98-100.

... account for practice in its humblest forms - rituals, matrimonial choices, the mundane economic conduct of everyday life, etc. - by escaping both the objectivism of action understood as mechanical reaction “without an agent” and the subjectivism which portrays action as the deliberate pursuit of a conscious intention, the free project of a conscience positing its own ends and maximising its utility through rational computation.¹⁵

Habitus implies an accumulation of collective understandings/assumptions, which are durable dispositions that are embodied in individuals or collectively.¹⁶

Bourdieu uses the terms ‘doxa’ and ‘doxic relations’ to explain the embodiment of social and cultural messages and practices within habitus. Doxa concerns the apparent self-evidence of social reality which in its habitual familiarity goes unquestioned.¹⁷ Habitus is generative of dispositions in that it structures and normalises unconscious assumptions of how the world is and thus orientates the agent towards interpretation of the social world. Habitus informs logical preferences for action against culturally historically determined possibilities,¹⁸ and is a ‘practical sense of the game’.¹⁹

Habitus does not rule out a measure of calculation of opportunity but this is defined in relation to the structuring perception of the habitus itself which predisposes the agent towards the recognition of horizons of possibility and likely outcomes of certain choices.²⁰ However, Bourdieu refutes claims that this is a deterministic view.²¹ He insists that habitus is not merely passively received social inheritance, for the dispositions thus acquired by the individual (despite their durability and the tendency of experience to affirm them) allows for ‘regulated improvisation’.²² Bourdieu considers that there may be times when (possibly extreme) circumstances cause a ‘break’ or *époque* in the apparent self-evidence of the doxa:²³

¹⁵Ibid., 121.

¹⁶Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), 53, 54.

¹⁷Ibid., 20.

¹⁸Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 95; Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 124.

¹⁹*An Invitation*, 120; Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 66.

²⁰*Logic of Practice*, 53.

²¹Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 131.

²²Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 57.

²³Jeremy F. Lane, *Pierre Bourdieu: A Critical Introduction* (London: Pluto, 2000), 194.

Habitus is not the fate that some people read into it. Being the product of history, it is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subject to experiences and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that reinforces or modifies its structures.²⁴

The significance of habitus is its mediating function between the individual and the structures in social reality, which exists in time and place, as well as inside and outside agents. Habitus is ontologically specific, being realised through individuals, yet epistemologically generalisable to social and cultural structures. It is relational as well as mediating. It concerns where one is in time, space and circumstances, who one knows and what one thinks proper or possible. This acknowledges a 'knowing subject' within what Morwenna Griffiths, in her assertion of the significance of the multiple influences, contexts and relationships in the establishment of identity, has conceived of as a cultural 'web'.²⁵ Sources concerning Mary Sumner's religious upbringing, education and experience of family relationships and married life will be drawn upon to inform discussion of her horizons of possibility and dispositions of habitus. Her social status and relationships and clerical and philanthropic networks will also be considered in relation to identifying attributes/practices of the wider group habitus in which she was located.

Field 'may be defined as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions'.²⁶ It is a structured system of social relations that exist in relation to one another. Field and habitus are connected, as Wacquant explains:

Habitus and field designate bundles of relations. A field consists of a set of objective, historical relations anchored in certain forms of power (or capital) while habitus consists of a set of historical relations "deposited" within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation and action.²⁷

Bourdieu claims that: 'To think in terms of field is to think relationally' and 'what exist in the social world are relations'.²⁸

²⁴Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 133.

²⁵Morwenna Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self: The Web of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1995).

²⁶Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 97.

²⁷Ibid., 16.

²⁸Ibid., 96, 97.

Habitus is related to fields because fields structure the location in which identity is established and agency is enacted. Fields mediate between the practices of the participants and their social and economic context and are consequently sites of cultural engagement and differentiation. Fields relate to political, economic, cultural and educational arenas in which social processes are structured.²⁹ Many fields are interrelated and fields may have sub fields within them.³⁰ A defining characteristic of fields, if the game analogy is pursued, is that the players have a common tacit belief in the game 'a recognition that escapes questioning'.³¹ This recognition is constitutive of the boundaries of the field which is the sum of what is valued within it.³²

Fields are locations for the production of value, knowledge or symbolic goods,³³ in doing so they also determine practice.³⁴ Fields assert value for the purpose of legitimising and upholding their ascendancy and in so doing, fields construct an epistemology of social reality, that is what counts as value and what 'is'.³⁵ They concern, as Helen Gunter notes 'the struggle for and rival claims to truth'.³⁶ Fields determine who and what is within them.³⁷ They are sites for the acquisition of advantages and of competition for them.³⁸

The thesis locates Mary Sumner within the field of religion through her activism on behalf of the Anglican Church, whether through parochial work in support of her husband, or through organisations such as the Church of England Temperance Society (CETS), the GFS or the MU. She will be associated through her kin and social contacts to those with high status within the Anglican Church, a dominant presence in the field of religion. Mary Sumner will also be located in the field of

²⁹ Gunter, *Leaders and Leadership in Education*, 13. 'Social processes are structured by a hierarchy of fields: political field, economic field, cultural field and education and so positions and positioning is about domination, subordination, or equivalence.'

³⁰ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 108.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 98; Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 67-68.

³² *Logic of Practice*, 58.

³³ *The Field of Cultural Production*, 78, 121.

³⁴ Gunter, *Leaders and Leadership in Education*, 13.

³⁵ Grenfell and Hardy, *Art Rules*, 29.

³⁶ Helen M. Gunter, 'Purposes and Positions in the Field of Education Management.' *Educational Management Administration and Leadership* 30 no.1 (2002), 11.

³⁷ Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 68.

³⁸ Moishe Postone, Edward Li Puma and Craig J. Calhoun, 'Introduction', in *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Calhoun, Li Puma and Postone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 10.

education through her engagement in disseminating religious knowledge via her publications for the MU, her engagement in parish educational initiatives and involvement in the CETS and GFS, all of which aimed to inculcate religious values. Her male relatives connect her by association to the fields of political power (her father-in-law as a bishop sat in the House of Lords) and economic power (her father was a retired banker and landowner).

In seeking to explain how power is upheld and transacted within fields, Bourdieu uses the term capital in relation to transactions of value and the pursuit of advantage in the field. The notion of symbolic capital expands on a market analogy from Marxist theory to suggest that capital allows the possession or acquisition of that which is perceived to have a value.³⁹ Despite acknowledging his appropriation of economic terminology Bourdieu refutes a classical economic Marxist model of capital because he considers it fails to acknowledge attributes other than material goods that may accrue from, and be transacted for, advantage.⁴⁰

Capital and field are mutually constituting and relational. Capital consists of attributes individuals (and groups) seek to acquire. It refers to those qualities and credentials that are valued in the field and are recognised as accruing advantages (power) to the players of the game.⁴¹ Bourdieu deploys the concept of distinction to conceptualise the ascription of value to (arbitrary) qualities, attributes and forms of knowledge.⁴² It is the field itself that defines and legitimises those assets that will be valued and what constitutes distinction within it. The assets acknowledged within it are constitutive of the field itself. For Bourdieu possession of capital by an individual agent relates to indices of 'the value set on him, which defines what he is entitled to [...] the (hierarchized) goods he may appropriate or the strategies he can adopt'.⁴³ So an agent recognised for possession of capital within the field may bear 'marks of distinction'.⁴⁴ Moreover, position in the field

³⁹Grenfell and James, *Bourdieu and Education*, 20.

⁴⁰Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 119.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 99.

⁴²Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1984).

⁴³Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 139.

⁴⁴*The Field of Cultural Production*, 117.

will possibly define the capital of an individual or group and affects dispositions (habitus) and opportunities for its further acquisition.⁴⁵

Bourdieu presents capital as being of three basic forms.⁴⁶ These are economic, cultural and social but he states 'we must add symbolic capital which is the form one or another of these species takes when it is grasped through categories of perception that recognize its specific logic or, if you prefer *misrecognise* the arbitrariness of its possession and accumulation'.⁴⁷ Symbolic capital is that which is likely to accrue prestige and social honour.⁴⁸

Economic capital is the most material and least symbolic for it appertains to financial wealth. Economic capital may be advantageous towards securing other kinds of capital but does not necessarily equate to the possession of cultural capital.⁴⁹ Bourdieu defines cultural capital as varieties of legitimate knowledge. It would be possible to have power in the economic field but to be perceived, according to the logic of other fields, as lacking the cultural capital recognised as prestigious in education, taste or forms of behaviour.⁵⁰

Bourdieu subdivides cultural capital into embodied, objectified or institutionalised.⁵¹ Embodied capital is that which is vested in agents. It could appertain to attributes such as piety, taste or being 'of good family' for which the agent may receive recognition and secure advantage. Embodied attributes such as gender or 'race' may serve to mediate capital. Objectified capital is associated with prestigious things invested with meaning and value as in the case of art works.⁵² Institutionalised capital is vested in structures or in organisations such as

⁴⁵Grenfell and Hardy, *Art Rules*, 31. Capital is symptomatic of field positioning according to a hierarchy logically defined by the field.

⁴⁶Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*. This work, published in French in 1970 and in English in 1977, was Bourdieu's first use of linguistic capital and cultural capital understood as relating to legitimate knowledge. Bourdieu has since identified further kinds of capital; Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991). First published in France 1982 this work identifies symbolic, social, economic, personal, political, linguistic and cultural capital.

⁴⁷Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 119.

⁴⁸Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu*, 85.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 113.

⁵⁰Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 3, 39, 68; *Practical Reason*, 19.

⁵¹Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 119.

⁵²Grenfell and Hardy, *Art Rules*, 30.

educational institutions or religious bodies which have the authority to bestow advantage or prestige.

Social capital refers to the sum of the resources and networks of personal relations, acquaintance and recognition which an individual connects.⁵³ Social capital concerns lasting relations in a sphere of contact.⁵⁴ High social capital is characterised by relations with significant others who are bearers of status.⁵⁵ Examples of social capital could be popularity, 'good breeding' and respectability.

Capital is symbolic not just because it can designate non material attributes such as reputation but because it works through a process of acknowledgement and recognition of what Bourdieu terms the imposed cultural arbitrary which is perceived as legitimate and which will be discussed in the next section. Attributes may be intangible, such as in the case of piety, as designated with the religious field, but have exchange value as they are recognised in the field as having worth or securing advantage.⁵⁶ Capital is transferable from one field to another. A key aspect of the thesis is to identify Mary Sumner's capital and to explore how it was transacted and accumulated in relation to her activism.

Education, symbolic violence, the cultural arbitrary and pedagogic work

Bourdieu's interest in the transmission of culture and the durability of social structures and advantage vested in certain groups, led him to engage with epistemology and to investigate the construction and status of knowledge. Stimulated by his own location as an academic, Bourdieu identified education as a significant mode of cultural transmission and mediator of social advantage. Education and pedagogy have been addressed by Bourdieu in a number of works

⁵³Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 119.

⁵⁴Grenfell and James, *Bourdieu and Education*, 20-21.

⁵⁵Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu*, 121.

⁵⁶Beverly Skeggs, 'Exchange, Value and Affect: Bourdieu and 'the Self'', in *Feminism after Bourdieu*, ed. Linda Adkins and Beverly Skeggs (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

notably *Reproduction in Education and Society*.⁵⁷ His interest extends to education both via formal systems and informal means for the construction and transmission of legitimate knowledge and to the relationship these have to social reproduction.⁵⁸

Bourdieu drew from empirical research into the relationship of scholastic attainment and social factors within the French education system, to inform the theory of symbolic violence and the concept of the cultural arbitrary, outlined in *Reproduction in Education and Society*. Bourdieu also identified the concepts of pedagogic work, pedagogic action and pedagogic authority. Although initially framed in the context of and applied to, a formal education system, Bourdieu sees these concepts as applicable to 'any social formation, understood as a system of power relations and sense relations between groups or classes'.⁵⁹

Pedagogic action refers to action towards inculcating notions of value, belief, or preferred knowledge encapsulated in Bourdieu's concept of the cultural arbitrary. Pedagogic work is the longer term inculcation of the cultural arbitrary; its product is a durable transposable habitus,⁶⁰ achieved 'without resorting to external repression or, in particular, physical coercion'.⁶¹ Pedagogic action and pedagogic work cannot be accomplished without pedagogic authority. Pedagogic authority, which is contested in field manoeuvres that deploy capital to assert legitimacy, is invested in those who are recognised or misrecognised as agents authorised to speak on behalf of, and invested with the authority accruing to, the group or institution whose cultural arbitrary they wish to enforce through pedagogic action.⁶²

⁵⁷ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*. Other major works on education include *La Misere Du Monde* (Paris: Seuil, 1993); *Homo Academicus* [in Translation from the French.] (Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell, 1988).

⁵⁸ Gunter, *Leaders and Leadership in Education*. Gunter applies Bourdieu's analytical tools to theorising leadership. For an example of the deployment of Bourdieu's analytical tools to analyse education that also deals with gender see Diane Reay, 'Cultural Reproduction: Mothers' Involvement in Their Children's Primary School Education', in *Bourdieu and Education: Acts of Practical Theory*, ed. Michael Grenfell and David James (London Falmer Press, 1998).

⁵⁹ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 4.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 31-54.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 11-31.

For Bourdieu all culture (systems of symbolism and meaning) is arbitrary. In one sense culture is arbitrary because there are no underlying objective principles to be found in culture; it is the accumulated sum of the practices of a group over time and owes its existence to the social conditions that produced it.⁶³

The selection of meanings which objectively defines a group's or a class's culture as a symbolic system is *arbitrary* in so far as the structure and functions of that culture cannot be deduced from any universal principle, whether physical, biological or spiritual, not being linked by any sort of internal relation to 'the nature of things' or any 'human nature'.⁶⁴

Culture is also arbitrary in that it is an imposition, which rests ultimately on force (albeit symbolic), of the values and meanings of the dominating group. It serves to sustain and reproduce their position of domination. Bourdieu claims 'every established order tends to the naturalisation of its own arbitrariness' through the assertion of its self-defined attribution of value and in a stable society this is misrecognised as self-evident.⁶⁵

In any given formation the cultural arbitrary of the group in the dominant position is the one which most fully though always indirectly expresses the objective interests (material and symbolic) of the dominant groups or classes.⁶⁶

Bourdieu refers to this as symbolic violence which disguises the arbitrary nature of domination by presenting it as legitimate.⁶⁷

The conservation of the social order is decisively [...] reinforced by [...] the orchestration of categories of perception in the social world which being adjusted to the divisions of the established order, (and therefore to the interests of those who dominate it) and common to all minds structured in accordance with those structures, impose themselves with all appearances of objective necessity.⁶⁸

Symbolic violence only acts on social agents with their complicity. Through the effects of pedagogic work and pedagogic action they are habituated towards unthinking recognition or misrecognition of the authority of the dominating

⁶³ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 8.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: University Press, 1979), 164.

⁶⁶ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 9.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁸ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 471.

structure.⁶⁹ Thus the dominated may uphold those structures which dominate them because they acknowledge the dominating authority as legitimate. They misrecognise the arbitrary nature of the legitimising values of the dominating structure. The complicity of the dominated is reinforced by offering rewards such as material, cultural or social advantage. These are capital assets asserted through pedagogic action which the dominating majority has the power to award. Yet, domination is not merely power over a given group. 'The violence is symbolic because, it is a relationship of *meaning* between individuals in which (mis)recognition of legitimacy ensures the persistence of power'.⁷⁰ It is also the case that those exercising domination do so because they also misrecognise its arbitrary nature. Bourdieu sees every pedagogic action as an act of symbolic violence in that it seeks to impose the cultural arbitrary. For Bourdieu, pedagogic action functions in three modes; family education and diffuse education (which are acquired by interaction with socially competent members within a social context) and institutionalised education (which is acquired by the pedagogic action of structures and organisations). The rites of the Church, such as confirmation or marriage, which Mary Sumner advocated, may be conceived of as institutional education. The success of pedagogic action lies in its ability to reproduce and endorse the dominant culture.⁷¹

The thesis applies these concepts to Mary Sumner. It argues that she was, as in the case of all social agents, a recipient of pedagogic action through her family and social context. As an upholder of a socially stratified society and the values of the Church of England she was habituated by pedagogic work to aspects of the cultural arbitrary. She was also a pedagogic actor in her strategies for the promotion of religious values and behaviour, which drew together family education and institutional education. Analysing the assets and attributes that allowed her pedagogic authority is a central concern of this thesis.

⁶⁹Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 162.

⁷⁰Frank Poupeau, 'Reasons for Domination: Bourdieu Versus Habermas', in *Reading Bourdieu on Society and Culture*, ed. Bridget Fowler (Oxford Blackwell, 2000), 71, 72.

⁷¹Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 5-10.

Bourdieu: language and religion

In Reproduction in Education and Society and in Language and Symbolic Power

Bourdieu refers to linguistic capital and explains his understanding of language as both a product of and a medium for social interaction, that must be considered in relation to its context and the circumstances of its production. Agents may be bearers of linguistic capital and located within a linguistic habitus which may or may not accord with the 'code' prioritised by perpetrators of the cultural arbitrary.⁷² Fields may prioritise particular varieties of linguistic capital that can be used for differentiation and for the reproduction of a cultural arbitrary.⁷³ As such, language is a medium for symbolic violence and the dispositions of habitus allow this to be misrecognised.⁷⁴ Bourdieu associates language with pedagogic authority, 'the power of words is nothing other than the delegated power of the spokesperson and his speech - that is the substance of his discourse [...] is testimony to the guarantee of delegation which is vested in him'.⁷⁵ The notion that by using legitimised language the speaker claims (and thereby gains) legitimisation as having the right to speak and for the authority of the message will be applied to Mary Sumner's use of the rhetoric of motherhood and religion.

Bourdieu's attention to religion is contained within a selection of articles and chapters.⁷⁶ In 'Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field', Bourdieu includes religion within the definition of a field and extends his definition of capital to include religious capital.⁷⁷ For Bourdieu religious capital, which he terms the 'goods of salvation', includes the sacraments and a sense of legitimisation and

⁷²Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 184-189.

⁷³Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, See Chapter 1 'Cultural Capital and Pedagogic Communication', 71-106 and Chapter 2, 'The Literate Tradition and Social Conservation', 107-139.

⁷⁴Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 'The Production and Reproduction of Legitimate Language', 43-65.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 107.

⁷⁶'Legitimation and Structured Interest in Weber's Sociology of Religion', in *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity*, ed. Scott Lash and Sam Whimster (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 119-136; 'Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field'; 'Authorised Language: The Social Conditions for the Effectiveness of Ritual Discourse', in *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

⁷⁷'Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field'.

non-material well being acquired through membership of a recognised congregation which promises salvation.⁷⁸ This understanding is also developed in 'The Laughter of Bishops' and 'On the Economy of the Church' in *Practical Reason*.⁷⁹ The chapter 'Authorised Language: The Social Conditions for the Effectiveness of Ritual Discourse' in *Language and Symbolic Power* draws on religious terminology to assert the notion of consecrated language in a discussion of the authorisation of discourse.⁸⁰ Bourdieu asserts that:

Religious institutions work permanently, both practically and symbolically to euphemise social relations, including relations of exploitation (as in the family), by transfiguring them into relations of spiritual kinship or of religious exchange [...] Exploitation is masked.⁸¹

In the religious field, Bourdieu believes competition is over the ownership of the 'goods of salvation' in that it seeks to inculcate in the practice and world view of lay people a particular religious habitus.⁸² Rey's interpretation is that religion 'provides a way for the under-classes to make sense of their lot. Religion thus contributes to the misrecognition of the social order as legitimate, although religion can and at times does trigger major social change'.⁸³ Kraus similarly notes that 'religious specialists inculcate in the laity a religious habitus that permits orthodoxy's and the economic and political elite's "misrecognized domination"'.⁸⁴ Religious specialists create the illusion that elites are religious and therefore moral and thus deserving of their power.⁸⁵ Rey asserts the relationship of religion to gender, 'race' and colonial conquest in his advocacy for the use of Bourdieu's thinking tools for analysis of institutional religion, which he sees as closely bound up with class and the legitimisation of domination.⁸⁶

⁷⁸Terry Rey, 'Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion', *Religion* 34, no. 4 (2004), 337.

⁷⁹Bourdieu, *Practical Reason*, 112-126, Appendix: Remarks on the Economy of the Church, 124-126.

⁸⁰*Language and Symbolic Power*, 107-116.

⁸¹*Practical Reason*, 117.

⁸²Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*; Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 126.

⁸³Rey, 'Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion', 333.

⁸⁴Kraus, 'Gender and Symbolic Violence', 177. [punctuation as source]

⁸⁵Rey, 'Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion', 334.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*

Bourdieu: gender and class

Bourdieu's *Masculine Domination* (2001),⁸⁷ takes gender as its central subject. Bourdieu is clear that gender is a site for the perpetuation of domination. The asymmetry of status he ascribes to gender reveals his anthropological perspective. Bourdieu maintains that women as a category are treated as objects of symbolic exchange and invested with a symbolic function. As goods themselves women are forced to preserve their symbolic value by conforming to male ideas. 'The liberation of women must involve questioning the foundations of the production of symbolic capital'.⁸⁸ Bourdieu, like Morgan and Tosh,⁸⁹ sees gender as a construct embedded within the social field applicable to the categories of 'men' and 'women'. He sees 'men the dominant [...] equally constrained by the roles and identities according to the dominant taxonomy, they were supposed to incarnate'.⁹⁰ Bourdieu considers masculine domination so structurally embedded as to be misrecognised as the natural order:

... the concordance between the objective structures and the cognitive structures, between the shape of being and the forms of knowledge [...] apprehends the social world and its arbitrary divisions, starting with the socially constructed division between the sexes as natural, self-evident and as such contains a full recognition of legitimacy.⁹¹

Despite critique by feminists, Bourdieu's ideas have been drawn on by scholars who acknowledge gender as a mediator of opportunity and a constituent aspect of domination.⁹² Terry Lovell claims that Bourdieu over emphasises the durability of the bodily inscription of the habitus, yet acknowledges that the durability of structural domination may be usefully conceptualised with Bourdieu's conceptual

⁸⁷Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*.

⁸⁸Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 174.

⁸⁹Morgan, 'Theorising Feminist History: A Thirty Year Retrospective'; Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*.

⁹⁰Lane, *Pierre Bourdieu: A Critical Introduction*, 133.

⁹¹Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, 9.

⁹²Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category.'; Moi, *What Is a Woman*; Andrea Jacobs, 'Examinations as Cultural Capital for the Victorian School Girl; Thinking with Bourdieu' *Women's History Review* 16, no. 2 (2007): 245-261; Joyce Goodman and Jane Martin, 'Networks after Bourdieu: Women, Education and Politics from the 1980s to the 1920s', *History of Education Researcher* 80, November (2007); Lisa Adkins and Beverley Skeggs, *Feminism after Bourdieu* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004); Beverly Skeggs, 'Context and Background: Pierre Bourdieu's Analysis of Class, Gender and Sexuality', *The Sociological Review* 52(2004): 19-34; Kraus, 'Gender and Symbolic Violence'; Reay, 'Cultural Reproduction: Mothers' Involvement in Their Children's Primary School Education'.

tools.⁹³ Krajs,⁹⁴ and Moi,⁹⁵ consider Bourdieu's conceptual tools a means of interrogating gender in relation to power and domination. According to Moi, gender, like class, is a location for the exercise of symbolic violence. It can be theorised in the same way as social class, as not a field in itself but as part of the general social field. It is always a relevant factor but not always the most relevant. Moi sees Bourdieu's perspective as assuming gender as relational and carrying varying amounts of social capital in different contexts.⁹⁶ For Moi, although a woman may lose some legitimacy through her gender, she may still have enough capital to make an impact in the field.⁹⁷ This is the case for example, when women of high social capital engage in patronage and philanthropy, a category that will be applied to Mary Sumner.

Bourdieu: life trajectory and networks

Bourdieu's insistence that the life of an individual agent should be placed in context, points to the significance of networks and prosopographical analysis. He maintains agents can only be understood as social beings and refers to the 'fallacy' of biography that treats the individual as a singular detached case.⁹⁸ This approach, therefore, fails to engage with the structural properties of the field and its logic and claim to legitimacy that intersects with the habitus of the agent in question to inform their horizon of possibilities. Bourdieu understands an agent to be linked to the collection of other agents engaged in the same field and facing the same realm of possibilities. Evidence relating to others of like habitus is relevant to locating the agent in focus within and against the dominant doxa.

Bourdieu interprets biographical events as a life trajectory which he sees as a 'series of successive locations, moves and field positions'.⁹⁹ He describes this process as social ageing which accompanies biological ageing. Biographical events,

⁹³Terry Lovell, 'Thinking Feminism with and against Bourdieu', in *Reading Bourdieu on Society and Culture*, ed. Bridget Fowler (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

⁹⁴Krajs, 'Gender and Symbolic Violence', 156.

⁹⁵Moi, *What Is a Woman?*, 269. 'Gender in his [Bourdieu's] thought is under theorised'. See also Adkins and Skeggs, *Feminism after Bourdieu*.

⁹⁶Moi, *What Is a Woman?*, 291.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 293.

⁹⁸Bourdieu, 'The Biographical Illusion', 304.

⁹⁹*The Field of Cultural Production*, 189.

locations and individual moves are not detached from structures or other agents.¹⁰⁰ This view supports an analysis of an agent that seeks, through assembling and comparing evidence on agents sharing common characteristics, to understand them relationally and in context and to illuminate values, attitudes and meanings.¹⁰¹

Fuch's identification of networks as concerned with the interplay of agents and structures is compatible with Bourdieu's understanding of social reality and his notion of field,¹⁰² as illustrated in Goodman and Martin's use of Bourdieu's conceptual tools to an analysis of intellectual exchange and the role and authority of key women in relation to organisational networks in a wider political context.¹⁰³

The thesis sees fields as having attributes compatible with formal networks as described by Fuchs, who discusses the notions of power dependency and exchange theory in relation to the analysis of networks. Power dependency sees formal networks assert the legitimacy of the capital they possess in relation to other structural sites of power. Exchange theory focuses on network collaboration toward mutual advantage.¹⁰⁴

Bourdieu's understanding of capital transactions within fields allows relations to be dynamic and situational. The concept of reproduction acknowledges competition towards domination but allows that agents or groups can collaborate to promote their aims. This accommodates both the notion of power dependency and of exchange and provides thinking tools that the thesis will deploy to conceptualise, for example, the MU as authorised by bishops, or to explore the potential mutual benefit to the MU and Anglican Church accrued via transactions of capital in the pursuit of shared aims.

¹⁰⁰ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 297-298.

¹⁰¹ Cunningham, 'Innovators, Networks and Structures'; Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 8, 180-181, 193.

¹⁰² Fuchs, 'Networks'.

¹⁰³ Goodman and Martin, 'Networks after Bourdieu: Women, Education and Politics from the 1980s to the 1920s'.

¹⁰⁴ Fuchs, 'Networks'.

Bourdieu: analysis and chapter structure

Bourdieu favours engagement with agents and structures historically situated. He draws attention to the embedded historical aspect within habitus and fields¹⁰⁵ and considers that ‘the separation of sociology and history is a disastrous division and one totally devoid of all epistemological justification: all sociology should be historical and all history sociological’.¹⁰⁶ His advocacy for a history ‘which finds in each successive state of the structure under examination both the product of previous struggles to maintain or to transform this structure and the principles, via the contradiction, the tensions and the relations of force which constitute it, of subsequent transformations’ is in other words a call to engage with change and continuity.¹⁰⁷ These concepts will be applied to an analysis of Mary Sumner’s life and activism that seeks to engage with issues of constraint, agency and empowerment.

Bourdieu’s theoretical notion that agents or structures seek to maintain domination, that he expresses in the term reproduction, will frame analysis of Mary Sumner as an advocate for the religious values of the Established Church. As Mary Sumner conformed to and advocated religiously authorised notions of behaviour framed by class and gender, notions of symbolic violence and misrecognition will also frame analysis. Bourdieu suggests that the analysis of a field which seeks to conceptualise the process of participation in and reproduction and transformation of social systems and power could be approached through the following operations:

1. Analyse the position of the field vis-à-vis the field of power.
2. Map out the objective structure of relations between the positions occupied by agents who compete for legitimate forms of specific authority of which the field is a site.
3. Analyse the habitus of agents; the systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalizing a determinate type of social and economic condition and which find in a definite trajectory within the field under consideration a more or less favourable opportunity to become actualised.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 124.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁰⁸ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 104-105.

The three level analytical steps noted above will be applied to Mary Sumner in reverse order, moving broadly from informative habitus, horizons of possibility and activism to an examination of agency and achievement in relation to upholding or transforming the doxa and the interest of dominant groups. The thesis will apply the above steps in chapters relating Mary Sumner to the themes of religion, mission and education.

Analysis of Mary Sumner's MU vis-à-vis the field of power is informed by the following assumptions. The field of power is understood to relate to the apparatus of government personified by the monarch as symbolic of the nation and empire. Power implies political power in a broad sense but not exclusively so. The notion of the field of power as power to dominate and reproduce (and enforce) advantage overlaps with power in the economic field, the power of ownership and the advantages e.g. political, cultural and educational that economic power may be transacted towards. The Anglican Church has power to affect practice in the religious field and also position in the field of education. It also has power in the political field because as the Established Church is has representatives in the legislature. Anglicanism is regarded as a major subfield in relation to the religious field as a whole. In this thesis the MU as an organised official body representative of a specific interest group is regarded as a subfield within Anglicanism.

The thesis will also draw on Bourdieu's strategy of representing relationships in diagrammatic form,¹⁰⁹ Connections between organisations (or sites of interest) will be visually represented and diagrammatic representation will be used to illustrate a trajectory of field manoeuvres relating to Mary Sumner and the MU. Tables will be used to represent common characteristics and mutual relationships or shared institutional associations between network actors.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹Bourdieu, *Distinction*; Goodman and Martin, 'Networks after Bourdieu: Women, Education and Politics from the 1980s to the 1920s', 73. Goodman uses this strategy to represent the position of an agent in relation to the field of girls' secondary education.

¹¹⁰Cunningham, 'Innovators, Networks and Structures'.

Chapter 3 - Mary Sumner and Religion

Introduction

Mary Sumner's life (1828-1921) and the instigation of the MU (from 1876) coincided with a period of 'religious revival', stimulated by evangelical enthusiasm across denominations.¹ In the field of religion there was a sustained contest over doctrinal authority as the privileged position of the Established Anglican Church was pressurised by the demands of other Christian denominations for more equitable treatment.² The 'ownership of the goods of salvation' was also contested by factions within Anglicanism, which placed different emphases on the interpretation of doctrine and forms of worship.³ Mary Sumner's activism via the MU occurred against this contested context in which a defensive Anglican Church sought to maintain its status and authority. It may also be seen as an expression of women's aspirations for fuller participation in matters of religion.⁴

This chapter will use Bourdieu's three level analysis (applied in reverse order) to explore Mary Sumner's negotiation of constraint and agency and her position vis-à-vis the reproduction and transaction of power in relation to religion. The chapter will begin with a focus on habitus. Mary Sumner will be located in relation to her experiences of religion amongst her kinship network in childhood and married life. The chapter will then move outwards to consider her wider network. Doctrinal preferences and notions of capital informed by religion, in particular in relation to women, will be considered. Attention will be given to the field of religion within which members of her kinship and social network manoeuvred. The contextual circumstances which framed these manoeuvres are noted as they are considered informative of Mary Sumner's notions of capital and horizons of possibility and thus pertinent to her activism via the MU.

The chapter will then analyse Mary Sumner's field manoeuvres in relation to securing recognition for the MU. It will note how Mary Sumner's notions of

¹Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*.

²Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 1, 1827-1859; The Victorian Church Part 2 1860-1901*.

³Rey, 'Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion'.

⁴Gill, *Women and the Church of England*.

religious capital accruing to women were articulated through the MU. How capital was transacted towards pedagogic authority will be analysed. Mary Sumner's strategies to promote recognition of the MU within the Anglican Church will be examined and networking with other agents and organisations in relation to the field of religion will be considered.

The chapter will then relate Mary Sumner's activism to the wider field of power. The MU as an Anglican organisation will be located in relation to the Anglican Church in the field of religion. The relationship of Anglicanism to power invested in the state will be examined. Mary Sumner's position as the instigator of the MU will be analysed in relation to the reproduction of, or negotiation of, the dominant religious (and social) doxa with attention being given to gendered horizons of possibility for women. The chapter will conclude by summarising dispositions of habitus and horizons of possibility, capital and field manoeuvres and fields and fields of power, reflective of the three levels of analysis.

Mary Sumner: religious habitus

Family life, living religion, capital assets and symbolic gifts

Mary Sumner's notions of religion were initially informed in childhood under the guidance of her parents who, by 1832 having converted to Anglicanism, approached religion with evangelical enthusiasm. From the age of twenty (1848) Mary's experience of religion in home life and in matters of doctrinal interpretation was also influenced by the Sumner family. Her marriage placed her in proximity to her husband's views on religion and to the authoritative views of his uncle, the Archbishop and his father, the Bishop of Winchester. Mary Sumner acted as 'helpmeet' to her husband, the Rector of Old Alresford, for thirty five years (1851-1886) before the diocesan adoption of the MU.⁵ Her social position overlapped with and was extended through the clerical networks associated with

⁵The notion of helpmeet derives from the Bible (Genesis 2. 18) it implies a supportive wife who facilitates her husband's career by her effective discharge of responsibility to ensure a well ordered home but also the notion of companionship and support both emotional and practical for her spouse in the discharge of his public duties.

her husband's roles as proctor (1866) and then prolocutor in Convocation (1886), archdeacon (1885) and suffragan bishop (1888).⁶

Mary Sumner's kin shared the practice of recording biographies of notable male family members.⁷ She followed family tradition by writing her husband's memoir.⁸ George Sumner was not only his father's biographer but completed a memoir of Sir Benjamin Heywood on behalf of his father-in-law, Thomas Heywood.⁹ Mary Sumner's niece Isabel edited the reminiscences of her father. Her claim that: 'It will help many a one to know how a layman, living in the world [...] and sharing the ordinary pleasures of a country gentleman, can yet fulfil the command; "What so ever ye do, do all to the Glory of God"',¹⁰ is an assertion of symbolic religious capital; a characteristic common to all the Heywood and Sumner memoirs. Both families presented religion as a public practice and as integral to the conduct of harmonious domestic life. Mary Sumner's references to religion in daily life, as a child and in her married life,¹¹ accord with the emphasis on earnest religion recorded by other members of her family¹² and by George Sumner as a feature of his evangelical upbringing.¹³

All the memoirs follow a pattern. In addition to recording the observance of religious practice in home life, attention to religious education and scrutiny of conscience, they communicate the valuing of warm family relationships. A happy childhood guided by affectionate pious parents, is followed by domestic harmony in marriage and a career featuring religious and educational good works. Finally, family members (and servants) gather for a peaceful deathbed parting and

⁶Clergy elected a proctor to represent them in one of the Church Convocations (York or Canterbury) which were divided into an upper house of bishops and a lower of clergy. A prolocutor was elected to serve as speaker within Convocation. George Sumner joined the upper house on his appointment as Suffragan Bishop of Guildford, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 63- 66.

⁷Thomas Heywood, Sir Benjamin Heywood and George Sumner, *A Memoir of Sir Benjamin Heywood ... By His Brother, T. H. With Two Chapters of Domestic Life and Letters, 1840-1865* (Manchester: Printed for private circulation 1888); Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*; Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*.

⁸*Memoir of George Sumner*.

⁹Heywood, Heywood and Sumner, *Memoir of Sir Benjamin Heywood*.

¹⁰Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, x.

¹¹Sumner, 'Early Life.'; 'Founding.' T.P Heywood's memoir notes 'parents and children united in the tenderest love and mutual confidence', Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 1.

¹²*Reminiscences*.

¹³Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 306-307, 324; Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 3.

testimonials to the character of the deceased from worthy sources are quoted. George drew on Mary to corroborate the affectionate relations in his family that he asserted in the memoir of his father:

There never could have been a more united family than the Sumners and it was remarkable that the sons and daughters who entered into the home life at Farnham Castle, were each one treated as part of the family quite as much as the real sons and daughters.¹⁴

Mary and George maintained strong links with their Heywood and Sumner relatives through regular visits. From 1850, they took annual holidays with Bishop Sumner, which included visits to Geneva, Rome and Seville, whilst their children stayed with their Heywood grandparents.¹⁵ They lived with Bishop Charles Sumner following the death of his wife in 1849 and Mrs Heywood, Mary's mother, when widowed in 1866, moved to Old Alresford Rectory.¹⁶ Kinship ties were reinforced through the rituals of christenings, weddings and funerals.¹⁷ Inter-marriage between relatives was not unusual.¹⁸ The remarriage of widowers within close kinship, social and professional networks was also common, as the marriages of George Sumner's sister Louisanna (1837) and daughter Louisa (1882) illustrate.¹⁹

The former Unitarianism of Mary's parents and uncle was not perceived as a difficulty by the Sumner family, despite their prominence in the Anglican hierarchy.²⁰ Thomas Heywood and his brother Sir Benjamin, who was considered 'most devotionally minded and kind hearted',²¹ were accepted as committed

¹⁴*Memoir of George Sumner*, 11.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 25-27.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 11, 14, 28.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 135.

¹⁸See introduction.

¹⁹*Memoir of George Sumner*, 10, 135-136; Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 40, 261. Louisanna was second wife to Rev. William Gibson, their daughter Ella Sophia, married Rev. Henry Heywood, Mary Sumner's cousin. Louisa Sumner was second wife to Barrington Gore Browne, son of Bishop Edward Harold Browne.

²⁰Sumner, 'Memorials'. The memorial enumerates generations of Sumners back to the seventeenth century. There are fifty five references to clerics (including six bishops); thirteen to schoolmasters and academics (including Eton and Harrow headmasters); twenty military personnel; several titled gentlemen and where no profession is mentioned at least ten entries appear to reference landed gentry; ten Sumners are located overseas.

²¹Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 425.

Anglicans.²² George acted as chaplain to his brother-in-law, Thomas Percival Heywood, in his role of High Sherriff of Lancashire (1851) and gave his funeral sermon in 1897.²³ Mary Sumner did not refer to the conversion of her parents but Thomas Percival's reminiscences acknowledged the Unitarian background of the Heywoods with respect: 'To this day I hear with pain and impatience any abuse of Unitarians: [...] My father and mother were faithful and devoted servants of God before they became members of the Church'.²⁴

Mary Sumner's evangelical belief in active efforts towards securing salvation is illustrated in her writing. She drew on biblical authority to assert that: 'Our Father in Heaven shows by his training of us, his grown up children that life was meant to be a place of discipline and self-conquest'.²⁵ The card Mary Sumner kept on her dressing table as a young wife and used as a prompt towards religious endeavour, although recalled later in her public recollections on the genesis of the MU, was at the time, a private exercise.²⁶ Similar scrutiny of conscience is noted in Jennie (Mrs Charles) Sumner's response to the Bishop's translation to Winchester in 1827: 'humility fills my mind my prayer is most earnest that we may be kept humble [...] more talents added to our charge calls for redoubled vigilance and activity',²⁷ a sentiment George Sumner echoed in urging clergy not to overlook their own private prayer and improvement.²⁸

Religion was presented as a comfort. Mrs Heywood was sustained in her final illness by her son-in-law's sermons and ministrations.²⁹ Preparation for and anticipation of the afterlife were mentioned frequently. George Sumner was described as 'sailing placidly to eternity in absolute submission to the will of

²² Benjamin Heywood's conversion was after his return to parliament as an MP in 1831. Thomas Heywood had converted by the time of his move to Hope End in 1832, Bebbington, 'Unitarian Members of Parliament in the Nineteenth Century', 5; Sumner, 'Early Life'. Anglican Church attendance and patronage is recalled in this account.

²³ Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 43, 264-275.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 4-5. Thomas Heywood, Mary's father was a trustee of Cross Street Chapel before conversion and was close to his elder brother Benjamin.

²⁵ Sumner, 'Obedience', 31; Romans 8. 16 'We are the children of God'; Hebrews 12. 6 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth'.

²⁶ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 13.

²⁷ Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 126.

²⁸ *Memoir of George Sumner*, 108-109.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 13, 28. She died in 1870.

God'.³⁰ Jennie Sumner approached death with expressions of 'joyful hope and expectation' in a 'happy state of semi-entrancement'.³¹ The death of her husband was similarly an occasion for family participation with George Sumner taking Holy Communion at his father's bedside amidst children and servants waiting to be wished farewell by the dying bishop.³² The joyful anticipation of the afterlife was similarly recorded in the later account of Mary Sumner's own death, which notes 'the vision must have been wonderful'.³³ The sorrows of parting, were alleviated by the comfort of the family circle and the conviction that a life well lived would assure salvation,³⁴ and that after death 'we shall soon meet again'.³⁵

Mary Sumner's recall of her mother's girlhood religious awakening after a dream of judgement (when still a Unitarian) is an assertion of the value placed on religious sensibility.³⁶ Mary Sumner's references to the solemnity of confirmation and communion accord with the personal experience of 'vital religion' professed by evangelicals and also affirm the advocacy for communion expressed by her husband and father-in-law.³⁷ She recalled the birth of her daughter, Margaret Effie, in 1849 as a religious experience: 'My first thought when my first child was born was of an awful sense of responsibility – God had given an immortal soul in to our keeping, it was a blessed solemn moment the joy was quite unspeakable'.³⁸

The attention to preparation for what Mary Sumner referred to as 'the Home above',³⁹ involved the observance of religious ritual in the earthly home. Sunday was a quiet day for spiritual refreshment: two services were attended even whilst on holiday. The habit of family prayer, in which servants were included, shared by both the Heywoods and Sumners, was sustained by George and Mary Sumner in

³⁰Ibid., 153-154. He died in 1909.

³¹Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*: 324. She died in 1849.

³²Ibid., 479. He died in 1874.

³³Louisa Gore Browne, *Letter to Mrs Hubert Barclay in Response to Condolence Letter on the Death of Mary Sumner August 1921*: LPL MU/MSS/2/2.

³⁴*Memoir of George Sumner*, 12. Letter quoted from Charles Richard Sumner on his bereavement to Mary Sumner; '... we must pray to be enabled to forget our selfishness [...] For the loss is to us- to her the gain!'

³⁵Ibid., 28; Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 77.

³⁶Sumner, 'Early Life.'

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸'Founding.'

³⁹'Marriage 2' *Home Life*, 18 - 25. 24.

their own household.⁴⁰ In 1886, their new home was consecrated by a religious service and prayer composed for the occasion.⁴¹

The focus on religion in the home positioned parents as religious educators and acknowledged the influence of women. Charles Sumner, as Rector of Highclere in 1817, circulated an address to parents emphasising the importance of religious home example on children.⁴² The Heywoods also modelled religious conduct to their children. Mary Sumner wrote: 'I never remember disobeying my parents. Such a course seemed to be made impossible [...] by their example of high principle as regards obedience, truth and honour'.⁴³ According to Porter, Woodward and Erskine, Mary noted the 'debt of gratitude' owed to Mrs Heywood for the thorough religious training, which included daily bible reading, that she and her siblings Tom and Maggie had received.⁴⁴

Mary Sumner created a picture of childhood as a time of innocence and playfulness and parental care as affectionate.⁴⁵ She also noted the warmth shown by her father-in-law to her baby daughter, Margaret Effie,⁴⁶ which accorded with George Sumner's recall of his parents' enjoyment of holidays with their children. He included an extract from a letter written by his mother, Jennie Sumner, in the memoir of his father:

We are greatly enjoying ourselves walking - rambling over the rocks still more by being with our children and permitted to enjoy their society as we can never do at home to be so much with my dear husband and to see him thus surrounded with our children and delighting to hear them converse freely are sources of happiness.⁴⁷

Mary Sumner's experience of family relationships demonstrated that the gendered role of mother and helpmeet was esteemed. Jennie Sumner regarded

⁴⁰*Memoir of George Sumner*, 21, 16.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 84.

⁴²Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 34.

⁴³Sumner, 'Early Life'.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 8.

⁴⁵Sumner, 'Early Life'.

⁴⁶*Memoir of George Sumner*, 14. As previously noted Margaret Effie was born in 1849 when George and Mary moved to Farnham Castle.

⁴⁷Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 220. Extract of letter from Mrs Jennie Sumner included in the memoir without addressee or date.

married love as blessed and sanctified by God⁴⁸ and George Sumner's grandmother, Hannah Bird Sumner, is quoted as stating: 'no life can be happier than that of a private clergyman's wife - when the parties are tenderly united by a bond of rational affection, not expecting unchequered felicity (which in no station here below is attainable)'.⁴⁹ Accounts of family life, couched in conventional religious rhetoric, refer to the contribution of wives and mothers and extol their virtues as religious exemplars to their families. Mary Sumner drew on Coventry Patmore's image to describe her mother as the 'Angel in the house to us all'⁵⁰ and was similarly commended in her own 1921 biography.⁵¹ At Farnham Castle, George Sumner's home from 1827-1848:

There never was a house where domestic happiness was more beautifully seen [...] who can forget the joyous radiance of Mrs [Jennie] Sumner of whom it may be truly said, that she was the centre of a system of gladness, which influenced the whole circle as it moved harmoniously around her.⁵²

Mary Sumner described her mother: 'winning people of all sorts and kinds, rich and poor by her tender sympathy, her charm of manner, her cleverness and humour and her quick appreciation of all that was good and interesting in those who approached her'.⁵³ Mrs Heywood was also celebrated for her 'very decided religious convictions' which 'moulded her whole tone of thought and manner of life and were an influence to those with whom she came in contact'.⁵⁴ Her endeavours as a spiritual helpmeet were acknowledged by her husband on his deathbed: 'It is all through you that I die in faith and peace - God bless you we shall soon meet again'.⁵⁵ Mary Sumner's mother-in-law Jennie Sumner was similarly commended.⁵⁶ A eulogy signed by 684 clergy, praised her contribution to family life and her husband's career:

She 'consecrated all to the service of her heavenly master' and well did she work with him [the Bishop] by her loving holy influence. The Golden thread

⁴⁸Ibid., 220.

⁴⁹Ibid., 23.

⁵⁰Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 8.

⁵¹Ibid., 15, 17.

⁵²Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 199. Reminiscence of Reverend Charles Hume. George went to Eton in 1836 and Balliol Oxford in 1842.

⁵³Sumner, 'Early Life'.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵*Memoir of George Sumner*, 28.

⁵⁶Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 37.

of principle, the fear and love of God was woven into the Farnham daily life and made it very attractive to all who shared in it.⁵⁷

George Sumner added: 'She was a true mother in Israel and throughout her married life a helpmeet to the husband that she dearly loved both in domestic and public life'.⁵⁸

George Sumner's conduct as a parish clergyman, which involved the 'heart to heart' work of taking religion into the homes of parishioners by visiting, leading family prayer and winning over men,⁵⁹ upheld the evangelical stance of his father for whom ministry was more than the public act of once a week preaching. It involved 'attention to the young and all that general parochial superintendence which is implied in what is termed the cure of souls'.⁶⁰

Mary Sumner was dismissive of the previous aristocratic absentee incumbent of Old Alresford. For her the rectory was to be 'no longer the land of lotus living ease' but 'a centre of parochial usefulness'.⁶¹ This was realised through a number of projects in the years between 1851 and 1886 that aimed to foster religious knowledge and behaviour, such as the village reading room (1878). Even the 'Cottage Garden Society' can be interpreted with the promotion of the religiously approved virtues of thrift and temperance in mind.⁶² The Sumners' approach to parochial work assumed that Mary would, following the pattern of her mother-in-law, be an active helpmeet in the parish.⁶³ According to Mary Sumner, her husband 'greatly approved of my having a mothers' meeting – which went through catechism, baptismal and Holy Communion services, the marriage service and special passages from the Bible and Prayer Book'.⁶⁴ The

⁵⁷ Ibid., 324; Mary Sumner repeats the anecdote, see *Memoir of George Sumner*, 12.

⁵⁸ *Memoir of George Sumner*, 12.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 111.

⁶⁰ Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 171.

⁶¹ *Memoir of George Sumner*, 15. The previous incumbent was Brownlow North, Earl of Guildford, son of the former Archbishop and Master of St Cross, the alms houses fictionalised as Hiram's Hospital by Trollope.

⁶² Ibid., 16, 20, 21, 31-38, 100-107. Education will be addressed in a following chapter.

⁶³ Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 155, 324.

⁶⁴ Sumner, 'Founding'. Membership cards introduced in 1876 were an innovation to an existing meeting for which the date is unspecified. A following chapter will discuss philanthropy in relation to Mary Sumner's understanding of mission.

Church choir, a meeting for married men and a branch of the GFS (1875), were also under her direction.⁶⁵

Mary Sumner's practice and dispositions of habitus were informed in a milieu in which agents upheld the doxa of Anglicanism.⁶⁶ Her network included clergymen who, as holders of official positions in the field of the Church, were invested with symbolic social capital accruing to high office and pedagogic authority by virtue of their institutional attachment. The enthusiastic advocacy for living religion, evident in Mary Sumner's kinship network, indicates that lay members of her family were also habituated into the misrecognition of the religious cultural arbitrary as legitimate.⁶⁷ Their public assertion of scrutiny of conscience, piety, service and charity as symbolic religious capital indicates that these attributes were recognised within kinship and wider networks.⁶⁸

In Mary Sumner's experience of marriage and family, symbolic capital assets accruing to women were as helpmeets and maternal exemplars of religious values.⁶⁹ Possession of this symbolic capital was rewarded by esteem within the family and the hope of a happy reunion in the 'hereafter'. The symbolic violence of patriarchal domination was masked by the conformity of men to gendered expectations of protectiveness, chivalrous behaviour and concessionary delegation of some authority to women in gendered roles that could be realised in the pedagogic action of philanthropy or parish work. Capital thus earned gave reputation (and thereby a degree of authority) for the individual women. It also added to the collective capital of the family because it was recognised within the social milieu and field of the Church which were structurally informative of the habitus of Mary Sumner and her kin.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ *Memoir of George Sumner*, 16.

⁶⁶ Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 53, 54, 20.

⁶⁷ Pierre Bourdieu and Richard Nice, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 164.

⁶⁸ Skeggs, 'Exchange, Value and Affect: Bourdieu and 'the Self'.

⁶⁹ Poupeau, 'Reasons for Domination: Bourdieu Versus Habermas', 71, 72.

⁷⁰ Skeggs, 'Exchange, Value and Affect: Bourdieu and 'the Self'.

Doctrinal belief in Mary Sumner's kinship network: a context of contested religious capital

George and Mary Sumner's years of parish ministry occurred against a context of controversy amongst Anglicans concerning 'correct' doctrinal interpretation and pressure from rival denominations contesting Anglican dominance in the religious field.⁷¹ Bishop Charles Sumner and his brother, the Archbishop of Canterbury, were, as agents with high field position, engaged in manoeuvres to support their preferred interpretation of doctrine and the status of the Anglican Church.⁷² Struggles in the field of religion also directly involved other members of Mary Sumner's kinship network.

'Correct' form in baptism, communion and ritual in worship was disputed by Low Church evangelicals (such as Bishop Charles Sumner and Archbishop John Bird Sumner), who emphasised individual effort towards salvation⁷³ and High Church Tractarians, who favoured ritual and priestly authority.⁷⁴ The effect of Charles Sumner's antipathy to those suspected of Tractarian views, which included the exclusion of ladies from philanthropic projects, is recalled by Charlotte Yonge's friend, Charlotte Moberly:

Bishop Charles Sumner had not long been Bishop of Winchester. He and almost all the clergy wives were of the Evangelical School. He had entirely made up his mind that Mr Keble would go over to Rome and was dreadfully afraid of him. The Tractarian Oxford movement was just beginning [1833] and the new Headmaster [George Moberly, Winchester] had the reputation of being connected with it and being full of Romish tendencies so for many years he had a hard time of it in Winchester.⁷⁵

The strength of feeling associated with establishing the exact doctrinal interpretation of the Anglican Church and by implication defending its spiritual

⁷¹The Tractarian Movement had started in 1833 and controversy over ritual continued until the 1874 Ritual Act; 1850 saw the Papal establishment of a Roman Catholic hierarchy in England and the 1851 census revealed declining numbers of Anglicans. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 1, 1827-1859; The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*.

⁷²Scotland, *John Bird Sumner*.

⁷³Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, 35; Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 463-446; Turner, 'The Victorian Crisis of Faith and the Faith That Was Lost'.

⁷⁴Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*; Chandler, *An Introduction to the Oxford Movement*.

⁷⁵C. A. E. Moberly, *Dulce Domum: George Moberly, His Family and Friends* (London: John Murray, 1911). 58-59, 83. See Appendix 2.

authority is demonstrated by the Gorham case. In 1850, after three years of dispute, Archbishop John Bird Sumner supported Reverend Gorham's view that baptismal regeneration was upheld by living the baptismal promise, rather than by virtue of the rite itself, which had been legally contested by Tractarian Bishop Henry Philpotts as against Anglican doctrine.⁷⁶ George Sumner devoted nine pages of biography to justifying Charles Sumner's judgement which, by implication, emphasised the role of parents and Godparents in preserving baptismal grace and protecting the child from sin.⁷⁷ Mary Sumner was to make this central to the MU.⁷⁸

The conversion of senior Anglican clerics to the Roman Catholic Church affirmed Charles Sumner's fear that Tractarianism led to Rome.⁷⁹ The sense of threat to the Established Anglican Church was heightened by the establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England, the so called 'papal aggression' of 1850. Charles Sumner considered it to be an invasion of the Queen's supremacy as head of the Church of England.⁸⁰ His aversion to the 'corruption of Rome' was reflected in his objection to the use of Marian iconography,⁸¹ and he perceived Roman Catholic priests as an assault on the paternal authority of the family:

The system of the confessional is foreign to the spirit of the gospel [...] Englishmen will never endure to see the weaker members of their families subjected to an authority which, if it does not taint and confuse the moral sense, will subdue the mind to the extinction of all independent volition and chain it captive with passive submission to the will of a spiritual director.⁸²

⁷⁶Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, 13, 26. The case went to the Ecclesiastical Court of Arches and the Privy Council. Philpotts threatened to excommunicate Sumner after his ruling.

⁷⁷Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 331-340.

⁷⁸Sumner, *Home Life*, 6; MU card.

⁷⁹Ashwell and Wilberforce, *Life of the Right Reverend Samuel Wilberforce, D.D: Lord Bishop of Oxford and Afterwards of Winchester, with Selections from His Diaries and Correspondence*; See Newsome, *The Parting of Friends: A Study of the Wilberforces and Henry Manning*. Notable converts were John Henry Newman (1845) and Henry Manning (1849). Manning was the brother-in-law of Sumner kinsman, Samuel Wilberforce. Other Wilberforce family converts included brothers Robert, William and Henry and brother-in-law George Ryder followed by his daughter and son in law.

⁸⁰Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 345-346.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 286-287.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 380.

In 1876 Mary Sumner's sister Margaret converted to Roman Catholicism.

According to the account written by her niece Isabel:

Of this act and of the mental agony which it caused to herself and to my father, both having been always of one heart and of one mind working together for God and His Church, I cannot write.⁸³

There is no surviving record of Mary Sumner's response to this but her writings for the MU reveal her to be in accord with her father-in-law's views on Roman Catholicism. She averred: 'the father should be the priest in the house'.⁸⁴

Similarly, when discussing the use of images in relation to MU materials, she insisted that the Madonna should only be represented with the infant Jesus:

She was most blessed as Mother of our Saviour but RC's worship her. Our Lord clearly showed that he did not wish this during his life [...] he always showed respect to her - but as an honoured human being – let us guard against worshipping the Virgin Mary as the RC's do.⁸⁵

Mary Sumner also felt that Roman Catholic attempts to 'win our people' were a threat to be resisted⁸⁶ and whilst she could respect Nonconformist Protestants,⁸⁷ she was strongly opposed to Mormonism and the 'deadly heresy' of Christian Science.⁸⁸

The death of Tractarian John Keble, in 1866, within the Anglican Church may have alleviated local tension but the 'struggle for doctrine'⁸⁹ and related field manoeuvres remained current within Mary Sumner's family. In 1868, George Sumner edited *Principles at Stake*,⁹⁰ a collection of essays by anti-Tractarian scholars. George's essay, 'The Doctrine of the Eucharist Considered, with

⁸³ Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 125-126. This was the same year Mary Sumner initiated the membership card at her mothers' meeting.

⁸⁴ Mary Sumner, *To Husbands and Fathers* n.d.: LPL MU/MSS/2/1/9.

⁸⁵ *Letter to Mrs Maude Central Secretary of the Mothers' Union 1917*, LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/3.

⁸⁶ *Letters to Mrs Maude*, n.d.

⁸⁷ Mary Sumner, 'Secular Education', *MIC* (October 1894).

⁸⁸ Mary Sumner, *Letter to Mrs Maude Re Christian Science 25 May 1909*: LPL MU Box 452.14.

⁸⁹ Sumner, *Principles*, 135.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* The word 'stake' evoked Protestant martyrs Latimer and Ridley 'whose blood had been shed for the pure truth of God', 170.

Statements Recently Put Forward Concerning the Sacrament', reflected the evangelical view in its argument against transubstantiation:⁹¹

If the wicked only eat the sign or sacrament of the body of the Lord without being in any wise partakers of Christ then it seems to follow that consecration cannot so change the elements of bread and wine as that they shall be themselves the body and blood of Christ. – [...] Eucharist is not a sacrifice but a sacrament a symbolic receiving to the heart of the believer the sacrifice is of praise and thanksgiving not body and blood [as Tractarians and Roman Catholics believed].⁹²

Despite a refutation of the doctrine of transubstantiation, evangelicals within the Anglican Church promoted communion, according to Charles Sumner: 'more frequent administration of the Holy Sacrament is much to be desired, so that the well-disposed [...] may have many opportunities of drawing near to the table of the Lord'.⁹³ An increase of communicants was regarded as a measure of Episcopal success and Mary Sumner thought it relevant to comment on the uplifting effect of her husband's confirmation addresses. Taking communion was advocated on the MU membership card (*Table 3: Wording of Mothers' Union Cards*).⁹⁴

George and Mary Sumner's church refurbishment (1871) was typical practice amongst their kin and social network. Charles Sumner (1844, Hale), Thomas Heywood (1840, Wellington Heath) and the Yonges (1872, Otterbourne), all endowed or improved churches.⁹⁵ However the appropriate adornment of churches was a matter for dispute between opposing doctrinal factions.⁹⁶ Thomas Percival Heywood, who sponsored the (1874) church refurbishment that was the catalyst for a legal challenge to the legitimacy of the form of [allegedly Tractarian ritualistic] worship conducted by the incumbent, was directly caught up in the

⁹¹Ibid., 145. Tractarians like Roman Catholics maintained the 'real presence' in the Eucharist.

⁹²Ibid., 161.

⁹³Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 173. The confirmation drive extended to repentant prisoners at Parkhurst Reformatory. *ibid.*, 319.

⁹⁴*Memoir of George Sumner*, 83-84; See also Ashwell and Wilberforce, *Life of the Right Reverend Samuel Wilberforce, D.D: Lord Bishop of Oxford and Afterwards of Winchester, with Selections from His Diaries and Correspondence*. Wilberforce makes numerous references to taking confirmation services.

⁹⁵Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 135; Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 16-18; Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 48-49.

⁹⁶Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 178. Charles Sumner 'preached the restoration and adornment of churches so shortly to be monopolised by the opposite school of thought'. [Tractarians were also styled Ritualists].

bitter controversy of the 'Miles Platting Affair', which finally concluded in 1882. His daughter, Isabel, recorded the grievance felt at perceived interference on the part of an extreme anti-Tractarian Low Church faction.

My Father's efforts, both public and private, in defence of the clergy and people of St. John's during the cruel and unjust persecution which they had to undergo were generous and untiring; they were also entirely unselfish. He was not contending for a ritual which he personally preferred, for he was no ritualist ... But he could not and would not, endure to see a united congregation, with its devoted parish priests, insulted and molested by persons who had nothing to do with the church or parish and relentlessly persecuted for obeying, in perfect good faith, the rubrics of The Book of Common Prayer.⁹⁷

The church restoration funded by George and Mary Sumner at Old Alresford avoided controversy: 'there was neither excessive ornamentation nor severe plainness'. The avoidance of 'severe plainness' illustrates the Sumners' rejection of views tending towards more extreme Protestantism. Although evangelical in earnestness they rejected a Nonconformist emphasis on preaching. The church was a '*House of Prayer*' [Mary Sumner's italics] not a 'House of preaching'.⁹⁸ The appointments of Samuel Wilberforce (1869) and Edward Harold Browne (1873) in succession to Charles Sumner (1827-69) brought a perspective to the interpretation of doctrine more accommodating to Higher Church views which George, who had attempted a conciliatory tone in *Principles at Stake*, adapted to.⁹⁹ As Archdeacon (1885) he was described as a 'moderate High Churchman'¹⁰⁰ and on his appointment as Bishop of Guildford (1888), 'a champion of no party or sect'.¹⁰¹ Despite taking the Bible as inspiration, the Sumners were also to accept the theological interpretation that accommodated the scientific understanding of evolution which emerged towards the latter years of the century. As with their interpretation of the sacraments of baptism and communion, belief in 'the sense not the letter' allowed them to recognise the non-literal 'Higher Criticism' approach to biblical interpretation as advocated (amongst others) by their acquaintances, Archbishop Temple and Charles Kingsley.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 138-139.

⁹⁸ Sumner, 'Prayer' Home Life. 100-109. 127.

⁹⁹ Sumner, *Principles*, 153, 'What I have said [on transubstantiation] has been, I hope urged in a spirit of brotherly candour and charity. Hard names convince no one'.

¹⁰⁰ *Memoir of George Sumner*, 51.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹⁰² Sumner, *Principles*, 158; Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 87-110.

Mary Sumner's habitus was informed at a time when the ownership of the 'goods of salvation' was bitterly contested.¹⁰³ The temporal durability of this contest indicates the capital value accorded to the possession of 'correct' doctrinal interpretation within the evolving field of religion as a whole and within the sub field of the Anglican Church. The struggles for authority in matters of doctrine could (and did in Mary Sumner's kinship and social network) have professional, legal and personal/social repercussions. Her relatives participated in field manoeuvres to uphold the established status of the Anglican Church and in advocacy for an interpretation of doctrine which rejected both ornate ritual and austerity in forms of worship. For Mary Sumner and her kin (with the notable exception of her sister) orthodoxy and thus the religious capital of most worth lay in Anglican belief.

Mary Sumner: wider habitus, notions of capital, field manoeuvres, networking to establish the Mothers' Union

Mary Sumner's kin were not the only mediators of her understanding of religion and its relation to what she deemed to be the appropriate roles and conduct of women. The Sumners identified themselves with the upper classes,¹⁰⁴ a position substantiated by the affluence of Mary's father, her titled uncle, George's Episcopal relatives and his education at Eton and Oxford. Old Alresford, a living worth £500 a year, was sufficient for sustaining the lifestyle of a gentleman and Mary Sumner identified her and her husband's social capital by enumerating several titled persons and gentry amongst their circle.¹⁰⁵

Social life was bound up with religious practice. At Old Alresford, 'the clergy and their wives were ever welcomed and many pleasant gatherings were held for church work'.¹⁰⁶ Supporting Church and philanthropic projects demonstrated the discharge of social obligations not only with regard to the perceived needs of the

¹⁰³Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 126.

¹⁰⁴Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 271; Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 2-7; Sumner, 'Address at the Church Congress in Hull 1890'.

¹⁰⁵*Memoir of George Sumner*, 23-25.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 21-25.

lower classes but amongst more privileged social equals and were consequently a source of capital.

The GFS provided Mary Sumner's first involvement with a women's religious organisation. It aimed to prevent working-class women and girls from 'falling' (the loss of symbolic capital occasioned by loss of chastity), by winning their adherence to religiously sanctioned standards of womanly conduct.¹⁰⁷ This was to be achieved through religious guidance, employment training and opportunities for social contact under the supervising patronage of a woman of a higher class.¹⁰⁸ The GFS originated in Winchester (initial discussions 1874, official inception 1875) and spread through the efforts of 'Foundress' Mary Townsend to mobilise women of similar class and religious interests.¹⁰⁹ Mary Sumner was a 'Founding Associate' and initiated one of its first branches (1875). Her involvement was sustained after the inception of the MU as a diocesan organisation in 1886. Mary Sumner visualised the MU as extending the preventive moral agenda of the GFS through the influence of women in their homes and she used GFS events and the example of Mary Townsend's networking strategy to promote the MU.¹¹⁰ According to Porter, Woodward and Erskine, she 'seized every opportunity that offered itself of seeking to interest personal friends far and near'.¹¹¹ The following table demonstrates the overlap of GFS and MU activism.¹¹² The asterisks (*) indicate active support for the MU amongst spouses.

¹⁰⁷ Agnes L. Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton, 1905), 4, 6. GFS Rule 3 insisted on chastity.

¹⁰⁸ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 4.

¹⁰⁹ Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society*, 11. 'Every Branch was organised in direct communication with her. For several years she never took so much as a week's holiday from GFS correspondence'. See Appendix 2.

¹¹⁰ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 6; Mary Sumner, 'Vice Presidential Speech to the GFS. Diocesan Conference at the George Hotel', *G.F.S Associates Journal Dec-Jan 1885*, 8.

¹¹¹ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 27.

¹¹² Data from *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work and A Short History of the Mothers' Union; Friendship's Highway; Winchester Diocesan MU Committee Minute Book; Fifty Years* and the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Table1: Activists in the Mothers' Union and Girls' Friendly Society

Activist	MU	GFS	Bishop as Spouse
Mary Sumner	Foundress Diocesan President 1885-1915 Central President 1896 -1909	GFS Founding Associate Winchester 1875 Diocesan Vice President 1885 Diocesan President 1887	George Sumner*, Suffragan Bishop of Guildford from 1888
Louisa Barrington Gore Browne (daughter of Mary Sumner)	MU Associate Botley c.1882 Speaks to central council re Mary Sumner's views on divorce	Assists with Old Alresford GFS branch between 1875-1882	
Dorothy Gore Browne (daughter of Louisa Barrington Gore Browne)		Winchester Diocesan President 1911	
Charlotte Yonge	Winchester Diocesan Committee 1886 member. Editor <i>MIC</i> 1890- 1901	Founding Associate 1875. GFS Literature Correspondent Her 1886 Novel <i>The Two Sides of the Shield</i> features the GFS.	
The Hon. Ellen Joyce	Original Winchester Diocesan Committee member 1885	GFS Founding Associate 1875 GFS Emigration Correspondent 1883 Founder of Winchester Emigration Society 1882 which by affiliation became BWEA 1888 (Sister-in-law to Lady Dynevor GFS Diocesan President , St David's, 1881, 1920)	
Emily Wilberforce	MU Central President 1916-20 Started Newcastle MU after Portsmouth Church Congress 1885 Her daughter Mrs Russell became MU temperance correspondent in 1917	Diocesan President Chichester 1897	Ernest Wilberforce,* Bishop of Newcastle 1882, Chichester 1896 - 1907
Elizabeth Harold Browne	Winchester Diocesan Committee 1885	Winchester Diocesan President 1879	Edward Harold Browne,*Bishop of Ely 1864, Winchester 1873 - 1891
The Hon. Augusta Maclagan	Central Vice President 1903 Friend of Mary Sumner-organised mothers' meetings Lichfield 1873/4	Diocesan President, Lichfield 1880, York 1892	William Maclagan, Bishop of Lichfield 1878, York* 1891 - 1908
Frances Atlay	Started MU in Hereford after Portsmouth Church Conference 1885	First Diocesan President Hereford 1880	James Atlay, Bishop of Hereford , 1868 - 1894
Ellen Bickersteth	Inaugurated Exeter MU after Portsmouth Church Congress 1885. Friend of Mary Sumner	Diocesan President Ripon 1881	Edward Bickersteth, Bishop of Exeter, 1885 - 1900
Emily Dowager Marchioness of Hertford	Associate from 1888 Started MU Diocese of London 1890 with her daughter	Diocesan President Worcester 1881	
Lady Horatia Erskine (daughter of Dowager Marchioness of Hertford)	Central Life Vice President Sisters supported MU as diocesan presidents or leaders.	Winchester Diocesan Council 1887	
Sophia Wickham Her daughter Lucy Ogilvy was also in the MU	Winchester member c.1894, district speaker 1896 friend of Mary Sumner	Associate c.1894	

Louise Creighton	Peterborough Diocesan President 1891 and Central Council member 1896 1908 Pan Anglican Congress Women's Committee	President Newcastle Diocese 1883	Mandell Creighton , Bishop of Peterborough , 1891, London, 1897 - 1901
Lady Laura Ridding (close friend of L.C)	Instigator of MU Watch Committee 1912 Instigated Women's League Southwell- 1884 used MU prayer	Winchester Diocesan Council Southwell diocesan GFS instigated 1884 - attempted to combine into Women's League 1886. Her mother Lady Selborne was at the GFS Conference Winchester 1887	George Ridding,* Bishop of Southwell 1884 - 1904
Eleanor Chaloner Chute	Winchester Diocesan Committee 1888	Winchester Diocesan President 1889 President Central Council 1901 onwards	
Beatrice Temple	Supported Laura Ridding's Womens League 1886. Hosted meeting to discuss London Diocesan MU	1880 first Diocesan President Exeter	Frederick Temple Exeter 1869, Bishop of London 1885 and Archbishop of Canterbury 1896 - 1902
Mary Benson	Speaker at Winchester Diocesan Conference 1887 and first central meeting. Supported Laura Ridding's Womens League	Central President 1893-1885	Edward Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1883 - 1896
Edith Davidson	Winchester Diocesan Vice President 1898 Central Vice President		Randall Davidson, Winchester, 1895, Archbishop of Canterbury , 1903 - 1928
Barbarina The Hon. Lady Grey	Speaker at Winchester Diocesan Conference 1887 Diocesan Council Member 1891	Member of Council 1877 President Central Council 1883-1899	
Emeline Francis Steintal	Hon. Sec. Ripon MU 1909 gave evidence on behalf of MU to Gorell commission on divorce 1909	Diocesan President Ripon 1914	

The networking amongst women to promote mutual aims, which was instrumental in expansion of both societies, was reflected in their 'Objects' [aims]. The GFS sought: 'To band together in one Society, women and girls as Associates and Members, for mutual help, (religious and secular), for sympathy and prayer'.¹¹³ Mary Sumner's intention with the MU (stated 1885) was similarly: 'To organize in every place a band of mothers who will unite in prayer and seek by their own example to lead their families in purity and holiness of life'.¹¹⁴ At the first MU Diocesan Conference in 1887, Mary Sumner said, 'those who join are asked to try and interest others in the union and persuade them to become members.'¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Object 1 GFS 1875.

¹¹⁴ Object 3 of the MU Sumner, *Home Life*, 10.

¹¹⁵ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 30-31.

Networking amongst clerical contacts was a significant manoeuvre towards access to the religious field. The personal contact of Mary Sumner and other women with bishops, who embodied both social capital and pedagogic authority as agents with high position in the Anglican Church, was a key factor in the genesis and development of both the MU and the GFS. In 1873, the Sumner's kinsman, Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, had been instrumental in stimulating Mary Townsend to conceive of the GFS.¹¹⁶ Mary Sumner's speech at the 1885 Portsmouth Church Conference was delivered at the instigation of her friend, Bishop Ernest Wilberforce. The suggestion that the MU should be adopted as a diocesan body occurred at a social gathering and with the sanction of Bishop Harold Browne was enacted the following day.¹¹⁷ The following table (*Table 2*) illustrates Mary Sumner's links with bishops through kinship, friendship, or through her husband's career in the Church.¹¹⁸

Table 2: Episcopal Contacts of George and Mary Sumner

Bishop	Nature of relationship	Remarks
John Bird Sumner, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1848-1862	George Sumner's Uncle	Evangelical George (abbreviated as GHS) is his chaplain
Charles Richard Sumner, Winchester, 1827-1869 (abbreviated as CRS)	George's Father	Evangelical George is his chaplain Appoints to George to Old Alresford 1851
Samuel Wilberforce, Winchester, 1869-1873 (abbreviated as SW) *	Distant cousin Friend Patron	Son of William Wilberforce CRS patron to SW patron to GHS - 1873. Broad churchman Son Ernest see below
Edward Harold Browne, Winchester, 1873-1891 (abbreviated as EHB) * \$	Second son Barrington Gore Browne married Louisa d. of Mary Sumner in 1882	MU supporter. Mrs HB GFS and MU supporter. Moderate high churchman appointed George Archdeacon 1886, Bishop of Guildford 1888
<i>Richard Trench, Archbishop of Dublin, 1864-1907 (formerly Dean Trench)</i>	Rector of Itchenstoke Friend and advisor to George prior to 1864	Also friend to Mary's father Thomas Heywood High church
Ernest Wilberforce, Newcastle, 1882-1896, Chichester, 1896-1907 *\$	Son of Samuel Wilberforce Friend	Prompts Mary to speak, Mrs Emily Wilberforce an MU activist and London MU President, Central President 1916. Temperance enthusiast
<i>William Maclagan, Lichfield 1878, Archbishop of York 1891-1908</i> *\$	Friend	High church MU supporter, Mrs Maclagan initiated early version of MU MU mass meeting speaker
<i>Lord Alwyne Compton, Ely 1886-1904, succeeds EHB</i>	Friend Colleague in Convocation	High church early MU branches in diocese
<i>Edward Bickersteth, Exeter, 1885-1900</i> \$	Friend	Early MU branches in diocese Evangelical
<i>George Ridding, Southwell, Nottinghamshire, 1884-1904</i> *\$	Friend, former Headmaster of Winchester College in Moberly and Yonge circle	Husband of Laura Ridding

¹¹⁶Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society*, 4.

¹¹⁷Testimony of Mrs Wilberforce in Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 21.

¹¹⁸*Memoir of George Henry Sumner; Life of C. R. Sumner; Mary Sumner Her Life and Work and A Short History of the Mothers' Union.*

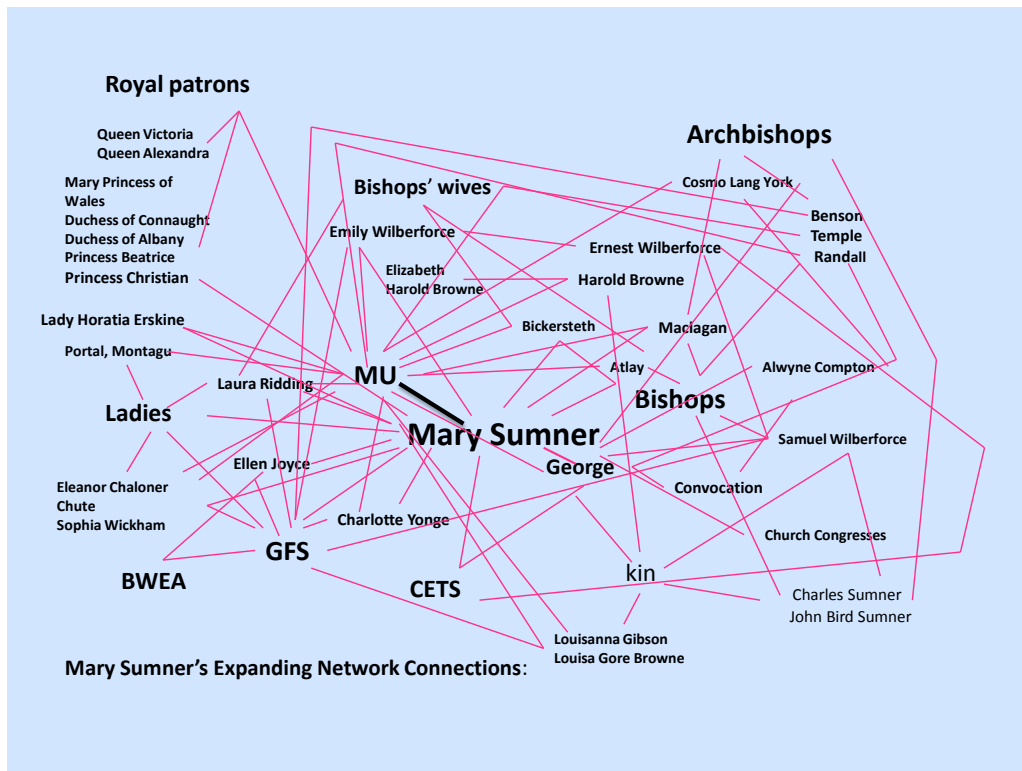
<i>Cosmo Gordon Lang, Stepney, 1901, Archbishop of York, 1909-1928*</i>	Inducted to living of Portsea by George Sumner in early 1890s	Invites MU conference to York offers advice on MU divorce petition, Mass Meeting speaker
Edgar Charles Sumner Gibson, Gloucester, 1905-1924	Nephew Son of George's elder sister, Louisanna, (d. 1899) 2nd wife of William Gibson, Rector of Fawley.	Read prayer at George's funeral.
Alan George Sumner Gibson, Coadjutor Bishop of Capetown, 1894-1906	Nephew As above	
<i>Edward Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1883-1896 \$</i>	Hosts to George and Mary at times of Convocation.	'Death of Benson a great sorrow a true friend and advisor' (GHSDD 70)
<i>Frederick Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1896-1902 \$</i>	Mrs Beatrice Temple London MU Diocesan President	'Archbishop and Mrs Temple carried on the kind hospitality and friendship' (GHSDD 70)
Anthony Thorold, Winchester, 1891-1895	Served by George as Suffragan Bishop	
Randall Davidson, Winchester 1895-1903, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1903-1928 * \$	Served by George as Suffragan Bishop	Davidson advisor to MU central committee Mrs Edith Davidson MU Central President for London and MU Vice President (GHSDD 147)
George Augustus Selwyn 1 st Bishop of New Zealand, 18411, Lichfield, 1867-1878	Tutor to George at Eton	

Kin including by marriage are represented by bold type; Friends and Associates in italic; Connection to the MU or GFS is marked* and \$ indicates marriage to a woman active in the Mother's Union. (GHSDD) indicates Mary Sumner's memoir George Henry Sumner DD Bishop of Guildford.

The following figure (*Figure 1*) represents the connections on which Mary Sumner drew in forwarding the MU.¹¹⁹ These links both fed into and expanded (through space and time) from the MU as Mary Sumner deployed varieties of networking strategy.

¹¹⁹Data from Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner; MU, Fifty Years*. MU/CO/PRES; Winchester Diocesan MU.

Figure1: Mary Sumner's Expanding Network Connections



The MU was not immediately a fully structured body (unlike the GFS). For several years it was instigated on the initiative of interested women, for whom Mary Sumner was the contact, securing authorisation by their influence on local clergy: 'Branches are started not by the voting of a majority who may possibly be half hearted but by the Enrolling member who consults with the incumbent and then has a meeting to explain the objects'.¹²⁰ Porter, Woodward and Erskine note the enthusiasm of women activists adopting Mary Sumner's vision. 'Very rapidly other dioceses followed the lead given by Winchester and they generally accepted the Winchester organisation'.¹²¹ The keystone of the 'work' was at parish level. The *Hampshire Chronicle* reported a typical meeting which combined a social event with communicating the message of the MU:

OTTERBOURNE Mothers' Meeting - On Tuesday last Miss Yonge entertained about 60 'mothers of young children' at tea in the school room. After the tables had been cleared a meeting was held, at which an earnest and

¹²⁰ Mary Sumner, *Letter Concerning Misconceptions on the Mothers' Union*: LPL MU Box 452A 14, to Mrs Maude, surmised date 1910-14.

¹²¹ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 107. Each Diocese had a president, 'presiding members' for each rural deanery and enrolling Associates who headed parish branches.

impressive address was delivered by Mrs Sumner, wife of the Archdeacon of Winchester.¹²²

Practices of the MU at local level included:

...holding periodical meetings which are addressed by various ladies on the objects of the union generally, lectures are given under its auspices on questions of health and sanitation: classes are held on Sunday afternoons for the religious instruction of members so that they may be able to impart religious teaching to their children.¹²³

Mary Sumner also deployed printed materials as a field manoeuvre in her pedagogic work to promote the MU. The sense of collective union advocated by Mary Sumner was fostered by issuing pamphlets, many written by Mary Sumner and included with her correspondence.¹²⁴ The MU magazine, *The Mothers' Union Journal*, was conceived as a newsletter from Mary Sumner to all members. Published initially in leaflet form in 1888, by the following year it had a circulation of 46,000.¹²⁵ MU identity was also promoted through the use of a logo designed by Heywood Sumner (c.1888) and later a brooch produced under Mary Sumner's close supervision (1909).¹²⁶

By 1892, the Winchester Diocesan Committee, invested with authority as the first MU organisation and home diocese of the 'Foundress', resolved that a central organisation and constitution were desirable to promote cohesion between dioceses and to ease the burden on Mary Sumner. Negotiations towards this commenced with the establishment, in 1893, of a Committee of Presidents but it took another three years to centralise the MU formally.¹²⁷ However, by 1896 a formal constitution enabled the MU to take a corporate stand as representative of a body of opinion on issues perceived to relate to morality and family life.

¹²²Hampshire Chronicle, 'Otterbourne Mothers Meeting', *Hampshire Chronicle*, 13 Feb. 1886.

¹²³*Hearth and Home*, 'Leading Societies and Their Work: The Mothers' Union', *Hearth and Home an Illustrated Weekly Journal for Gentlewomen*, 28 Jan. 1892.

¹²⁴Mary Sumner, *Letter to Mrs Crawford*, 19 June 1917: HRO WDMU 145M85/A12; *Letter to 'My Dear Marion' (Basdell)*, 23 Dec (Surmised) 1916:HRO WDMU 145M85/A11.

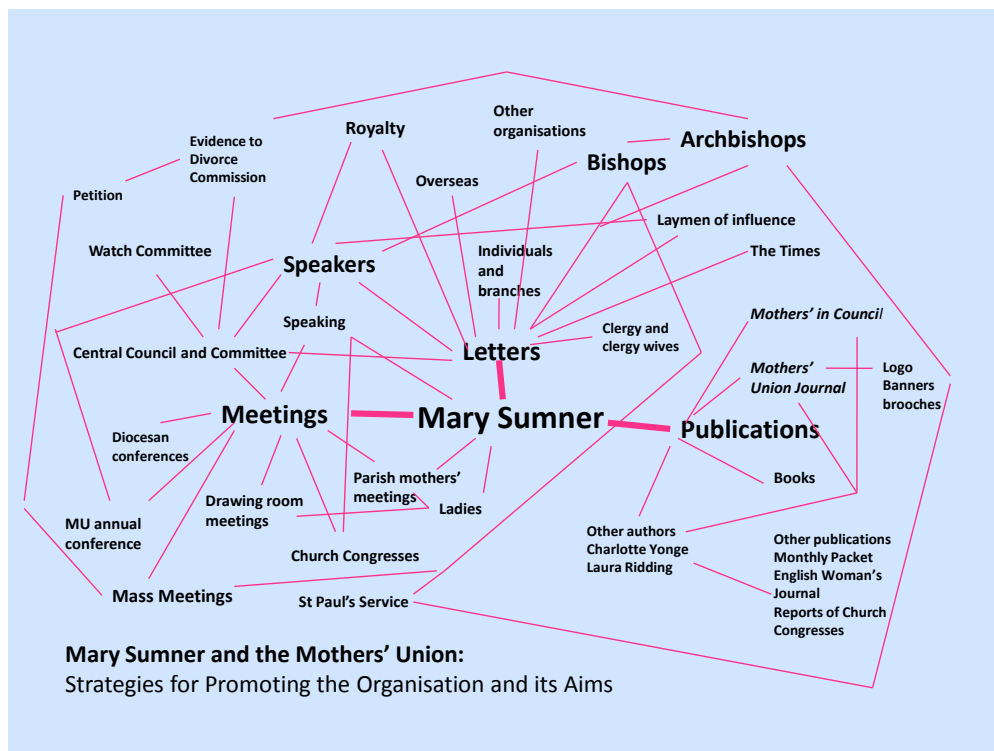
¹²⁵MU, *Fifty Years*, 10-12. 'Practically all the dioceses adopted [...] a Diocesan Cover for local news', published quarterly - it sold 8,000 in 1888.

¹²⁶Mary Sumner, *Letter to Mrs Maude Concerning Lady Hillingdon's Drawing Room Meeting*, 23 Feb. 1909: LPL Box 452/4, Written from Bournemouth 23 Feb 1909.

¹²⁷MU. *Minute Book*: LPL MU/CC/1/1; Erskine, 'A History of the Mothers' Union'.

The following figure (*Figure 2*) indicates the three main ways that Mary Sumner communicated her aims and encouraged support for her organisation, broadly within the field of religion, but with some overlap into the field of education via publications: power is also as represented by royalty and archbishops, who are located towards the top of the figure.¹²⁸ The figure also seeks to represent a trajectory of movement from closer contacts socially and geographically outwards in space and over time.

Figure 2: Mary Sumner's Strategies for Promoting the MU and its Aims



Mary Sumner continued to personify the MU after centralisation and its campaigns on divorce, secular education and temperance reflect her views.¹²⁹ She served as its Central President until 1909 and remained as the Winchester Diocesan President until 1915. Her intervention in the policies and practices of the

¹²⁸Data *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work and a Short History of the Mothers' Union*; LPL MU/CO/PRES/ and MU/MSS/; HRO WDMU *Committee Minute Book 145/M85/C2/2*; HRO Selborne Collection; *Mothers' Union, Fifty Years*; *The Monthly Packet*; *The MUJ, MIC and The English Woman's Journal*.

¹²⁹Sumner, 'Marriage I.' *Home Life*: 9-17 ; Sumner, 'Secular Education.' *MIC*, October 1894; Sumner, 'Temperance' *Home Life*: 66-74.

MU and her strategy of canvassing support both within and beyond MU membership, continued regardless of not holding office.¹³⁰

Mary Sumner was, despite her stature in the MU, obliged to compromise over the issue of revised membership cards. Her letters to her friend Minnie, Lady Addington, in 1910 and again in 1912, reveal her distress: 'I am so grieved at all the discussion and varying opinions about the card it is really a great trial to me and I long for peace concerning it'.¹³¹ It was unusual for Mary Sumner to reveal feelings that were less than positive or to show weakness. Her disappointment (expressed in 1912) that the MU 'has not gripped London' was to be kept 'strictly private'.¹³² However, her programme of travelling and speaking for the MU at large scale meetings affirmed the esteem in which she was regarded by members. She was greeted with a standing ovation at the 1908 Mass Meeting in the Albert Hall and at the York MU Conference in 1913. After an extensive tour of northern towns her visit was likened to a royal progress.¹³³ A time line showing Mary Sumner's activism and the durability of her involvement in the MU in relation to its corporate development is included as *Appendix 1- Mary Sumner and her Mothers' Union: her activities and corporate development*.

Mary Sumner's key field manoeuvre for promoting her organisation was mobilising agents whose class affiliation and allegiance to Anglicanism reflected a group habitus in which notions of social and religious capital were recognised collectively. She drew on individual agents invested with social capital and pedagogic authority (possessed by virtue of social status, philanthropic activism, marital association, or as holders of office within the Church) initially amongst her circle, to give authority to the MU. The notion of capital by association (forwarded through Mary Sumner's field manoeuvres: speeches, publications and notably correspondence) not only endorsed the message and status of the organisation

¹³⁰ *Letters to Lady Chichester*, sent between 1909-1911; *Letters to Mrs Wilberforce*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/7, sent between 1916-20; *Letters to Mrs Maude*, 1909-1921.

¹³¹ *Letter to 'Dearest Minnie' Concerning Revision of Mothers' Union Constitution 14 April 1910*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/1. 'Naturally I would prefer the cards we have always had.'; *Letter to 'Dearest Minnie' Concerning Revision of the Mothers' Union Cards 1912*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/1.

¹³² *Letter to Mrs Maude on the Mothers' Union in London Failing to Reach Educated Mothers 28 Sep. 1917*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/3.

¹³³ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 52, 71-72.

but served to make it attractive to an extended network of activists and a wider membership. As the revered 'Foundress' of the MU Mary Sumner was a beneficiary of this spiral of increasing capital.

The Mothers' Union as an Anglican organisation: women in the Church, capital and field manoeuvres

The adoption of the MU as a diocesan organisation can be attributed to the clerical circle in which the Sumners moved. It also reflects wider recognition by senior churchmen, which the instigation of the GFS and the inclusion of a women's section at the Portsmouth Church Conference (1885) illustrate, that women had a pastoral role in the ministry of the church.¹³⁴ Although according to scripture, it was 'a shame for women to speak in the church' (1 Corinthians 3. 5), it was considered appropriate, like Dorcas, 'to be full of good works' (Acts 10. 36). This position was demonstrated by the favourable attitude of the Sumners and Heywoods to female participation in parochial work and philanthropy. While excluding women from institutional power, this gendered stance exploited women's contributions to religious life as, in the words of George Sumner, 'handmaids of the church'.¹³⁵ Mary Sumner drew on this recognition of capital to claim pedagogic authority in her field manoeuvres to secure the position of the MU as a recognised body within the (Anglican) religious field.

Porter, Woodward and Erskine's account of the 1885 Portsmouth Conference, at which Mary Sumner made her first public Church Conference speech, illustrates the negotiation of authority by women speakers. They report Emily Wilberforce's account of her husband's [Bishop Ernest Wilberforce] 'inspiration' in asking a woman to address women and which emphasised Mary Sumner's reluctance to speak until given authority by him.¹³⁶ Mary Sumner's own account also claimed male authorisation: 'my dear husband was not in the hall but I knew he would approve' [of her speaking].¹³⁷ She was not the only woman to speak at the

¹³⁴ Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 131-145.

¹³⁵ George Sumner, 'Speech to the Annual G.F.S. Diocesan Conference at the George Hotel Winchester', *Girls' Friendly Society Associates Journal*, January 1885.

¹³⁶ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 21.

¹³⁷ Sumner, 'Founding'.

conference. Although Mr Townsend spoke about the GFS on behalf of his wife; Ellen Joyce, as a widow no longer subject to the authority of her husband, delivered her own paper on emigration.¹³⁸

The notion that religious authority was unwomanly was rooted in scripture and the interpretation of St Paul.¹³⁹ The Pauline position derived from Genesis and woman's secondary creation from Adam's rib as his companion. Further, because of her susceptibility to temptation, woman was responsible for loss of innocence and sin 'Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in transgression' (Timothy 2. 14). Charlotte Yonge wrote in 1877: 'I have no hesitation in declaring my full belief in the inferiority of woman, nor that she brought it upon herself'.¹⁴⁰ Mary Sumner, likewise, misrecognised the legitimacy of gendered Anglican doctrine and affirmed her agreement that women should 'be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children. To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed', by using this Biblical quotation as a subheading to a written address.¹⁴¹ She upheld paternal authority as divinely ordained:

Home life is a monarchy the husband and father is the sovereign of the small realm- he and his wife together wield a sceptre of divine power – the exercise of this power in the human father is intended to express and typify in each home the greater rule of the Almighty.¹⁴²

Bishop Harold Browne, although progressive in initiating a stipendiary deaconess in his Ely diocese in 1869, noted that she should set aside 'all unwomanly usurpation of authority in the church'.¹⁴³ In 1890, there was still a guarded reaction to women's activism. At the Hull Church Conference, Archdeacon Emery:

¹³⁸Ibid.; Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 82; Church of England, 'Official Report of the Church Congress Held at Portsmouth', (London: Church of England, 1885), 449.

¹³⁹Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 15.

¹⁴⁰Charlotte M. Yonge, *Womankind* (London: Walter Smith and Innes, 1898), 1.

¹⁴¹Sumner, 'Mothers' Work Outside the Home', *Home Life*. 127-137. The biblical reference heading the chapter is Titus 2, 3, 4,5.

¹⁴²'To Husbands and Fathers'.

¹⁴³Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 197, notes Harold Browne's appointment of full time stipendiary deaconess Fanny Elizabeth Eagles and quotes from his 1869 Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of Ely which articulated the duties of the deaconess thus: – 'to seek out poor and impotent folk and intimate their names to the curate, instruct the young in school or otherwise, minister to those in hospitals and setting aside all unwomanly usurpation of authority in the church, should seek to edify the souls of Christ's people in the faith'.

...wanted to speak in favour not of special societies, or guilds, or sisterhoods, or deaconesses, but in favour of the old district visiting system [...] What they wanted was the clergyman's wife to feel she was one with her husband.¹⁴⁴

Speaking on the same platform, Mary Sumner was respectful of the paternal authority vested in both family and Church:

It must be self-evident that the Mothers' Union is a work of women to women, of mothers to mothers and that we could hardly summon fathers of all ranks and classes, as well as mothers to our meetings we should be considered presumptuous and impertinent if we were to do so. It would be outside our province as women.¹⁴⁵

She was, however, 'deeply grateful to clergymen and laymen who are helping us' and drew on the pedagogic authority of churchmen.¹⁴⁶ Following the initial adoption of the MU in Winchester, Mary Sumner (according to Porter, Woodward and Erskine), 'wrote personally to most of the Diocesan Bishops, explaining the aims of the new venture and asking for their approval and support'. She also made use of her husband's position as Archdeacon and accompanied him on parish visits as a means of promoting the MU.¹⁴⁷ Ways to encourage the endorsement of clergy at parish level were discussed at Diocesan Committee meetings and in MU publications disseminated amongst clergy wives and Rural Deaneries.¹⁴⁸

Mary Sumner's preference for the doctrinal beliefs of the Anglican Church was evident in her writing. In 1888, she urged *Mothers of the Higher Classes* to uphold the sacraments of the Church¹⁴⁹ and in 1895 she wrote: 'If Mothers would hope to fulfil their duty to their children they must not neglect any one of the means of Grace'.¹⁵⁰ The 1876 MU membership card began with the exhortation, 'Remember

¹⁴⁴Record of Events Report of the Church Congress at Hull', *English Woman's Review*, 15 Oct. 1890.

¹⁴⁵Sumner, 'Paper Read at the Church Congress in Hull 1890'.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 27, 28.

¹⁴⁸WDMU Committee, *Minute Book 1886-1910*, WDMU HRO 145/M85/C2/1.

¹⁴⁹*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, (Winchester: Warren & Son, 1895), 67.

¹⁵⁰*Home Life*, 8, The sacraments of Communion and Infant Baptism.

that your children are given up body and soul, to Jesus Christ in Holy Baptism' and concluded:

If you repent truly of your sins and desire with all your heart to love and follow the Lord Jesus, come to the Holy Communion and feed on him by faith, then will your soul be strengthened and refreshed. Jesus said "Do this in remembrance of Me;" It was his Dying Command.¹⁵¹

Anglican identity was promoted by the insistence that the Subscribing Members who formed the leadership of the MU at local, diocesan and central level should be communicants of the Church of England.¹⁵² Protestant Nonconformists could join as ordinary members as long as they accepted the sacrament of infant baptism.¹⁵³ MU practice drew on the forms and language of the Church to substantiate its claims to pedagogic authority,¹⁵⁴ although it did not, in keeping with its misrecognition of the superiority of paternal clerical authority, engage with intellectual theological debate.¹⁵⁵ Enrolment into the MU involved a ritual prayer and used a question and answer format reminiscent of the catechism and was conducted either by a clergyman in church or an Enrolling Member.¹⁵⁶ Annual services were held from 1888 in Winchester and Annunciation day (March 25th), an anniversary marked in the Church calendar, was adopted by the Central Council, in 1897, as a 'Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving'.¹⁵⁷ MU speakers took platforms at Church Conferences and territory was also claimed through the display of banners in parish churches. In a letter dated 1915, Mary Sumner expressed her view that: 'the Mothers' Union ought to have its centre in the Church House - it is one of the most important of the Church organisations'.¹⁵⁸

Porter, Woodward and Erskine illustrate the association of the MU with the Church by noting bishops as diocesan patrons and clergy officiating at MU

¹⁵¹Ibid., 6, Members card original wording.

¹⁵²Subscribing members were 'ladies' drawn from upper/middle class who paid a subscription to MU funds. Other members were not required to subscribe.

¹⁵³*Home Life*, 4.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., 7-8.

¹⁵⁵Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 59, discusses Higher Criticism and Theology referenced to MU Annual conference 1896 re Mary Sumner's views as in accord with mainstream Anglican liberal thought.

¹⁵⁶*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 66.

¹⁵⁷Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 109.

¹⁵⁸Sumner, 'Letters to Lady Chichester', 20 Oct 1915.

services.¹⁵⁹ Mary Sumner sought the presence of 'powerful' clerics and laymen invested with pedagogic authority to endorse the MU message at conferences and mass meetings.¹⁶⁰ The success of field manoeuvres to secure the MU's recognition as a Church body is demonstrated by the instigation of an annual service at St Paul's Cathedral¹⁶¹ and in the 1917 opening of the central headquarters by the Bishop of London.¹⁶² Seven bishops under the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury officiated at the Jubilee celebrations in 1926.¹⁶³

The MU treated landmarks in family life as occasions for religious thanksgiving and in the case of prominent figures, adopted them as shared corporate events that were reported in MU publications.¹⁶⁴ Mary Sumner's golden wedding anniversary was celebrated with Eucharist and afterwards 'a large gathering was assembled by the Diocesan Council of the Mothers' Union, at the palace of Wolvesey, whereat the Bishop and Mrs Sumner were the honoured guests'. The following day a special service in the Cathedral and 'tea under an enormous tent' was attended by 1200 Diocesan MU members.¹⁶⁵ The Sumners' diamond wedding was also celebrated with the presentation of a screen endorsed with royal signatures.¹⁶⁶ Death and bereavement amongst prominent officials in the organisation and in the royal family were also treated as occasions for public recognition.¹⁶⁷

In working to secure the recognition of the MU as a Church organisation, Mary Sumner avoided assertions contrary to notions of gendered patriarchal authority legitimised by the Church and embedded in social practice. She built on the recognition by individual clergymen that women could contribute to the

¹⁵⁹Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 108.

¹⁶⁰Sumner, 'Letters to Lady Chichester'. 'Some powerful men speakers [...] Would the Bishop of London help or the Bishop of Southwell who is a warm friend of mine? [...] A good powerful layman should be chosen.'

¹⁶¹Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 110.

¹⁶²*Ibid.*, 78.

¹⁶³Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years*, 50-52.

¹⁶⁴Mary Sumner, *Letter to Mrs Maude Thanking Her for Birthday Wishes*, 4 Jan. 1919: LPL MU/CO/PRES/4. Mary Sumner wishes her birthday greetings and her response to be published in the *MUJ*.

¹⁶⁵*Memoir of George Sumner*, 138-143; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 42-43. Second MU London President Horatia Erskine also had her golden wedding marked by the Society, 126.

¹⁶⁶*Memoir of George Sumner*, 151-153; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 53.

¹⁶⁷*Mary Sumner*, 70, 110, 158.

pedagogic action of the Church through field manoeuvres which identified the MU with its spaces, ritual and language.¹⁶⁸ She sought further endorsement from its highest officials, invested with pedagogic authority, as speakers, celebrants and advisers. Her organisation also asserted domestic celebrations (notably her own wedding anniversaries) as indicative of religious capital because they commemorated successful upholding of the religious sacrament of marriage. Thus, not only did the MU speak for the Church but the Church spoke for and sanctified the MU and thereby endowed the women speaking on its behalf with pedagogic authority.

The province of women: marriage, motherhood, morality, the symbolic capital of purity

Women's authority was vested in their upholding of the Christian construction of what were deemed desirable womanly qualities; raising children, nurturing family life and demonstrating piety and self-restraint.¹⁶⁹ According to Mary Sumner, a good mother 'shines like a light in this dark world. She receives the flame straight from Christ Himself- she reflects His Image. Husband, children and neighbours rise up and call her blessed'.¹⁷⁰ The inception of the Diocesan MU occurred after Mary Sumner had demonstrably discharged her duties as mother and wife. Her three children were married (Margaret Effie 1872, Louisa 1882 and Heywood 1883)¹⁷¹ and between 1851 and 1885 she had 'entered fully into the life of the village' by taking a mothers' meeting, a meeting for married men, training the choir, acting as Church organist and leading a branch of the GFS.¹⁷² Mary Sumner had also accrued social capital as her husband's hostess and helpmeet in what she termed 'The Social Life' of the district.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, Cultural Capital and Paedagogic Communication, 71-106.

¹⁶⁹Mary Sumner, 'In Memoriam Mrs Wordsworth', *MIC* 1894. Mary Sumner enumerates these virtues as exemplified by Mrs Wordsworth; Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 324; Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 12; Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 45; Sumner, 'Early Life'.

¹⁷⁰*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 57.

¹⁷¹Sumner, 'Memorials'; Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 135.

¹⁷²*Memoir of George Sumner*, 16, 17.

¹⁷³*Ibid.*, 23-25.

Mary Sumner assumed marriage and motherhood as a desirable destiny for women and the role of woman was little differentiated from that of mother.¹⁷⁴ Unmarried woman could act in a motherly role by contributing to the management and ethos of 'The Home' or performing gendered duties associated with the home sphere, such as education or philanthropic activity. 'Mothers work often devolves on unmarried women; we have many married women without children in our Mothers' Union and good unmarried who are mothering children as Godmothers or Guardians'.¹⁷⁵ In conflating womanhood with motherhood, Mary Sumner was in accord with clerical authority. For Bishop Thorold, quoted in an undated MU leaflet, 'maiden aunts are the human angels of childhood [...] if she is not a mother she had yet the motherly heart which is womanhood's priceless possession'.¹⁷⁶

Mary Sumner's promotion of motherhood as a spiritual educative vocation reflected her experience of maternal influence and the home as a site for living religion. She considered that children should be revered as the handiwork of the Creator: 'The child has a soul, that soul will live forever. God gives to each little child a conscience - a religious instinct and the wish to love and serve him. Our duty is to cultivate this divine instinct and train our children for the battle of life'.¹⁷⁷

Mary Sumner's 1876 card for mothers (*Table 3*) recalled her own use, as a young woman, of a personal prompt card to as an aid to spiritual endeavour.¹⁷⁸ The card for mothers urged church attendance, bible study and family prayer and instructed mothers to teach their children to be 'truthful, obedient and pure'.¹⁷⁹ For Mary Sumner, this involved protecting them from the loss of innocence caused by bad companions and temptations such as drink. The card noted: 'You are strongly advised never to give your children beer, wine or spirits without the

¹⁷⁴Yeo, 'Some Contradictions of Social Motherhood'.

¹⁷⁵Mary Sumner, *Letter to Mrs Sharme*, 15 Dec. 1911: LPL MU/PRES/BOX452/4.

¹⁷⁶C. M. Hallett, *The Mothers' Union, How It May Be Furthered in a Parish by Associates*: LPL MU/PM/6/1; Yonge, *The Two Sides of the Shield*. This novel features the GFS. It describes two good women the mother and Aunt Jane unmarried but maternal through her GFS work.

¹⁷⁷Mary Sumner, 'A Mother's Greatest Duty' (London: Mothers' Union, n.d.).

¹⁷⁸Anecdote reported in Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 13-14.

¹⁷⁹Sumner, *Home Life*, 6, 7.

Doctor's orders or to send them to the public house'.¹⁸⁰ In an 1895 address Mary Sumner warned that: 'Bad people often give beer or spirits to young girls in order to ruin them'.¹⁸¹ The MU card also advised that 'Blasphemy, coarse jests and slander' were to be avoided as were 'bad books' and material dealing with what were considered to be scandalous topics.¹⁸² In Mary Sumner's view, these were not only an incentive to vice but would corrupt the national as well as individual character.¹⁸³

Purity as a desirable attribute, particularly (but not exclusively) for women, was understood to mean, above all else, chastity. Rule IV on the MU card made explicit the need to protect the chastity of girls before marriage and to 'keep them from the streets and lanes at night, unprotected'.¹⁸⁴ Mary Sumner's lengthy elaboration on virginity demonstrates her prioritisation of this capital attribute: [Mary Sumner's punctuation and italics]

Tell her [the daughter] what a *priceless* jewel it is; which once lost or spoiled can never be regained other things when lost or spoiled may be made good, but a girl's character never; once lost it is lost forever; the girl may repent and by the mercy of our Saviour she may be forgiven, she may do her utmost to retrieve her character, but she can never be the same; her innocence is gone, gone forever: she may marry; she may be a good wife and mother; but she can never be in God's sight or in man's sight, or in her own sight, what she was in the happy days of her *innocence*. Therefore dear friends warn your girls and warn them in time.¹⁸⁵

The GFS was equally concerned to secure the symbolic capital of an elevated standard of womanhood for its members. Central Rule Three (1875) stated: 'No girl who has not borne a virtuous character to be admitted; such a character being lost, the Member to forfeit her Card.' This was not entirely uncontested, as Agnes Money notes in commenting on the challenge to GFS recruitment posed by this high standard:

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 6. The wording for 'poorer mothers' was 'in accordance with their different state of life [...] no lady would be tempted to send her child to the public-house'.

¹⁸¹ 'Temperance', 70.

¹⁸² *Home Life*, 6.

¹⁸³ *Letter to the Editor The Times 'Improper Books'*, December 9th 1909; Mary E. Sumner, Horatia E. Erskine and Emily Wilberforce, *Letter to the Editor The Times 'Undesirable Literature'*, January 13th 1910.

¹⁸⁴ Sumner, *Home Life*, 6; Members' card Rule 4.

¹⁸⁵ 'Discipline', 80; 'Letters to Lady Chichester'.

There had been in some minds strong objections to Central Rule Three as unchristian, as likely to foster a pharisaical spirit in its members. These objections seemed to be dying out and it seemed to be very generally acknowledged that a national society on any other basis would not be the least the same power for good and could not create that public opinion which is such a safeguard to those classes in which it exists and the absence of which, in too many communities of the working classes has left their girls so much exposed to temptation.¹⁸⁶

Mary Sumner had no doubts about the value of chastity. In her capacity as Vice President of the Diocesan GFS she 'spoke strongly on the injuries done to the Society by the admission of those who would bring it into disrepute. It should be looked upon as an honour to belong, rather than as an institution for the training of rough girls'.¹⁸⁷ The importance of individual members upholding the collective reputation of the Society was also emphasised in the MU. Mary Sumner noted:

In many branches an excellent rule has been made that no mother can be admitted who has only been married to her husband before a registrar [...] and it is needless to say that no unmarried mother could ever be a Member of the Society.¹⁸⁸

Moreover 'no person should be admitted, who is known to be living in open sin, or causing gossip'.¹⁸⁹ The following rule from the Organisation Leaflet, which Mary Sumner quoted in the preface to her 1895 *Home Life*, noted that: 'if any Member or Associate persists in breaking the rules, or causes a scandal, it may be necessary to ask them to return their card and remove their name from the lists'.¹⁹⁰ Individual reputation contributed to, as well as drew from, collective symbolic capital.

Mary Sumner's view that Christian marriage legitimised sexual relations was reflected in MU literature.¹⁹¹ In 1895, she envisaged marriage as a 'mystical union

¹⁸⁶Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society*, 18-19. 'But now the difficulty arose in a fresh form as the work of the GFS took root in some of the large towns where the standard of morality was at an exceptionally low ebb and where constant changes of residence made the difficulty of knowing the past character of girls. - I will not refer to this ... for it leads to the sundering of friends and the hindering of work'.

¹⁸⁷Sumner, 'Vice Presidential Speech to the G.F.S. Diocesan Conference at the George Hotel'.

¹⁸⁸WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', 21 Nov. 1890. 'In the case of immorality it would be best if the member resign her card'.

¹⁸⁹Sumner, *Home Life*, 4-7.

¹⁹⁰Ibid., 5.

¹⁹¹'Example', *Home Life*. 93-99.

instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the bond that is between Christ and His Church'. Her view references Ephesians, 5. 21 and the Anglican marriage service that sanctified marriage as a transition from innocence which safeguarded the reputation of women. For Mary Sumner, 'The first wedding was that of Adam and Eve and God himself married them in the Garden of Eden and started Home Life.'¹⁹² Thus marriage was a bond of 'the deepest solemnity'.¹⁹³ Marriage as 'the result of a marketable transaction also called a satisfactory match' could not be considered a true bond.¹⁹⁴ It was not 'a mere contract to end at will, when either party grows tired of the other, or when there is unkindness and quarrelling and incompatibility of temper'.¹⁹⁵ The vow of marriage was 'absolute, irrevocable, [and] indissoluble'.¹⁹⁶ An undated leaflet produced by the London Diocesan MU noted: 'the whole position of women stands or falls with the sanctity of marriage and the respect due to family life'.¹⁹⁷

Mary Sumner believed that the divine institution of marriage upheld social order and she was concerned that: 'the sanctity of marriage is being undermined and trifled with by the increasing number of divorce cases and attacks made on marriage by certain writers of the day'.¹⁹⁸ 'We all know how seriously the Divorce Act of 1857 has sapped the foundations of family life [...] It is causing the degradation of parents, widespread misery and cruel injury to the character training of children'.¹⁹⁹ She saw this as 'flooding the country with immorality' which would lead to 'fatal results' in national as well as home life.²⁰⁰

For Mary Sumner notions of desirable womanly capital were predicated on the mis/recognition of the legitimacy of the prevailing gendered religious doxa which assumed, in accord with prevailing social practice, that marriage and motherhood was the appropriate role for women. Women as 'spiritual mothers' could demonstrate their possession of symbolic religious capital by demonstrating piety

¹⁹² 'Marriage I', 11.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁹⁴ 'To Husbands and Fathers'.

¹⁹⁵ 'Marriage I', 2-4.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁹⁷ Mrs Maude, 'Leaflet Number 4 for Subscribing Members', ed. Diocese of London Mothers' Union (n.d.).

¹⁹⁸ Sumner, 'Marriage I', 13.

¹⁹⁹ 'The Home' (Winchester: Warren and Sons, n.d).— 9d a dozen 2/6 for fifty post free.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

through prayer, church attendance and in encouraging children in Bible study. Capital was also to be acquired by protecting children from the sins of intemperance and blasphemy and in so doing, raising them to uphold religiously authorised standards of morality. Foremost amongst the capital of the Christian woman was chastity, which Mary Sumner considered (in common with her co-workers in the GFS and MU) an absolute marker of the capital of women collectively as well as individually. The possession of this religiously framed symbolic capital was an essential pillar of the MU claim for pedagogic authority.

Negotiating marriage: the good husband and father, capital assets and symbolic rewards

Mary Sumner's view of appropriate relations between men and women in marriage reflected the gendered Anglican assumption of the divinely ordained authority of men over women: 'The husband and Father is the head of the house his example and influence should be to his family the type and pattern of divine rule'.²⁰¹ Yet, her vision of marriage included the Pauline exhortation 'husbands, love your wives' (Colossians 3. 19).²⁰² Mary Sumner saw marriage as a benign institution for the love, honour, comfort and exclusive status of the wife, who was, 'the weaker member and needs sympathy and protection'.²⁰³ She envisaged marriage as a religious partnership: 'how beautiful is a home where peace and love prevail, where a married pair are the entire world to each other and live faithfully under God's laws'.²⁰⁴ In her 1895 *Marriage Address 2*, she asserted the rewards of loving domesticity:

It would be well if husbands and wives could treat each other as they did in their courting days and try to remain *lovers* all their lifelong so that love grows sweeter and stronger, as like Darby and Joan, they walk hand-in hand down the of hill of life together and prepare for the Home above.²⁰⁵

²⁰¹'To Husbands and Fathers'.

²⁰²*Ibid.*, Subheading 'To Husbands'.

²⁰³*Ibid.*, 141.

²⁰⁴'Marriage I', 14.

²⁰⁵'Marriage 2', 24. Mary Sumner's italics.

She also advocated prayer as a way for couples to keep their marriage vows in mind: 'There are some happy couples who begin the habit of praying together on their wedding day and have never left off'.²⁰⁶

Mary Sumner was enthusiastic in her advocacy for marriage but it was 'not the whole object of life [...] It is better to remain single than to marry unhappily or unwisely. No woman is justified in joining herself to a man who is victim of a fatal passion and bringing down misery on her family'.²⁰⁷ She accepted that domestic life, caring for children and keeping the husband from temptation could be hard but once married the couple should make the best of their situation: 'for no two people can be joined together for life without meeting trials and difficulties [...] there is always the need of mutual forbearance'.²⁰⁸ The onus was on the woman to lead in this by her example. Wives were recommended to avoid nagging and to counter the ill temper of the husband with 'sweetness and evenness of temper'.²⁰⁹ The remedy to marital discord lay in forbearance, civilizing through example and prayer. Self-restraint should also be exercised in keeping difficulties private: 'Beware of ever talking about your husband's faults to anyone – even your own mother [...] you can speak to God about them'.²¹⁰

Despite Mary Sumner's assertion to a Church Congress audience in 1890 that it was 'presumptuous' to summon fathers ('of all classes') to meetings,²¹¹ her actions suggest that she was referring to men other than those from the working class, which indicates class as a mediating factor in gendered hierarchy. According to her reminiscence of parochial life between the years 1851-86, she had spoken (with her husband's 'cordial approval')²¹² to a parish Bible class of labourers. She recalled this in a 1917 letter to MU central Secretary Mrs Maude.²¹³ Mary Sumner also addressed working men in her writings 'To Husbands' and 'To Fathers' (1895)

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

²⁰⁷ 'Marriage I', 17, 18.

²⁰⁸ 'Marriage 2'.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

²¹¹ 'Paper Read at the Church Congress in Hull 1890'.

²¹² 'Founding'.

²¹³ 'Letter to Mrs Maude, Central Secretary of the Mothers' Union 1917'.

and the undated pamphlet *To Husbands and Fathers*.²¹⁴ She had (gendered) high expectations for Christian manhood: 'Boys should be modest and pure quite as much as girls'.²¹⁵ In 'To Fathers' she asserted that men had a duty of respect, love and fidelity to their wives and they also had a role as exemplars of religious living to their children.²¹⁶ In 'To Husbands' she wrote that:

True religion is needed here, which will inspire men with Christian chivalry and make them good and tender and sympathetic husbands and fathers, temperate in their habits, providing for the home needs themselves and placing the wife in her true position in home life - honoured, shielded and protected.²¹⁷

This included (especially for the poor man, whose wife lacked the help of servants) being:

Ready and willing to put his shoulder to the domestic wheel, to cheer with kind words the suffering weary hearted mother and even through the night to relieve her sometimes of the fretful baby or the sick child and set things to rights in the morning before he starts off to work again.²¹⁸

For Mary Sumner, the good husband and father was domesticated and religious. The attributes she recognised as capital assets of the Christian man included sexual continence, temperance and involvement in family prayer. The good father exemplified these behaviours as a model to his children. Other sources for the acquisition of symbolic capital lay in providing for the material needs of the household and treating the wife with courtesy and consideration. The rewards for conformity to standards of Christian manliness were the symbolic gifts of companionship and comfort within the domestic circle, respect there and in the community and the hope of salvation.

²¹⁴'To Husbands', *Home Life*. 138-147 ; 'To Fathers,' *Home Life*. 148-160; To Husbands and Fathers.

²¹⁵'Purity', *Home Life*: 40-48. 44.

²¹⁶'To Fathers'.

²¹⁷'To Husbands', 149.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 150.

The patriotic Mothers' Union: Church, state and claims to territory in the field of power

Mary Sumner's intention that the MU should 'awaken in Mothers a sense of their great responsibility [...] in the [religious] training of their boys and girls (the future fathers and mothers of England)'²¹⁹ and in so doing 'to reform the morals and raise the tone of this country through the homes',²²⁰ revealed her belief in the contribution of women to national life. Mary Sumner's understanding of women's citizenship was predicated on the notion of concern for and participation in community improvement.²²¹ Whilst focusing on gendered duties rather than the achievement of civil rights, the emphasis on contribution to social wellbeing, which Mary Sumner saw as dependent on Christian values and conduct, was a claim for the recognition of women's 'work' as wives and mothers. It was also an assertion that public matters overlapped with issues of concern in the home which permeated the rationale and practice of the MU.

The Established Church of England, which Mary Sumner sought to uphold through the MU, had a privileged relationship to the state. State and Church power were personified in the monarch. Authorised by temporal power, Anglicanism, in turn, legitimated monarch and state by association with divine authority and Christian values.²²² Mary Sumner considered the Christian family as the bulwark of well-ordered society. In 1895, she claimed: 'Every man in the land who is ruling himself and his home in accordance with the faith and obedience of Christ is a tower of strength to his country'.²²³

George Sumner's remarks at the 1890 Hull Church Conference communicate a perception that there was a need to promote social cohesion. He claimed that the MU 'tends to unite the classes and in these days of social inequality and difficulty, anything that tends to unite the classes together should certainly be welcomed by

²¹⁹ *Home Life*, 10. Objects of the Mothers' Union. In 1902, 'England' was replaced by 'Empire'. This will be discussed in the following chapter on mission.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 4; *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 69. This 1888 work had a similar message.

²²¹ Beaumont, *Housewives and Citizens*, 4-43, 47-52.

²²² *Memoir of George Sumner*, 5, 62, 85; Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 109, 124.

²²³ Sumner, 'To Fathers', 161.

us who have the interests of society at stake'.²²⁴ For Mary Sumner this reflected the notion of respectability in which classes were united by adherence to the moral and social values endorsed by the Church.²²⁵ She illustrated her vision of a cohesive (but stratified) society with reference to Aesop's fable of 'the Body and its Members',²²⁶ a view that echoed the commitment to 'faithfulness to employers' advocated by the GFS in their 1876 'Objects'.²²⁷

The connection of every class of society is required to the support and well-being of the whole [...] In fact, the union of all classes is necessary to that maintenance of authority, respect for the public law and stability of government on which the safety of property to individuals and the continuance of the national prosperity alike depend.²²⁸

Mis/recognising the legitimacy of social stratification, which advantaged the class and interests with which she identified, Mary Sumner asserted the social and spiritual inclusiveness of the MU: 'Even the poorest mother will remember her life is of infinite value'.²²⁹ For, 'the mysterious gift of influence is granted to all wives and mothers in extraordinary measure, rich and poor, educated and uneducated'.²³⁰ Mary Townsend likewise asserted, in 1885, that the GFS was 'intended to embrace [...] not one class only but any of those maidens of our land who are bravely going forth to earn their livelihood in different posts of honourable work'.²³¹ Although, as Charlotte Yonge noted in her 1887 article on the MU, it was desirable to enrol 'ladies, farmers' wives and village trades people, as well as the poor',²³² this did not mean that social divisions were dismantled. When travelling, Mary Sumner requested a first class railway ticket for herself, whilst her maid travelled third class.²³³ However, competence and loyalty in servants was regarded as laudable and used to illustrate the virtues and

²²⁴Sumner, 'Speech to the Annual G.F.S. Diocesan Conference at the George Hotel Winchester'.

²²⁵Cannadine, *Class in Britain*, 92-94.

²²⁶Sumner, 'To Fathers', 160-161.

²²⁷Girls' Friendly Society, Object 2

²²⁸Sumner, 'To Fathers', 159.

²²⁹*Home Life*, 1.

²³⁰Ibid., 139, 'Every Member Should be a Worker'.

²³¹Mary Elizabeth Townsend, 'Department for Members in Professions', *Girls Friendly Society Associates Journal February 1885*. The GFS faced more difficulties negotiating status amongst different categories of working women who were sensitive to nuances of class status - both Societies were rather tentative in relations with the middle classes.

²³²Yonge, 'Conversation on the Mothers' Union'.

²³³Sumner, 'Letter to Mrs Maude, Central Secretary of the Mothers' Union 1917'.

(symbolic) rewards of accepting and fulfilling the obligations of one's (divinely ordained) place in society, whether high or low. Being a good master was also recognised as a source of capital.²³⁴ Relationships across social strata could be warm, as Mary Sumner's correspondence with her former maid illustrates: 'Dearest B, I am longing to hear about you, how you are and how dear baby is [...] Ever I am, with love and best wishes, your affectionate as of old, M. E. Sumner'.²³⁵

There was an assumption that leadership would follow class divisions. Mary Sumner's view was that, 'reforms come from the head of the body politic and circulate through the masses'.²³⁶ The responsibility of 'the upper classes' to set a good example to social inferiors was a recurring theme in her publications between 1888 and 1915.²³⁷ In *To Mothers of the Higher Classes* she wrote:

Let me entreat the more educated, more influential women to give a helping hand in spreading the principles of the Mothers' Union, each in her own circle among her equals and among her poorer neighbours. [...] They must take the ignorant and weaker Mothers by the hand and by prayer and example teach them how to do their duty by their children.²³⁸

Mary Sumner repeated this message in *Home Life*: 'Mothers of the Upper Classes are asked to take their place in the van [...] if they join and act as leaders, it will be easier to win all sorts and conditions of Mothers to see their responsibility'.²³⁹ The parish meetings of the MU exemplified the patronage assumed by 'ladies' for those within their sphere of influence. Mary Sumner interpreted the response of her married men's group as accepting of her class based assumption of authority, which she recalled in a 1917 letter: 'I hold that a lady has such power over the married men - I shall never forget their inborn chivalry to me - they treated me like a queen. Many were tough looking men'.²⁴⁰ Friend and fellow worker, Lady Laura Ridding, held similar views. In an address delivered to the 1887 Wolverhampton Church Congress she claimed: 'The mother owes it to her

²³⁴ *Memoir of George Sumner*, 26, 51-52.

²³⁵ *Letters to Marion Basdell 'Bassie' Hutchings Ereaux*: HRO WDMU 145M85/A7-11. Mary Sumner was Godmother to 'dear baby'.

²³⁶ *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 11.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 12, 13, 15, 17, 'Letter to Mrs Maude on the Mothers' Union in London Failing to Reach Educated Mothers, 28 Sep. 1917'; 'Letter to 'Dearest Minnie' Concerning Revision of the Mothers' Union Cards, 1912'.

²³⁸ *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 57.

²³⁹ *Home Life*, 3.

²⁴⁰ 'Letter to Mrs Maude, Central Secretary of the Mothers' Union 1917'.

children and her households to teach them [...] Character training is her work'.²⁴¹
 At the Exeter Church Congress in 1894, she noted that this responsibility extended to the workplace where ideally: 'the girls look up with a happy smile of friendship as the owner's wife goes through the rooms where she watches with motherly Christian care'.²⁴²

Mary Sumner's understanding of class was also embedded in the early MU cards, which addressed a membership categorised as 'poorer mothers' and 'Mothers of the Higher Classes'. Their cards had slightly different wording, for 'no lady would be tempted to send her child to the public house'.²⁴³

Table 3: Wording of Mothers' Union Cards

Members' card as used at Old Alresford from 1876	Subscribing members' card original wording as used from 1886
1. Try, by God's Help, to make them truthful, obedient and pure. 2. Never allow coarse jests, bad, angry words, or low talk in your house. Speak gently. 3. You are strongly advised never to give your children beer, wine or spirits, without the Doctor's orders, or to send young people to the public house. 4. Do not allow your girls to go about the streets at night and keep them from unsafe companions and from dangerous amusements. 5. Be careful that your children do not read bad books or police reports. 6. Set them a good example in word and deed. 7. Kneel down and pray to God morning and evening and teach your children to pray. 8. Try to read a few verses or the bible daily and come to Church as regularly as possible. (Reproduced in Sumner. <i>Home Life</i> , 6,)	1. I desire, by God's help, to make them truthful, obedient and pure. 2. To watch over their words and to prevent to the utmost of my power, evil speaking, slander and gossip in my home. 3. To guard my Children, as far as I can from frivolous bad, or doubtful companions, influences or amusements. 4. To be very careful as to the books and newspapers that they read or which are seen in the house. 5. To teach them habits of moderation and self-control and if possible avoid giving them - beer wine or spirits without the doctor's orders. 6. To set them a good example in word and deed. 7. Pray with them daily 8. To read and explain the Bible and instruct them in our Holy Christian Faith. 9. To hallow God's Day and to worship Him regularly in His House of Prayer. (This example from HRO Wickham of Binsted 38M49/E7/104. A card retained by Sophia Wickham a MU Associate c.1894.)

²⁴¹Ridding, 'Home Duties'.

²⁴²*The Guardianship of Working Girls Paper Read to the Church Congress Exeter 1894*, Selborne Papers: HRO 9M68/73/10.

²⁴³*Home Life*, 6.

The later publication of magazines (from 1888 and 1891) replicated the differentiation between these social categories. Class stratification was also reflected in the distinction made (as noted in 1888 in *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*) between Subscribing Associate members and the 'poorer' members who were not obliged to pay.²⁴⁴ In 1895, this was qualified with the amendment, 'unless they like to'.²⁴⁵ The two tier system followed the approach taken by the GFS.²⁴⁶ It was not until 1912 that, after some resistance from Mary Sumner, the MU cards were revised into a single version for all members.²⁴⁷

The MU was slow to adopt democratic processes. Mary Sumner's undisputed leadership was acknowledged with her installation as Central President in 1896 and the appointment of her successor, Lady Chichester, in 1910, did not involve an election. Social status, network contacts and record of service contributed to the pedagogic authority necessary for leadership and responsibility was presented as an obligation to be upheld rather than sought for personal aggrandisement.²⁴⁸

The MU (like the GFS) secured royal patronage from Queen Victoria (1897), Queen Alexandra (1901) and Queen Mary (1910). When writing *To Mothers of the Upper Classes* in 1888, Mary Sumner used Queen Victoria and Prince Albert an example of desirable religious, as well as social capital, to endorse the MU message: 'their true love and their noble high minded standard of righteous living [were] a pattern of what married life should be'.²⁴⁹ She also drew on royal opinions to assert the corrupting effect of reports from the divorce courts:

These cases which must necessarily increase, when the law becomes more known, fill now almost daily a large portion of the newspapers and are of so scandalous a character that it makes it almost impossible for the newspaper to be trusted in the hands of a young lady or boy. None of the worst French novels, from which careful parents would try to protect their children, can be as bad as what is daily brought before and lands upon the breakfast

²⁴⁴*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 66.

²⁴⁵*Home Life*, 4; Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*.

²⁴⁶Money, *History of the Girls' Friendly Society*, 4-5.

²⁴⁷Sumner, 'Letter to 'Dearest Minnie' Concerning Revision of the Mothers' Union Cards 1912'; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 129.

²⁴⁸*Mary Sumner*, 117, 137, 138, 158.

²⁴⁹*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 12.

table of every educated family in England and it is evident must be pernicious to the public morals of the country.²⁵⁰

Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein (Queen Victoria's third daughter) was Patron of the MU in the Diocese of London from 1908, gave the MU support as a speaker and corresponded with Mary Sumner. In the context of opposition to divorce in 1911 she wrote: 'Yes I will come and come gladly to a special meeting'. She also shared Mary Sumner's view that the leaders of society should set a moral standard and that sensational publicity was damaging: 'the good of our class is not brought before the masses but all our sins, vices, silliness [and] bad manners are put upon them in very crude colours'.²⁵¹

Royal patronage (as enumerated in *Table 4*) endorsed the MU's definition of itself as an organisation with interests in upholding national life.²⁵² In a letter to the Mayoress of Birmingham, written in 1910, Mary Sumner quoted King George V's rhetoric to support her claim to the contribution of the work of mothers to national life: 'The strength of a nation lies in the homes of its people'.²⁵³

Table 4: Royal Patronage of the Mothers' Union and Girls' Friendly Society

Royal Patron	MU	GFS
Queen Victoria	1897	1880-1901
Queen Alexandra*	1899 as Princess of Wales 1901 as Queen Meets Mary Sumner	1901
Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Alexandra		Mass meeting patron 1920
Queen Mary	1899 as Duchess of York then as Queen 1910 Visitor to Mary Sumner House 1919.	
HRH Duchess of Albany Princess Helen* of Waldbeck m. Leopold, Victoria's eighth child, who was a haemophiliac and d. before the birth of their second child.	Addressed MU 1911 Winchester Guildhall on the Duty of Mothers. Profile in early <i>MUJ</i> Patron of Winchester 1898. ²⁵⁴	
Princess Beatrice* ('Baby'- the Queen's	Patron of Isle of Wight 1898.	

²⁵⁰ *Good Homes and Faithful Marriages*, n.d.: LPL MU/MSS/2/8.

²⁵¹ Princess Christian of Schleswig Holstein, *Letter to Mrs Sumner*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/6, n.d surmised 1911 in context of other correspondence on topics discussed in the letter.

²⁵² Data, Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*; Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*; Mary Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway*; LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/5.

²⁵³ Mary Sumner, *Letter to the Mayoress of Birmingham* 13 Dec. 1910: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/5.

²⁵⁴ Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 96, 97.

9th child and 'home daughter') m. Henry of Battenberg.	Guest of Honour at opening days of Mary Sumner House 1925	
Princess Christian*Helena 5 th child of Queen Victoria, married Christian of Schleswig-Holstein in 1866, founder member of the Red Cross. Her daughter Princess Helena Victoria founder YWCA women's auxiliary.	1908 Patroness of MU for London. Opened the first Mary Sumner House in 1917.	'Working Associate' of Old Windsor Branch. Patron of GFS mass meeting 1920
Princess Frederica* of Hanover	Interested by Helen Duchess Of Albany. 1912 Patroness for the continent. Started Biarritz branch of MU.	
Duchess of Connaught, Louise Margaret, m. to Arthur, 7 th child of Queen Victoria,	Patron of the MU army branch from 1895. Opened Connaught House in Winchester, a home for ex-workhouse girls	
Princess Mary (Viscountess Lascelles) d. of Queen Mary,	1919 visited Mary Sumner House with Queen Mary. 1925 opened new Mary Sumner House.	1902 Vice Patron as Princess of Wales

* signed Mary Sumner's Diamond Wedding Jubilee screen

The association of temporal and spiritual power was reflected in the Anglican Church's endorsement of the army, which was symbolised in the ceremonial blessing of regimental colours.²⁵⁵ When officiating at such a ceremony in 1886 George Sumner said: 'it would be an evil day when Christianity was supposed to be separated from the military profession [...] the true soldier of the Queen might be a true servant of the King and Lord of Lords'.²⁵⁶ The MU established Army Branches (1894) and later in 1918 Navy Branches, which were instrumental in spreading the organisation overseas.²⁵⁷ The MU demonstrated its overt patriotism by publishing leaflets to support recruitment to the armed services in 1914.²⁵⁸ Mary Sumner was in no doubt of the religious justification for fighting the Germans (1914-18) nor was she alone in holding this view.²⁵⁹ She also saw the war

²⁵⁵See Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 328-342; Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 293-294; Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 61, 125.

²⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 62.

²⁵⁷Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 80; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 145.

²⁵⁸Mothers' Union, 'To British Mothers: How They Can Help Enlistment', (London: Mothers' Union, 1914); 'Brave Women', (London: Mothers' Union, 1914); Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 91-105. The GFS was also patriotic and supported the war effort in practical ways, see Chapter XII 'The Motherland's call to the Pilgrims'.

²⁵⁹Sumner, 'Letter to Mrs Crawford 19 June 1917'; Lady Horatia Erskine, *Letter to Mrs Sumner*, 18 Aug. 1918: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/5; Ridging, 'The War Chronicles Part I, 1914'.

as a stimulus towards religious belief,²⁶⁰ but feared the effect of wartime conditions on the morals of girls.²⁶¹ Her assertion that victory should be earned by moral rectitude and advocacy for a day of national humiliation, reflected her belief that Protestant Christianity was integral to national identity and that it was legitimising of and contributory to its power and authority.²⁶²

Traditionally, the Anglican Church was associated with conservative political values.²⁶³ George Sumner described himself as a conservative 'of a somewhat liberal type' and insisted 'it was not the wish of the Church simply to vote Tory [clergy were] churchmen first politicians second'.²⁶⁴ There were nevertheless occasions when Church (and MU) interests overlapped with divisions of opinion on party political lines. Moves to disestablish the Church in Wales from 1895, which were opposed locally by George Sumner in Winchester and nationally by the MU, were associated with Liberal party policy.²⁶⁵ The secularisation of education, so feared by Mary Sumner and which was the subject of her address 'Secular Education',²⁶⁶ was similarly associated with the Liberal party.²⁶⁷ However, despite this (and the presence in the membership of women of Tory opinions, including Laura Ridding and notably Ellen Joyce, a stalwart supporter of the Conservative Primrose League) the MU was not an overtly party political organisation.²⁶⁸

In acting upon Mary Sumner's 'call for national intercessions' in moral issues (1912) the MU engaged in field manoeuvres designed to influence government

²⁶⁰Sumner, 'Letter to 'My Dear Marion' (A.K.A Basdell) 23 Dec. (Surmised) 1916'; 'Letter to Mrs Crawford, 19 June 191?'; 'Letter to Mrs Sharpe'.

²⁶¹*Letter to Dearest Edith (Randall)*: LPL MU/CO/5/5.

²⁶²'Letters to Lady Chichester', 2 July 1915. 'Until the Nation humbles itself and turns to God we cannot expect Victory and Peace. Do you think a universal day of humiliation can be arranged?'

²⁶³Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*, 332.

²⁶⁴*Memoir of George Sumner*, 128.

²⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 128-130. George Sumner's speech at the anti Welsh Church disestablishment meeting in Winchester.

²⁶⁶Her fears were prompted initially by the introduction of non-denominational Board Schools in 1870. This will receive further attention in the chapter on education.

²⁶⁷Sumner, 'Secular Education'.

²⁶⁸Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 67, 72-76. According to Moyse it engaged in political action on the understanding that moral issues were at stake; Lady Laura Ridding, *Diaries*, 6 July 1919: 9M68/68. Selborne Papers, HRO Entry for 6th July 1919; Julia Bush, *Women against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 134-135.

policy.²⁶⁹ It campaigned against the legalisation of marriage to the 'Deceased Wife's Sister' (1902),²⁷⁰ increasing secularisation of education (1902 and 1906),²⁷¹ relaxation of divorce law (1903, 1908-12, 1917, 1921)²⁷² and the 'Disestablishment of our Dear Anglican Church in Wales' (1911).²⁷³ Field manoeuvres also sought to recruit public opinion to support the MU position on other social and moral issues. The MU opposed the 'White Slave trade' (1912),²⁷⁴ the 'threat of Mormonism' (1911),²⁷⁵ anti-Christian 'Socialist' Sunday Schools (1912)²⁷⁶ and 'bad books'.²⁷⁷ It responded to concerns over the increase of drinking amongst women with the appointment, in 1917, of Mrs Russell (the daughter of Emily and Ernest Wilberforce) as Temperance Correspondent. It was in favour of legislation intended to increase the age of consent (1910).²⁷⁸

Consistent with the emphasis on women's citizenship as service to society rather than seeking rights, the MU avoided the issue of suffrage.²⁷⁹ Mary Sumner was not an enthusiast. She considered that caring for children gave women a more exalted status than the achievement of political rights.²⁸⁰ Her friend, Lady Horatia Erskine, agreed.²⁸¹ Even Laura Ridding, a committed suffragist, expressed reservations on lowering the age for women voters in 1919.²⁸² The gendered MU position was encapsulated in a speech by the Countess of Airlie that was reproduced in the 1891 debut issue of *Mothers in Council*:

²⁶⁹Sumner, 'Letter to 'Dearest Minnie', Concerning Revision of the Mothers' Union Cards 1912'. Views which are expressed and re-expressed with vehemence.

²⁷⁰Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 11, 12.

²⁷¹Sumner, 'Letters to Lady Chichester,' 24 April 1915?

²⁷²Letter to Mrs Maude Referring to Divorce Legislation: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/3; Letter to the Mayoress of Birmingham, 13 Dec. 1910: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/5; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 119-128, 142, 154.

²⁷³Sumner, 'Letter to 'Dearest Minnie', Concerning Revision of the Mothers' Union Cards 1912'.

²⁷⁴'Letters to Lady Chichester', 7 Jan. 1913. 'Every member of the Mothers' Union is against the White Slave traffic - if she were not she would not be a member'; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 127.

²⁷⁵Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 126.

²⁷⁶Sumner, 'Letter to 'Dearest Minnie', Concerning Revision of the Mothers' Union Cards 1912'.

²⁷⁷'Letter to the Editor The Times 'Improper Books', 9 Dec. 1909.'

²⁷⁸Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 141. Emily Wilberforce was Central President of the MU at the time.

²⁷⁹Bush, *Women against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, 135.

²⁸⁰Mary Sumner, *MIC*, January 1891.

²⁸¹Erskine, 'Letter to Mrs Sumner'.

²⁸²Ridding, 'Diaries', 6 July 1919.

Consider what power has been given to women by God and how far greater it is than the powers that man can accede to them. The moulding of the future generation lies mostly in their hands if they care to exercise their influence.²⁸³

The scope of MU interests and its professionalisation in matters of procedure was represented by the establishment of diverse committees.²⁸⁴ The brief of the 'Watch Committee', instigated by Lady Laura Ridding in 1912, was 'to watch and give information and advise the Council as to desirable action with regard to legislative proposals in Parliament concerning matters affecting the welfare of the mothers of the nation'.²⁸⁵ The MU sought to influence policy through gathering evidence to present to government commissions (notably the 1909 Gorell commission on divorce), securing the support of influential individuals and sending delegates and speakers to conferences (from 1890).²⁸⁶ It also cooperated with other organisations such as the GFS. This cooperation and the overseas dimension of the MU's networking will receive further attention in the following chapter on Mary Sumner and Mission.

Mary Sumner considered that divorce was not only sinful but 'tends to fatal results in domestic and national life'.²⁸⁷ Opposition to divorce reform from 1903 was foremost amongst MU campaigns. As in the years prior to the centralisation of the MU between 1886 and 1896, the strategy of writing directly to influential clergy or lay men in authority was deployed. Porter, Woodward and Erskine note that in 1909 Mary Sumner drew on her acquaintance with Archbishop Cosmo Lang of York and the Bishop of London, Randal Davidson (the husband of the London Diocesan MU President), to seek advice on raising a petition. The same year, Mary Sumner and members of the MU Central Council expressed their view to Lord Gorell, the chairman of the Divorce Commission and presented evidence gathered by enquiry at diocesan and branch level. Mary Sumner's views on divorce were still being heard in 1920, when her daughter, Mrs Gore Browne, passed on her

²⁸³Countess of Airlie, 'Report of Speech by the Countess of Airlie', *MIC*, January 1891.

²⁸⁴Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 113.

²⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 127.

²⁸⁶MU, *Fifty Years*, 26, 30, 43. Lady Laura Ridding spoke on issues of interest to the MU from 1887, when she addressed the Wolverhampton Church Congress on 'Home Duties of the Educated Woman'.

²⁸⁷Mary Sumner, 'The Home' (Winchester: Warren and Sons.n.d.)

views on the indissolubility of marriage.²⁸⁸ In rationale and campaigning strategy, opposition to divorce reform encapsulates the agenda and practices of the MU, which reflected the views of the 'Foundress' and the durability of her influence.²⁸⁹ It also illustrates the field position that she and the MU achieved in relation to the Church and to temporal authority. In 1926, the author of *Fifty Years* considered that the MU had been influential in mediating legislative reform:

Those who govern our nation have realised that, in dealing with the marriage laws of our country, they have to reckon with a very large section of women who banded together in the Mothers' Union have pledged themselves to defend their country from legislation which is in direct contradiction to the law of God more than once since 1910 the prompt action of the Mothers' Union has prevented the increase of divorce facilities and its influence has been felt with regard to other Bills before parliament which have concerned the moral welfare of our country.²⁹⁰

Conclusion: thinking with Bourdieu²⁹¹

Mary Sumner: dispositions of habitus and horizons of possibility.

Mary Sumner's dispositions of habitus were informed in the context of a family and social circle which prioritised religious capital, in particular that of the Established Anglican Church. The religious doxa legitimised the cultural arbitrary of patriarchal dominance by asserting the authority of men over women as divinely ordained.²⁹² It drew on biblical interpretation to identify chastity as an absolute marker of female symbolic capital.²⁹³ Notions of desirable capital in relation to women accrued around maternal and domestic roles. Women distinguished by these indices of desirable capital were authorised to act beyond the family circle in ways that contributed to upholding the social and religious capital of the family. This exercise of pedagogic action could accrue further pedagogic authority for women.

²⁸⁸Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 119-123, 154.

²⁸⁹Beaumont, *Housewives and Citizens*, 77-79, illustrates the durability of Mary Sumner's views in MU policy.

²⁹⁰Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years*, 26-27.

²⁹¹Jenkins. *Pierre Bourdieu*, 1. Jenkins notes Bourdieu's ideas as 'being good to think with'.

²⁹²Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 5; Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, 9.

²⁹³Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 174.

Mary Sumner's recollections of her early life and marriage (which were produced with advocacy for the MU in mind) illustrate her misrecognition of patriarchal domination as both divinely ordained and 'the natural order'. Her writings on marriage emphasise the symbolic (but also practical) rewards of conforming to religiously authorised gendered conduct.²⁹⁴ Her complicity with the cultural arbitrary of religion (and also with the associated arbitrariness of class and gender differentiation)²⁹⁵ is also demonstrated in the agenda of the MU and by her support for the GFS.²⁹⁶ This complicity may be attributed to the effectiveness of pedagogic action in securing the misrecognition of the symbolic violence to which she was subject. There was a high degree of correspondence between the pedagogic action of family, social milieu and as institutionalised in the Church, in the mis/recognition of legitimate authority and capital assets.²⁹⁷

Mary Sumner: capital and field manoeuvres

Mary Sumner's recognition as a pedagogic authority in the field of religion (specifically the sub field of Anglicanism) was predicated on her possession of recognised varieties of capital and the accumulation of further capital over time and space (family, parish, locality and nationally). This was contingent on and was mediated by her position in relation to other agents and their field positions and capital advantages.²⁹⁸

By association to her affluent father Mary Sumner was the beneficiary of economic capital. As a musician, linguist and well-travelled woman she embodied cultural capital. Her education had also habituated her to conforming to the dominant social and religious doxa which informed approved notions of gendered conduct. She was also a physically attractive young woman. Association with an extensive kinship network and with individuals of relatively high social status gave her social capital.²⁹⁹ Her marriage to George Sumner united individual agents who

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 162.

²⁹⁵ Moi, *What Is Woman?*, 291.

²⁹⁶ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 8.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 5-10.

²⁹⁸ Grenfell and Hardy, *Art Rules*, 31.

²⁹⁹ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 119.

embodied varieties of personal capital but also brought together the capital assets of the cultured, affluent but socially aspirational Heywoods (formerly associated with commerce and Nonconformism) and the Sumners, a family invested with religious and social capital attributable to the prominent position (distinction) of its members in the religious field, specifically the sub field of Anglicism, which had privileged status in the wider field of power.

Mary Sumner acquired the symbolic gendered capital of the good wife through successful childrearing and acting as helpmeet to her husband in parish work and social interactions. This authorised and was increased through her participation in socially and religiously approved causes, as exemplified by the CETS and the GFS. Her possession of capital was bound up with the progress of her husband, whose career was also a trajectory of capital accumulation and transaction, equally mediated by his relationship to agents recognised for distinction in the Church. Position in the religious institution favoured by the dominant social group, facilitated contact with agents with high social capital and degrees of political capital. Mary Sumner's location adjacent to agents in the religious field was significant in the genesis of the MU, which drew on their support.³⁰⁰

The authorisation of the MU by clerics representing institutional pedagogic authority and its promotion through the mobilisation of Christian ladies, demonstrates that Mary Sumner's capital was recognised by agents within her habitus, who collectively misrecognised the dominant cultural arbitraries of Church, gender and class hierarchy and sought to reproduce them through symbolically violent pedagogic work. The instigation of the MU and the GFS is indicative of a sense that the religious doxa and the indices of religious womanly capital were contested and in need of defending. This mutual recognition of desirable capital was fundamental to the success of Mary Sumner's field manoeuvres. Her possession of social and religious capital allowed her the authority to recruit support amongst an extending network of personal contacts with a shared interest in upholding Anglicanism to endorse the MU. The endorsement she secured from agents possessed of esteemed social capital or invested with religious pedagogic authority as churchmen, served to present

³⁰⁰Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 11-31.

association with the MU as a means for the acquisition of social and religious capital. This accumulation of capital accrued not only to the MU as a body but was embodied in Mary Sumner as its iconic 'Foundress'. The wide circulation of the publications through which she asserted the significance of women as moral exemplars, without challenging the gendered doxic values of Anglicanism, is also indicative of a successful field manoeuvre. In speaking for an official Church organisation and drawing on the language of the Church, Mary Sumner may be considered not just a pedagogic worker, a helpmeet on behalf of the Church, but as an agent invested with pedagogic authority.

Mary Sumner, the Mothers' Union and the Anglican Church vis-à-vis the field of power

The Anglican Church of England, in which Mary Sumner was raised and into which she married, was associated with the state and upheld the cultural arbitrary of royal power. *Figure 3* (see end of this section) represents the trajectory of Mary Sumner and her organisation towards power in the field of religion, in this case the sub field of the Anglican Church. It also represents a trajectory within the wider field of power, understood as relating to the apparatus of government. The monarch was affirmed in temporal power by the rite of coronation. This was presided over by clergy of the highest rank who were political appointees and members of the higher legislative chamber. The Church of England also legitimised the armed forces, the ultimate bastion of state power, through religious ceremonials. Religious authority was drawn on to sanction the moral right of the nation in time of warfare against its enemies.³⁰¹

The Anglican Church represented the interests of the dominant social group. It perpetuated the cultural arbitrary of class privilege by promoting a doxa that asserted social stratification as divinely ordained. In return for 'knowing ones place' it offered paternalistic philanthropy and salvation.³⁰² Mary Sumner identified with 'the upper classes' and saw behaviour in accordance with religious principle as related to social wellbeing. Social ills were interpreted as

³⁰¹The following chapter will consider religion in relation to legitimising empire.

³⁰²Bourdieu, *Practical Reason*, 117.

indicative of moral failings rather than systemic disadvantage.³⁰³ Conformity to and complicity with the symbolic violence of religiously approved standards of behaviour, such as sexual continence and temperance, would avoid the misery of prostitution, violence and poverty and thus served the interests of the state.³⁰⁴

For Mary Sumner, the dominant position of those with temporal power was legitimised by their demonstrable possession of religious capital.³⁰⁵ Much of her pedagogic action was directed at the upper/middle classes with the aim of securing their conformity to the religious cultural arbitrary. This may be interpreted as action to legitimise social domination by associating it with religious capital. Mary Sumner's pedagogic action can be seen as defensive of the cultural arbitrary of religion against secular values. The MU and to a lesser extent the GFS, which placed less emphasis on Anglican sacraments, may be perceived as pedagogic work towards perpetuating the Anglican cultural arbitrary. As avowedly patriotic organisations they also engaged in pedagogic work towards upholding the privileged status of the Anglican Church in relation to the state.

Mary Sumner is representative of a category of conservative, religious woman of upper/middle class status, who identified with and claimed alliance to, 'upper class' interests and perceived privileges and responsibilities. The MU offered these women, within gendered parameters, opportunities for the acquisition of symbolic capital through religious activism. In exchange for mis/recognising the legitimacy of arbitrarily ascribed gender roles and characteristics (that accrued around the notion of spiritual motherhood) that they sought to perpetrate, it offered the rewards of usefulness, capability and expertise and reputation in a territory of their own, dedicated to lobbying on issues they considered relevant. The foremost beneficiary of these rewards as the revered 'Foundress' was Mary Sumner herself. She was innovative in securing her own recognition as a pedagogic authority not just within the MU but in the Anglican Church and the field of religion.

³⁰³ *Distinction*, 471.

³⁰⁴ Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 333.

³⁰⁵ 'Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion', 334.

In establishing the MU as a recognised body within the Anglican religious field, Mary Sumner may be seen as mediating doxic assumptions on the role of women. Whilst the capital asserted as desirable in women was conceived of within the existing gendered religious and social doxa, the worth of this capital was championed as significant to national life.³⁰⁶ Through drawing on the authority conferred by institutional attachment to the Church and royal endorsement, the MU made the presence of women at mass gatherings and as speakers on public platforms, not only familiar but respectable. It identified women as collectively organised within the Church. It also normalised the collective action of women in relation to public issues.³⁰⁷ It could also claim to represent a body of opinion and lobbied to influence policy at a time when women had no direct political voice.

The voices of rank and file members of the organisation are absent from the record, yet evidence of support for the pedagogic work and recognition of the pedagogic authority of Mary Sumner and the MU can be seen in the rapid expansion of the organisation nationally and overseas.³⁰⁸ In exchange for the misrecognition of the legitimacy of a religious doxa which upheld patriarchal and class domination and enforced absolutes in gendered standards of behaviour, the MU offered tangible advantages and symbolic gifts. Members of the MU were offered a discourse of empowering motherhood and could accrue the social honour of belonging to an organisation which (like the GFS) upheld a standard of high moral conduct. They were also given a space for respectable socialisation and offered entertainment and instruction through its magazines. Celebrity endorsement was given to the organisation by titled ladies and members of the royal family. In Mary Sumner members could identify with a leader who combined a distinguished public profile with the ability (via her writing, speaking and correspondence) to give members a sense of sympathetic personal connection. She appeared to embody the capital assets and symbolic gifts that she asserted as a reward for upholding religiously authorised notions of womanhood and religious piety.

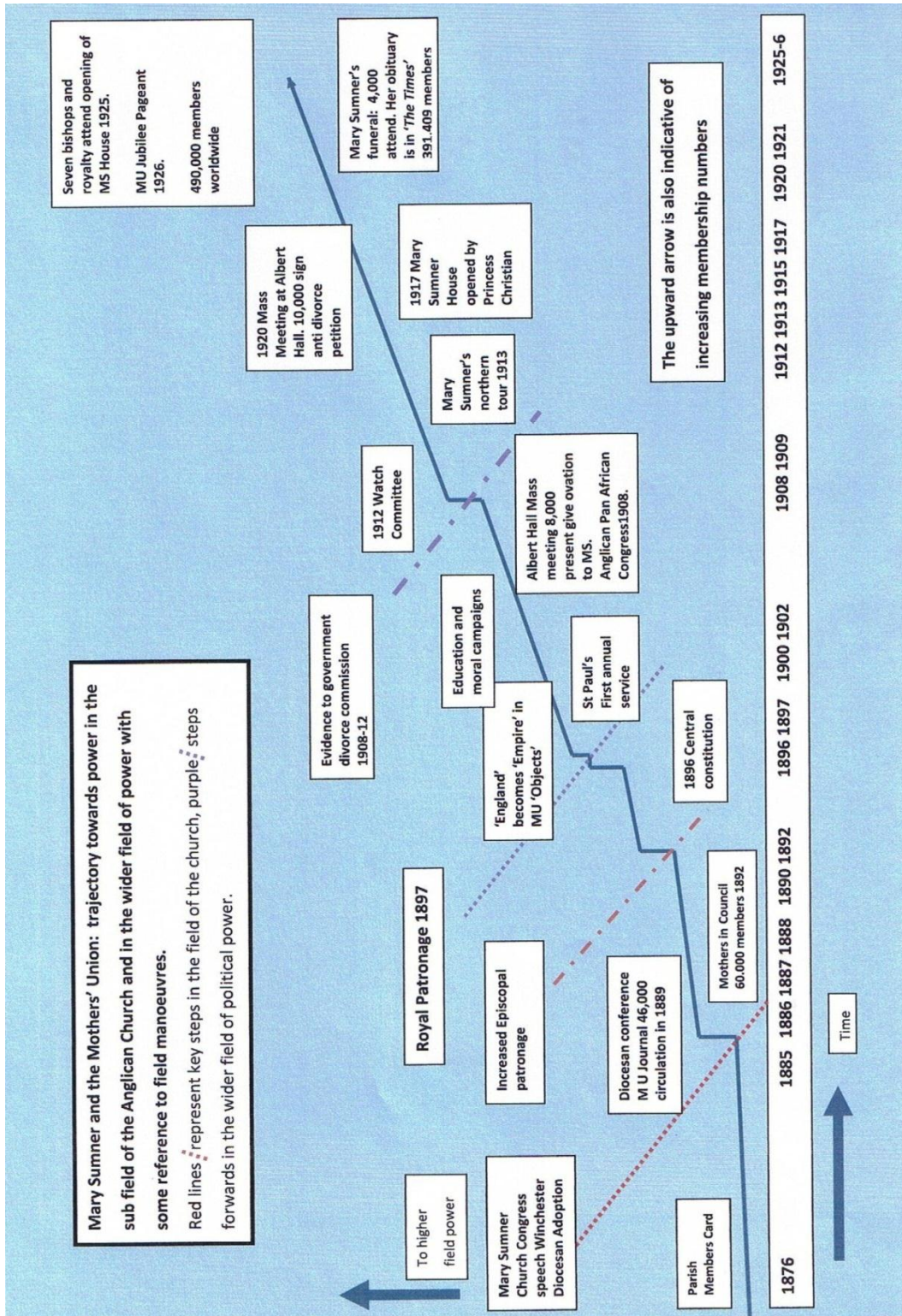
³⁰⁶ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 36.

³⁰⁷ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 133.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 162.

Mary Sumner's activism was dedicated to and authorised by upholding the gendered and socially stratified doxic values of the established Anglican Church. Despite its dual position as recipient and enactor of symbolic violence, the MU was a conduit for the articulation of a collective woman's point of view and a means, albeit framed within gendered notions of maternal womanliness, for women to develop expertise, exercise authority and assert their value. Mary Sumner's stature, as a female celebrity speaker to mass audiences and the leader of a religious worldwide mass organisation, makes her innovative in the context of her times and remarkable in any period.

See below for ***Figure 3 Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union Field Trajectory Religion***



Chapter 4 – Mary Sumner and Mission

Introduction

Mary Sumner's activism occurred in a context of a proliferation of philanthropic activity, stimulated by evangelical religious revival and the expansion of British overseas rule, in which women were participants. This chapter understands mission to relate to varieties of religious and philanthropic activism 'at home' and overseas. It sees mission as relating to women's gendered spheres of activity (such as philanthropy) legitimised by religious authority, as in the notion of 'women's mission'.¹ 'Mission' was also used by Mary Sumner, her network associates, and other contemporaries, to refer to philanthropic and religious outreach 'at home', encapsulated in the term 'civilizing mission';² and to activism motivated by religious faith and the desire to impart religious preferences and standards of conduct upon others.³ Mission also concerns the activity of missionaries and missionary societies seeking converts overseas. Mission is also seen to relate to the provision of religious ministry for expatriate communities. Mission in this sense invites consideration of identities (racial and gendered), relations and transactions of meaning and power between 'home' and overseas, in diverse local/ national/ transnational /colonial /imperial spaces and contact

¹Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 82, quotes Mary Townsend GFS 'foundress' on GFS work as 'a Mission', the 'missionary element which is the secret of our society'; Angela Georgina Burdett-Coutts, *Woman's Mission: A Series of Congress Papers on the Philanthropic Work of Women by Eminent Writers* (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, 1893), Mary Sumner's 'Responsibilities of Mothers' was one of the papers; In this article she asserts the 'exalted mission' of child rearing 'the sphere which God has appointed for her in the home'; Anon, 'Record of Events Report of the Church Congress at Hull', *English Woman's Review*, October 15th 1890, Archdeacon Emery's address.

²Twells, *The Civilising Mission*, 5, uses the terms 'missionary philanthropy' and 'civilizing mission'; Dagers, 'The Victorian Female Civilising Mission and Women's Aspirations Towards Priesthood in the Church of England', 625. The term 'Victorian female civilizing mission' unifies the expansive range of activity [...] into the world beyond the home. Religion [...] was inextricably linked with philanthropy'. This term as used by Dagers and Twells, encapsulates the assumption of superior values and standards of behaviour and an assumed authority for their imposition on groups categorised as deficient, frequently through religiously motivated philanthropy which was compatible with what Dagers has described as 'spiritual womanhood'.

³Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 131-145; Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920* (London: Virago, 1985), 36, 'Underpinning all women's work was a sense of religious commitment'.

zones.⁴ This chapter will consider mission via these three interconnected strands, domestic, philanthropic and engagement with distant spaces and Mary Sumner's interplay with them.

This chapter analyses Mary Sumner's negotiation of constraint and agency and her position vis-à-vis the upholding and transaction of power relative to mission. The chapter will begin with a consideration of circumstances that informed Mary Sumner's habitus and will examine the three aspects of mission (outlined above) as understood in and experienced by Mary Sumner in her kinship network. It will identify capital and practices in philanthropy and religious missionary enterprise overseas with reference to women's domestic mission and its extension into authorised philanthropic action. The chapter will then move outward into wider networks both informal and formal to consider Mary Sumner located amongst other agents and organisations. Attention will be given to Mary Sumner's understanding of non-Christian religion and attitudes to 'race' and the work of missionaries as discussed in accounts of her travels, in particular her visit to the Holy Land in 1880 (prior to the diocesan launch of the MU), which provided the material for the published account *Our Holiday in the East*.⁵ Her views on 'woman's mission', philanthropy and overseas engagement will be contextualised through attention to the GFS as the organisation she participated in prior to her activism through the MU.

The chapter will examine Mary Sumner's field manoeuvres in relation to mission. Mary Sumner's use of the MU to advance her religious agenda in the British/English metropole and overseas will be considered, as will her use of missionary endeavour overseas to validate the MU message 'at home'. Transactions of desirable capital relating to motherhood and 'women's mission' 'at home' and philanthropy and missionary activity overseas towards securing

⁴Catherine Hall, *Cultures of Empire: A Reader: Colonisers in Britain and the Empire in Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1-45. Cooper and Stoler note the transactional relationship in terms of identity between metropole and periphery; Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*: 6-7. 'Contact zone' and 'transculturation' describes meaning drawn from encounters across space and culture. I use the term overseas to refer to this diversity of locations.

⁵*Our Holiday*.

pedagogic authority and field position for the MU, will be analysed. Relations with other organisations, including the GFS and the Anglican Church and evidence of networking practices, will be examined.

The chapter will locate the MU in wider fields of power represented by the Anglican Church and the Empire. Mary Sumner's attitudes to Empire, 'race', non-Christian religion and non-Protestant Christian denominations as reflected in and promoted through the MU will be located in relation to the reproduction or negotiation of a dominant cultural arbitrary with attention being given to gender, class, religion and 'race'. The chapter will conclude by summarising dispositions of habitus and horizons of possibility in relation to mission, capital and field manoeuvres and fields and fields of power, reflective of the three levels of analysis.

Mary Sumner: habitus; kinship networks; traditions of philanthropy; evangelical religion and civilizing mission.

Traditions of philanthropy and evangelical mission

The Unitarian traditions upheld by the Heywoods prior to their Anglican conversion were characterised by the application of religious principles to all aspects of life, belief in human perfectibility and, contingently, aspirations for self and societal improvement, frequently realised through philanthropy.⁶ These were compatible with Anglican doctrine, particularly as practised by believers of an evangelical mind, who demonstrated their inner faith through public acts. Thomas Heywood and his elder brother, Sir Benjamin, following conversion to Anglicanism (c. 1834) realised their philanthropic impulse in the building of parish churches, in addition to providing schools and facilities for the poor.⁷

⁶Alan J. Kidd and K. W. Roberts, *City, Class and Culture: Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985); Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England, 1760-1860*; Gleadle, *The Early Feminists: Radical Unitarians and the Emergence of the Women's Rights Movements, 1831-51*. The educational dimension will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁷Sumner, 'Early Life'; McConnell, 'Heywood, Sir Benjamin, First Baronet (1793-1865)'.

The Heywoods (and the Sumners), motivated by their religious beliefs, considered that their advantaged position within society both entitled and required them to exercise responsibility for the material and spiritual welfare of the population in the locality. Family memoirs enumerate philanthropic achievements in an assertion of religious capital. Mary Sumner noted that: 'Uncle Benjamin [Sir Benjamin Heywood] and [cousin] Oliver [Heywood] spent their lives in working for God and their fellow creatures'.⁸ Thomas Percival Heywood (her cousin and brother-in-law) was also 'a lifelong philanthropist'.⁹ Mary's father, Thomas Heywood, similarly demonstrated his philanthropy through church building and the provision of a school.¹⁰

Mary Sumner and her niece Isobel emphasised philanthropic activity as ministry undertaken by their parents as married couples. Mary Sumner recorded that her parents 'took a never failing interest in all the poor around them' and 'kept actively at work for the good of the poor people'.¹¹ Isobel Heywood similarly recorded that her parents, used 'to visit diligently and make friends with the poor'.¹² Children in the family were also habituated to the acquisition of symbolic capital through participation in philanthropic work. Mary and her sister were expected to help in Sunday school.¹³ She recorded that when 'a large bazaar was held at Hope End to help in getting the church at Wellington Heath finished [...] I had a stall of canary birds and flowers and made £12'.¹⁴

The notion of philanthropy as mission is evoked by the language in which philanthropic activity is described, which is evocative of endeavour and venture to regions deemed to be in need of moral improvement. Mary Sumner considered that her parents' interventions 'were the means of transforming a wild district

⁸Sumner, 'Early Life', 32.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., 'My father built a church at Wellington Heath [...] a neglected district'.

¹¹Ibid., 32,33.

¹²Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 31.

¹³Sumner, 'Early Life'; See also Charlotte Mary Yonge, 'A Real Childhood', *MIC*, January 1892; Julia Bush, 'Joyce, Ellen (1832–1924)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2006), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/74348>, accessed 26 Nov. 2012]. MU and GFS co-workers Charlotte Yonge and Ellen Joyce were similarly expected to contribute to philanthropic 'work' as children. Yonge taught Sunday school and Joyce sewed for an emigrant.

¹⁴Sumner, 'Early Life'.

into a respectable community'.¹⁵ The district reformed by her sister Maggie and her husband was: 'A sort of 'no man's land' out of the way of good influences; drinking, fighting and all sorts of wickedness went on there unnoticed and unrebuked'.¹⁶

Missionary valour is evoked in anecdotes recalling the personal witness of religion. Mrs Heywood's 'wonderful act of piety and love' in nursing and bringing spiritual comfort to a typhoid victim, signalled willingness to engage in an unpleasant and possibly perilous activity in the discharge of Christian duty that was consistent with notions of 'woman's mission'.¹⁷ The Sumners shared a similar outlook towards the participation of women in philanthropic activity. George Sumner's mother was commended for her competence in the administration of the annual charitable distribution of clothing to the poor from the Bishop's Palace: 'the clergy were obliged to allow that the lady had been the best general'.¹⁸

As evangelical Anglicans the Sumners also understood religion as a mandate for working towards the improvement of others.¹⁹ Charles Sumner applied himself to modifying public conduct by eliminating 'abuses', such as the 'profanation of the Sabbath' by cricket matches and Sunday trading. He opposed the 'Hop Sunday' festival on the grounds that it provoked excessive drinking, immorality and rowdiness.²⁰ For Charles Sumner, whose success in filling an empty church by the earnestness of his evangelical preaching is noted by his son George: 'clergy were not placed just to live an ordinarily respectable life but to save souls'.²¹ Dissent should be actively countered; for 'others in the field are ready to pick up gleanings' the Anglican priest 'must preach more earnestly, more simply more affectionately'.²²

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 64.

¹⁷Sumner, 'Early Life'.

¹⁸Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 155.

¹⁹Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, 119; Brian Dickey, 'Evangelicals and Poverty', in *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society 1780-1980*, ed. John Wolffe (London: SPCK, 1995), 38-59.

²⁰Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 175.

²¹Ibid., 33.

²²Ibid., 176.

Charles Sumner approached his Episcopal duties with missionary enthusiasm. In 1829, he made the first visit by the incumbent Bishop to the Channel Islands which formed part of the extensive diocese of Winchester.²³ The purpose of the visit was to counter adherence to rival denominations. It was also intended to promote confirmation and the taking of communion in a region where this aspect of sacramental observance had been neglected.²⁴ The conception of the nature of these visits as missionary is evoked not only by the agenda of improving religious participation but by the emphasis on the travail and hazard involved in gaining the destination. The sense of distant venture is heightened by the fact that French, 'or a sort of patois', was the first language of the working-class population, some of whom were 'somewhat primitive in their manners and customs, but singularly free from vicious habits'.²⁵ This did not inhibit the inclusion of the wifely helpmeet. Mrs Jennie Sumner and their two children 'were of course included' in the Bishop's travels. Her contribution to his ministry by correcting his French in order to aid his communication with catechumens is noted and her stalwart behaviour at moments of danger is also recorded as a laudable attribute.²⁶ In 1850, George and Mary Sumner accompanied Bishop Charles Sumner on one of these visitations, which included the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney and Sark. As his father's chaplain, George 'preached and spoke for the SPG (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) and CMS (Church Mission Society)'.²⁷

In 1859, George and Mary joined in Charles Sumner's tour of what were referred to as 'missionary districts' in Ireland. The tour was undertaken in support of the [Anglican] 'Society for Irish Church Missions to Roman Catholics'. The Bishop was pleased to note that as a result of the 'patient forbearance and endurance of the missionaries [...] the influence of the priests is much diminished'.²⁸

Charles Sumner was also an enthusiast for foreign missions.²⁹ He had preached on behalf of the CMS in 1827,³⁰ and was active in support of both the CMS and the

²³Ibid., 187. Visits were subsequently undertaken every four years.

²⁴Ibid., 184.

²⁵Ibid., 181-182.

²⁶Ibid., 181-184. Mrs Sumner, Jennie Fannie Barnardine, had French as her first language.

²⁷*Memoir of George Sumner*, 14.

²⁸Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*; See Bebbington, 'Atonement', 22, 27 for evangelical aversion to Roman Catholicism as a stimulus for missionary activity

²⁹Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 141.

SPG,³¹ increasing the diocesan funding for the latter from £70 at the start of his episcopate to £4061 in 1866. Diocesan contribution to the CMS by that time totalled £8964.³² At the start of the twentieth century, Sumners were serving in the mission field overseas. George Sumner's nephew, Alan George Sumner Gibson, was Coadjutor Bishop of Capetown in 1904 and his great nephew, Edward Harold Etheridge, was in 1900 a missionary in Mashonaland (Zimbabwe).

Mary Sumner: parochial philanthropy and missionary philanthropy via organisations 1851 to 1886

For Mary Sumner, parochial work affirmed dispositions of habitus towards religious outreach. Acting as the helpmeet to her husband in his parochial ministry provided an opening into the field of philanthropy through which she accumulated capital. This authorised her to exercise pedagogic authority on her own account, notably through her involvement in the GFS (1875) and Mothers' Meeting which, with the issue of membership cards in 1876, marked the genesis of the MU. Mary Sumner's transaction of this pedagogic authority into pedagogic work through the diocesan MU will be the subject of a following section.

George and Mary Sumner, like their relatives, realised their religiously motivated philanthropy by providing facilities for education and worship.³³ They maintained an emphasis on personal intervention in relations with parishioners. George 'gained their hearts in many cases by sympathy in their family joys and sorrows [...] He was a personal friend and advisor as well as their clergyman.'³⁴

³⁰Ibid. An action which, according to George Sumner, 'publically allied him with the evangelical party'.

³¹Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 55-84. See 'The Gospel for the Globe' for the origins of the evangelical Anglican CMS (1799) and the Society for The Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701) which originated to provide Anglican clergy for British subjects in the colonies. It was associated with the 1699 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Stanley associates evangelical revival with missionary expansion.

³²Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 139-141. Sumner, 'Memorials'.

³³*Memoir of George Sumner*, 16-17. See previous chapter.

³⁴Ibid., 19.

Parish work at Old Alresford reflected the trend towards participation in organisations that sought to promote religiously approved conduct in order to remediate perceived social ills. In 1855, George Sumner, the Honorary Secretary for the initiative in Hampshire, published an account of 'Book Hawking',³⁵ a scheme which, according to Mary Sumner: 'did useful work in sending men round the villages with Bibles, prayer books and good literature'.³⁶ George Sumner also served on mission related committees. He was a member of the Diocesan Mission Council for promoting parochial missions in the Diocese and was Vice President of the Winchester Diocesan Branch of the SPG.³⁷

The Church of England was conscious that working-class men were under represented in congregations and attention was given to their recruitment.³⁸ Old Alresford had a Young Men's Association³⁹ and Mary Sumner drew attention to the participation of men in parish life as a marker of the success of her husband's (and her own) parochial work: 'It was often observed how great was the number of men who attended Old Alresford Church'.⁴⁰ She notes that it was at the request of the husbands of members of her Mothers' Meeting that her married men's' Bible study group was started.⁴¹

During and following the period of parochial work, the perceived social evils of drink provided a focus for the campaigns by those who perceived the inculcation

³⁵George Henry Sumner, *Book Hawking; as Conducted in Hampshire* (London: Wertheim and Macintosh, 1855). Book hawking was a Church of England initiative dating from c.1855, see Henry George De Bunsen, 'The Bookhawker: His Work and His Day: Being a Paper Read at the Conference of the Church of England Bookhawking Union, Held at Derby, 21 Sept 1859', (Published for the Church of England Bookhawking Union, Aylott and Sons, 1859); James Randall, *Book-Hawking a Means of Counteracting the Evils of the Day* (1862); D.R. Mackarill, 'Book-Hawking-a Moral Enterprise', *Antiquarian Book Monthly* 27, no. 7 (2000).

³⁶*Memoir of George Sumner*, 20.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 149.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 117-120, Charge by the Bishop of Guildford Church of England Men's Society c.1901; See also Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901* (London: A.& C. Black), 222, 223, 226; Gill, *Women and the Church of England*: 84-87. Gill discusses attempts by 'muscular Christians' such as Charles Kingsley to reconcile a gentle Jesus and a feminised church with masculinity.

³⁹*Memoir of George Sumner*, 16.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 18.

⁴¹'Founding'.

of moral and religious conduct as a remedy for social ills.⁴² For Mary Sumner, poverty, violence and immorality could be attributed to drink because it caused loss of self-control. Advocacy for temperance (and mothers as promoters of temperance) was embedded from 1876 in the cards produced for members of the Mothers' Meeting and later asserted in Mary Sumner's writing.⁴³ At Old Alresford, the 'cause' was supported indirectly by the promotion of respectable entertainments, such as the Cottage Garden Society, the Reading Room and village concerts. It was overtly promoted through a branch of the CETS (established in Winchester 1877) which did 'not seek to enforce teetotalism on all [...] simply moderation in the use of intoxicants as a condition of membership'.⁴⁴ However, Mary Sumner regarded total abstinence with approval.⁴⁵ Her advocacy for temperance was shared by her daughter Louisa (also an activist in the MU) and her husband Canon Gore Browne who 'stopped the whole village going to the pub'.⁴⁶ By 1886, Mary Sumner was taking a leading role in the Winchester Juvenile Union of The Church of England Temperance Society. The Hampshire Chronicle reported:

A gathering in Canon Street rooms of the children of the Juvenile Union established three years ago for the benefit of children who do not attend the National Schools in Winchester, over which Mrs Sumner who is president of the Union for 1886 most kindly presided. Mrs Sumner addressed the children and gave most excellent reasons why they should remain steadfast to their principles and expressed the hope that each of the children would try and get some more children to join.⁴⁷

For Mary Sumner 1886 was a significant year. It was at this time (facilitated by her move to The Close in Winchester) that she assumed office in the diocesan hierarchy of the GFS. It was also the year of the Portsmouth Congress, which provided the 'good opportunity' that Mary Sumner had desired for making her

⁴²Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England, 1815-1872* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 1971); Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 133-134.

⁴³Sumner, 'Temperance' *Home Life*, 66 - 74.

⁴⁴Anon, 'Church of England Temperance Society', *Hampshire Chronicle*, 7 April 1877.

⁴⁵*Our Holiday*, 74. 'As the majority of the party were total abstainers ([...] we never felt the least inconvenience or inability to endure fatigue from it), a kettle was soon boiled and excellent tea, with milk, provided'.

⁴⁶M.G Evans and Austin Whitaker. *Winchester Life Histories No. 31 Mrs M G Evans*, 2 Oct. Winchester Memories: HRO AV12/31/S1.

⁴⁷Anon, 'Winchester Juvenile Union of the Church of England Temperance Society' *Hampshire Chronicle*, 16 Jan. 1886.

idea of a union of mothers bound by a card of allegiance to habits of prayer and moral conduct 'more widely known'.⁴⁸

The imperative towards the improvement of others through religion, evident in both the Heywood and Sumner families, was mediated by their social status but informed, above all, by evangelical enthusiasm typified by a belief in the application of religious practice for the improvement of public as well as private life. Their philanthropic projects may be considered as a mission in that they sought to promote adherence to standards of moral conduct informed by religion. The misrecognition of the superiority of Anglican doctrine informed the categorisation of 'others' as deficient in religious capital and legitimised this perpetration of symbolic violence through pedagogic action. Those categorised as unenlightened, that is in need of winning for (Anglican) Christianity, could be local or further afield. For the Heywoods and Sumners, involvement in philanthropy could accrue and indicate possession of symbolic capital, both religious and social.

Travels in the 'East': Mary Sumner in the 'contact zone', the habituated gaze, notions of religious and cultural capital

In 1880, Mary Sumner had an experience that was affirmative of her faith and informative of her advocacy for mission work in foreign lands. She published an account of what she described as *Our Holiday in the East*.⁴⁹ Mary was accompanied by her husband, George, their daughter, Louisa, two Heywood cousins and the Reverend (later Archdeacon) Stanhope and his daughter. This 'charming party of intimate friends and relations', styling themselves 'The Happy Seven', set out on a three month journey to Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon.⁵⁰ Mary Sumner called it 'an era in our lives' and described the journey as 'our pilgrimage to the Holy Land'.⁵¹ By visiting the 'Orient', Mary Sumner was engaging

⁴⁸Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 20.

⁴⁹*Our Holiday*, 4; *Memoir of George Sumner*, gives an edited account and documents a trip to Algiers in 1892/3.

⁵⁰*Memoir of George Sumner*, 39.

⁵¹*Our Holiday*, 70.

in a pastime of increasing popularity amongst the upper/middle classes.⁵² The Sumners were also in the category of Christian travellers (particularly those of an evangelical mind) who 'saw' the Holy Land in terms of an illustration to reveal scripture truth.⁵³ The practice of providing a written account of travels through which the audience 'at home' could imagine and construct notions of identity and difference was also familiar.⁵⁴

Throughout the narrative, Mary Sumner emphasises the possession and accumulation of religious capital. In camp, George led Sunday services and twice daily prayer. Her assertion of the sense of religious solemnity experienced at sites associated with scripture is encapsulated in this entry:

Good Friday in Jerusalem was a day never to be forgotten. The English services were well attended and the [Anglican] Bishop of Jerusalem preached an earnest sermon on the great subject of the crucifixion. It seemed wonderful and solemn to be commemorating the great central fact of our holy faith in the very place where Our Blessed Lord laid down his Life.⁵⁵

There were occasions when there was a deficit between Mary Sumner's aspiration for spiritual affirmation and the actuality of experience: 'When face to face with a holy site on which the mind has dwelt during a lifetime, it is somewhat disappointing not to have a stronger sense of enthusiasm at such moments'.⁵⁶ However her comment that, 'the difficulty of realising the exquisite scriptural stories in modern degraded Palestine was a constant source of disappointment', is

⁵²Mary Sumner's friend Laura Ridding also visited Egypt and the Holy Land in 1886. Lady Laura Ridding, *Account of Travels to Egypt and the Holy Land*, Selborne Papers: HRO 9M68/59/1.

⁵³Melman, *Women's Orients*, 25-56, 165-190. See 'A Prosopography of Travel, 1763-1914'; 'Evangelical Travel and the Evangelical Construction of Gender'.

⁵⁴Ibid. Melman draws attention to the trope of travel writing as autobiographical in constructing, locating and affirming the identities of their protagonists as they responded to the 'other' in the 'imaginary geography' of a culturally constructed gendered and hierarchical 'orient' an oppositional binary to the 'occident'. Melman also identifies 1880-90 as the high point in the production of women's travel narratives. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 7. Pratt notes how travel writing may serve to 'produce' notions of distant space and construct conceptions of cultural identity for writer and readers; See also Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985).

⁵⁵*Our Holiday*, 143. See also 22, 37, 42, 72, 87, 90, 103, 110, 123, 151, 183, 193 for similar evocations of religious experience and sensibility.

⁵⁶Ibid., 162.

suggestive that poor government and cultural and religious deficiencies, rather than the lack of religious sensibility on the part of the travellers was the cause.⁵⁷

The Sumner party's cultural capital was signalled in reports of enthusiastic sightseeing at historic sites.⁵⁸ Mary Sumner celebrated the freedom and adventure of travel on horseback and 'bohemian' living under canvas.⁵⁹ She also took pleasure in the perceived quaintness and exoticism of the 'East' and its inhabitants.⁶⁰ In Alexandria, she 'felt very much as if we had waked [sic] up in another planet [...] full of interest and delight'. Cairo donkey boys 'were as full of fun as an Irish car driver',⁶¹ Arabs had 'noble countenances' and their artistic drapery was a pleasure to look at.⁶² Mary Sumner considered that they exhibited 'a strange sort of majesty and loftiness' and noted with approval that a Bedouen [sic] is always true to his word.⁶³ She singled out their 'handsome and loyal' Syrian guide for praise. 'Of Hani, it was impossible to speak too highly'.⁶⁴ Hani's estimable qualities were associated with his profession of Christianity: 'Hani always tried to join in these [religious] Tent Services and when they parted he said to Canon Sumner. "I never had such a successful journey before" [...] He then said pointing to Canon Sumner's breast pocket, "That's what kept us safe. It was the Bible you always read and your prayers"'.⁶⁵

Informed by her conviction of the superiority of her own religious, national, cultural and even aesthetic notions of value, Mary Sumner felt able to record generalised judgements of categories (religious, racial/national. gender) of a

⁵⁷Ibid., 80.

⁵⁸Ibid., 26-30. These pages record visiting the sphinx and the pyramids. George Sumner and his daughter Louisa ascended one pyramid and visited the interior.

⁵⁹Ibid., 24, 296. India-rubber baths, soap tins, beds, sponges and looking glasses were amongst the Sumners' camping equipment. The ladies had brought their own saddles.

⁶⁰Ibid., 16.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., 14.

⁶³Ibid., 121, 224; Emma Raymond Pitman, *Missionary Heroines in Eastern Lands: Woman's Work in Mission Fields* (London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1895), 131-137. Miss Whatley's view of Egypt corresponds almost exactly with Mary Sumner's responses in interpretation of the exotic scene, both refer to dreaming and describe camels, drapery and 'native countenances'.

⁶⁴*Our Holiday*, 7, see Mary Sumner's footnote.

⁶⁵*Memoir of George Sumner*, 51. Mary Sumner records a visit to Hani's family in 'Beyrout' and notes correspondence with Hani in years after the holiday. Hani's children were Selim, Maron, Ayoob, Foudoulla, Regina, Bechara and 'little Josef'.

person based on limited examples of behaviour. English characteristics (work ethic, moral and physical hygiene) were seen to have the advantage even in comparison with other Europeans. She portrayed Italians at Brindisi exhibiting an 'inconceivable want of energy' and her condemnation of Port Said as 'very new, very French and very wicked' reveals her association of France with laxity in morals.⁶⁶

For Mary Sumner, cleanliness was a measure of what she perceived as 'civilized' behaviour. Even Christian pilgrims going to Jerusalem were noted as exhibiting manners and customs that 'were not altogether appetising'.⁶⁷ She was shocked at villages in Alexandria: 'The Arab villages are deplorable children of all ages and degrees of nudeness roll about in the dust heaps [...] how they can live in such degrading dirt and with habits so uncivilized, is almost inconceivable to Europeans.'⁶⁸

Lack of refinement was noted by Mary Sumner in culture, too. She considered that 'Orientals seem to have no musical gifts'.⁶⁹ Seeing a performance by dancers at Jericho who 'with their tattooed faces, glaring eyes, dark complexions and dishevelled hair [...] looked like savages', the Sumner party (who had not enjoyed the concert) thought they 'had found ourselves in central Africa'. The Sumners countered by singing 'a selection of glees and songs'. Mary Sumner reported that these efforts were applauded but the thoughts of the indigenous audience on the Sumners' artistic efforts and conduct are a matter for speculation.⁷⁰

Mary Sumner saw lack of self-control as indicative of racial inferiority 'Easterns are subject to paroxysms of wrath'. She also categorised 'Orientals' as childlike.⁷¹ Her narrative included:

⁶⁶*Our Holiday*, 4, 64; 'French' was synonymous with lax morals and 'French novels' exemplified unsuitable literature. Mrs Knight, 'On High Schools and Home Education', *MIC*, April 1891; Mary Sumner, *Good Homes and Faithful Marriages*: LPL MU/MSS/2/8; *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 18; Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change in Britain since 1880*, 44-45.

⁶⁷*Our Holiday*, 66.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 12, 14.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 101.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 124-125.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 108, 215, 278.

An incident worth noting as illustrative of native character [...] Al Raschid having been kicked by a horse burst into tears [...] it was only a scratch which an English lad would have laughed at but the great childlike Syrian be-pitied himself greatly and his pathetic and dramatic gesticulations were quite touching.⁷²

The Sumners were confident of their status as English travellers.⁷³ Mary Sumner recorded that: 'The Union Jack floated over the central tent and gave éclat to our encampment'.⁷⁴ They claimed access to indigenous people of high social standing and authority. *Our Holiday* records visits to the Governor of Nablous and the Mufti of Damascus amongst other notables.⁷⁵ In Egypt, the Sumner party were entertained by the Khedive who had 'the good sense to apply to one of our great public schools in England, [for a tutor for his sons] [...] an ex-master of Winchester College'.⁷⁶ The narrative implies that superior class equates with civilized behaviour and thus the appreciation of (English, Christian) values as represented by the Sumner party.

In addition to Mary Sumner's tendency to make judgements according to her perception of racial and national types, her observations reflect her preference for Protestant Anglican observance.⁷⁷ Roman Catholic iconography was not to her taste: 'At Gethsemane the only things that jarred upon us were the pictures of our Lord's sufferings at the Latin stations. These poor representations seemed puerile and impertinent'.⁷⁸ She also disapproved of Greek Orthodox Church ritual and the lack of restraint shown by its worshippers.⁷⁹

Positioned as non-believers, Muslims and Jews were subject to a similar scrutiny. Mary Sumner condemned 'the utter lack of reverence and decorum' at a Jewish funeral.⁸⁰ At the 'Wailing' [Western] Wall in Jerusalem she noted: 'Jews from all

⁷²Ibid., 223.

⁷³Mary Sumner distinguished the Sumner party from 'Cooks Tourists', Ibid., 122.

⁷⁴Ibid., 71.

⁷⁵Ibid., 185, 264, 169, 249, 263, 267, 306.

⁷⁶Ibid., 47-49, 50-51; Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 41-42.

⁷⁷Cooper and Stoler, *Colonial Cultures*, 2-4. Her remarks illustrate Cooper and Stoler's notion of grammar of difference.

⁷⁸*Our Holiday*, 172.

⁷⁹Ibid., 98.

⁸⁰Ibid., 113.

parts of the world [...] many with almost Saxon features [...] but all having the subtle Jewish look which is unmistakable'.⁸¹ She also commented on what was, to her, their mistaken profession of faith. 'Their forefathers had crucified the Lord of Glory and they knew it not: the true Light is Shining and they see it not: the Messiah for whom they sigh has come, but they believe it not.'⁸²

Muslims also exhibited what for Mary Sumner was a regrettable lack of decorum in worship. She condemned the religious fervour of an Egyptian festival as a 'barbarous and disgusting rite',⁸³ and at a Muslim funeral 'four veiled women astride on donkeys [were] uttering wails. Great indeed was the contrast between this scene and our reverent English funerals. The wailing too had an artificial ring about it, which did not denote true sorrow'.⁸⁴ Muslim stories and legends 'did not to say the least, consort well with the facts of scripture'.⁸⁵ Moreover she averred that 'religious liberty is abhorrent to Moslems'.⁸⁶ However, 'It was impossible not to be struck by their fearless profession [of faith] or to help wishing that members of our pure Church would be equally bold in their Christian ritual'.⁸⁷ She was also impressed by the devotion exhibited by a group of 'dervishes' but qualified her approbation by noting that:

In our minds was a deep longing that such evident religious fervour might be gathered up with our own holy faith and that the yearnings of these fanatics should be satisfied by a real and intelligent knowledge of the unknown God whom they ignorantly worship.⁸⁸

Despite George Sumner's assertion in his preface to *Our Holiday*, that no attempt 'to solve the knotty questions connected with the holy sites in Palestine' was intended,⁸⁹ Mary Sumner associated what she perceived as the failings of the Ottoman government with religious deficit: 'Bad government may account for

⁸¹Ibid., 145.

⁸²Ibid., 147.

⁸³Ibid., 47.

⁸⁴Ibid., 52.

⁸⁵Ibid., 104.

⁸⁶Ibid., 186.

⁸⁷Ibid., 54.

⁸⁸Ibid., 276.

⁸⁹Ibid., 1. Preface.

much, a false religion may account for more'.⁹⁰ Missionary work offered a solution. She considered that:

We as Christians must try more zealously to raise up the banner of the Cross in the midst of a land so dear to Our Lord. [...] Only thus will light break forth out of the present darkness and Palestine take its rightful place amongst Christian kingdoms. If the holy land were governed by Christian rulers a great religious revival would in all probability soon begin.⁹¹

A recurrent theme in Mary Sumner's assertion of the superiority of (Protestant) Christianity concerned the treatment of women and revealed her assumption concerning appropriate gendered behaviour. For her, 'eastern' social practice demonstrated a 'barbaric want of chivalry' on the part of men.⁹² It was also her view that 'eastern' religious forms of observance denied women participation in worship and spiritual inclusion.⁹³ She described a Jewish service as 'very much lacking in devotion [...] the mother sat apart and hardly seemed to join in the service at all'.⁹⁴ At the 'Wailing' [Western] Wall there were only 'a few women who kept in the background'.⁹⁵ Despite asserting that: 'No religion treats women fairly but the Christian religion',⁹⁶ her reservations on the practices of the 'eastern' Orthodox Churches extended to the treatment of women. In a Greek Orthodox Church, 'there was a gallery at the back very high up where women can worship unseen. Even the Christian women here follow the Moslem custom and entirely veil their faces'.⁹⁷

⁹⁰Ibid., 88.

⁹¹Ibid., 90.

⁹²*Memoir of George Sumner*: 98-99.

⁹³Melman, *Women's Orients*, 194-209. Melman's Chapter 'Domestic life in Palestine': Evangelical Ethnography - Faith and Prejudice', refers to women's writing on Moslem and Jewish women that puts Mary Sumner's views in a context of evangelical disapproval of the treatment of 'orientals'. Melman identifies (amongst numerous examples) Mrs Mott's 1865 *Stones of Palestine: Notes on a Ramble through the Holy Land*; Suzette Lloyd and Harriet Smith's 1872 *Daughters of Syria: A Narrative of the Efforts of the late Mrs Bowen Thompson for the Evangelisation of Syrian Females* and Countess Ellesmere's *Journal of Tour in the Holy Land in May and June 1840* as works which reflect this view. They are works dated prior to Mary Sumner's 1880 journey.

⁹⁴*Our Holiday*, 151.

⁹⁵Ibid., 145.

⁹⁶*Memoir of George Sumner*, 50.

⁹⁷*Our Holiday*, 81.

Muslim practice drew Mary Sumner's strongest disapproval. She considered that the zenana system, which she had observed at first hand in Egypt, Palestine and Syria, symbolised the low social and spiritual status of women. For Mary Sumner, the zenana condemned women to a life that was 'vacant and debilitating [...] dreary, useless, childish [and] inane.'⁹⁸ Women were 'kept in ignorance and practical imprisonment [...] employing their time in little else than idle gossip and the jealousies and inanities of their miserable life. We never saw a book or a bit of needle work in any harem we visited'.⁹⁹ She condemned what she called 'forced marriage' and commented 'daughters are puppets in their parents' hands'.¹⁰⁰ Mary Sumner considered that this state of affairs demonstrated the need for missionary intervention, 'the inestimable value of zenana work'.¹⁰¹ These views were reiterated in her 1910 memoir of her husband: 'It is frequently asked by men and women of the world; "What is the good of Missions? Why not leave the Easterns to live up to their own religions?" These people [...] do not know the fate and sorrow of the eastern woman.'¹⁰² Mary Sumner's experience in Algeria (also recalled in the memoir), which included a covert visit to observe worship in a mosque,¹⁰³ affirmed the view she asserted in the account of *Our Holiday* and was also drawn upon as evidence towards her authority on the subject:

During our time in Algeria, as in the East we were deeply moved by the condition of wives and mothers. It is terribly sad, for where the Christian religion does not prevail, their lot is indeed hard and fills one's heart with sympathy. A woman is never seen inside a mosque. I believe she is supposed to have no soul, for in speaking to a dervish (the native village schoolmaster at Sidi-ben-Madin) he said, when asked why there were only boys in school, "OH girls do not need it; they have no souls; they die like dogs." I do not suppose this is the universal opinion of Easterns; but it would account in some measure for the treatment of women in

⁹⁸Ibid., 310, 128. Miss Stanhope's 'exhibition of first rate riding' to an Arab audience is used by Mary Sumner to indicate the freedom accorded to Christian women.

⁹⁹Ibid., 266.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 303.

¹⁰¹Ibid., see Guli Francis-Dehquani, 'Women Missionaries in Persia: Perceptions of Muslim Women and Islam, 1884-1934', in *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799-1999*, ed. Kevin Ward and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000).

¹⁰²*Memoir of George Sumner*, 50.

¹⁰³Ibid., 94-95. Mary Sumner observed the Grand Mufti leading 'the last important ceremony of Ramadan' and noted: 'Very properly the Bishop [George Sumner] was not invited!'

Mohamedan countries. All honour to Missions which are working for the salvation of women.¹⁰⁴

Accounts of visits to missions and missionaries feature in both *Our Holiday* and in the record of Mary Sumner's time in Algeria.¹⁰⁵ Women taking leading roles in missionary schools feature prominently,¹⁰⁶ and she noted that the missionary, Mr Macintosh, was 'greatly helped in his work by his wife'.¹⁰⁷ In Egypt, Mary Sumner visited a school run by the 'brave, indomitable' Miss Whatley, who had been 'abused insulted and cursed in the streets by fanatical Moslems'. Mary Sumner was impressed by Miss Whatley's achievement in the face of 'difficulties which would have completely disheartened a less heroic spirit'.¹⁰⁸ She also commended Mrs Bowen Thompson for her mission school in Damascus where, 'the sphere is one of great difficulty and danger and requires much tact as well as Christian Courage'.¹⁰⁹ In 'Beyrout', Mary talked to mothers at Mrs Mott's school for girls, who 'sent a kind message to the members of my Mothers' Meeting at home about which I had told them'.¹¹⁰ For Mary Sumner, the valorous example of missionaries was a standard to be lived up to and she warned of the discredit that failure to uphold Christian standards engendered in the eyes of non-believers. In 1910, when the Mothers' Meeting, mentioned in 1880, had grown into a worldwide organisation, she wrote:

If *all* English women showed the Easterns what the home life of a true wife and mother is and if in every country possessed by the English, the Christian religion had always been openly lived and honoured by the English Government and taught in the schools which were started by our Government in the conquered lands, by this time Christianity would have

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 93. Capitalisation as source. See also 99 according to the testimony of English Missionaries 'the homelife of women [...] was sad indeed'.

¹⁰⁵ *Our Holiday*, 110, 112, 119, 146, 204-206, 210-211. These are in addition to other references mentioned in the body of the text.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 251, 301. Mrs Mott and her sisters Mrs Henry Smith and Miss Lloyd of the British Syrian Schools are an example. They were sisters of Mrs Bowen-Thompson d.1869.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 273.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 44-45; Emma R Pitman, *Missionary Heroines in Eastern Lands: Women's Work in Mission Fields* (London: S W Patridge, 1895), 129-160. Miss Whatley, one of the subjects was the daughter of the Archbishop of Dublin. She worked in Egypt from 1856 to 1889 having begun her mission work in Ireland during the famine of 1846 to 1851 on behalf of the Irish Anglican Church Mission among Roman Catholics.

¹⁰⁹ *Our Holiday*, 273; Pitman, *Missionary Heroines*, 40-72.

¹¹⁰ *Our Holiday*, 302; Pitman, *Missionary Heroines*, 57. The Syrian Schools were established following the 1860 Christian Druze conflict in Damascus.

won so many hearts and homes that the present troubles assailing the British rule would, in all probability, be unknown.¹¹¹

Mary Sumner also considered Christianity to contribute to good government, as exemplified by the rule of England, for her the highest exemplar of a Christian nation. Moreover, English men and women needed to embody the standards of morality that in Mary Sumner's opinion made English rule superior. Mary Sumner also prioritised the cultural and social capital of 'Englishness' above those of different nationality, religion and ethnicity. In her accounts of *Our Holiday* and the visit to Algiers, Mary Sumner asserted herself and her associates as bearers of desirable cultural, social and religious capital by positive assertions of engagement with cultural symbols, association with persons of status and anecdotes of religious sensibility. Defining herself as a traveller and presenting her account in print, was, in itself, an assertion of capital (implicitly economic and cultural and also signifying intrepidity). In addition, Mary Sumner's possession of (assumed) superior symbolic capital was affirmed and asserted in contrast to examples of difference perceived as indicative of deficiency. So, for Mary Sumner, the 'east' signified dirt, ignorance, heathenism, passion, childishness and the oppression of women, whereas 'English' signified cleanliness, education, self-control, maturity and 'freedom' for women. With the Bible as her guidebook, she approached her journeys mis/recognising Protestant Christianity and 'Englishness' as superior and legitimating of domination and like others of similar habitus, saw what she came looking for.

Mary Sumner: habitus; wider network; mission via the Girls' Friendly Society

In 1874, Mary Sumner had become one of the original 'Associates' of the GFS.¹¹² She sustained a parochial GFS branch at Old Alresford (1886) and served as Vice President (1885) and then President of the Winchester Diocesan GFS (1887 and 1888).¹¹³ Her daughter, Louisa Gore Browne, (daughter-in law of Mrs Harold

¹¹¹*Memoir of George Sumner*, 50-51. Mary Sumner's italics.

¹¹²Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 218.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, 214.

Browne, wife of the Bishop of Winchester and member of the inaugural GFS committee), was also active in the GFS.¹¹⁴ In 1911, Margaret Gore Browne, Mary Sumner's granddaughter (b.1886, later Mrs Evans) was Diocesan GFS President.¹¹⁵ Attention to the GFS is given as informative and affirmative of Mary Sumner's habitus pertinent to activism realised through the MU and relative to notions of 'women's mission' and engagement overseas. Examination of the GFS also locates Mary Sumner within a context of views on Empire and 'race', which while diverse in emphasis, are united in prioritising religious capital as legitimising of gendered roles, philanthropy, mission and empire. Although the GFS preceded the diocesan MU by a decade, overseas expansion of the societies was largely contemporaneous (c.1890-1914) and collaboration occurred between them in field manoeuvres to promote a mutual religious agenda 'at home' and overseas. The GFS was notable for its promotion of emigration. As noted in the previous chapter, there was an overlap of GFS and MU personnel, notably in the context of engagement overseas exemplified by Charlotte Yonge, an enthusiast for missionary work and imperialists Laura Ridding and Ellen Joyce.¹¹⁶

The GFS: Woman's mission, an appetite for service, missionary philanthropy

The rationale for the GFS was religious.¹¹⁷ In the account of the GFS published in *Friendship's Highway* (1926). GFS 'Foundress', Mary Townsend, is reported as saying, 'I have always conceived of the GFS work as the nature of a Mission, the Mission of Women to Women'.¹¹⁸ To prevent, 'tales of shame and misery, of wasted lives spent in the service of sin or vanity instead of in the service of Christ'.¹¹⁹ GFS 'lady' Associates such as Mary Sumner and her daughters would in their 'wonderful mission for women among women',¹²⁰ act to promote religious

¹¹⁴ Winchester Diocesan Girls' Friendly Society. *Winchester Diocesan GFS Council Minutes*, 4 Oct. 1887, Winchester Diocesan Girls' Friendly Society: HRO 33M89/29.

¹¹⁵ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 214.

¹¹⁶ See Appendix 2.

¹¹⁷ Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 131-145, Chapter Six Piety and Philanthropy: Women Volunteers in the Life of the Church. See Appendix 2 for Mary Townsend

¹¹⁸ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 82.

¹¹⁹ Money, *History*, 4, 6. See previous chapter.

¹²⁰ Anon, 'Record of Events Report of the Church Congress at Hull', Speech by Bishop of Southwell George Ridding.

knowledge and observance amongst working class 'girls' by acting as moral guardians and through providing 'respectable' leisure opportunities and education. GFS Associates' shared habitus gave them, in addition to class identity and religious affiliation as Anglican communicants, an expectation of and an appetite for, service.¹²¹ Mary Townsend's assertion that 'hundreds and hundreds of devoted women are labouring for their young sisters' welfare',¹²² is given credence by the personal column of *The Monthly Packet* of August 1875 (the first year of the GFS), the magazine edited until 1890 by GFS Associate, Charlotte Yonge. Whilst 'Emilie would be grateful for linen or books to 'distribute amongst her poor people', 'PC' offers thanks for donations for her 'Winter Home for Consumptives'.¹²³ For Edith Moberly, GFS Diocesan President for Salisbury (1880-1887) philanthropic involvement was central to her sense of worth. The thought of being obliged to give up such 'work' left her feeling bereft.¹²⁴ The admission by Miss Lucy Olivia Wright, who made a career as Central Secretary of the GFS from 1880 until her death in 1896, that: '*I love the GFS*' [italics as source] is also suggestive of philanthropic work experienced as affirmative of identity and sense of purpose¹²⁵ and indicative of a role and position in the field of philanthropy, through which unmarried women could contribute their 'maternal' talents to social improvement.¹²⁶

Despite the extensive range of welfare work undertaken by the GFS that became increasingly subject to state intervention,¹²⁷ the GFS's identity as a Church of England society remained foremost. It looked upon itself as 'one portion of that

¹²¹Charlotte Yonge, *Womankind* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1890 f/p 1877), 85-90. The chapter 'Charity' asserts alms giving as a religious duty and provides examples of how young ladies may achieve this through the support of missions 'at home' or overseas even if parents forbade direct contact with the poor; Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*, 1-17.

¹²²Money, *History*, 5.

¹²³Anon, *Monthly Packet*, 'Correspondence August 1875', *The Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Younger Members of the Church of England*, 35.

¹²⁴Moberly, *Dulce Domum*, 213. The Moberleys were friends of Charlotte Yonge. At the thought of giving up her boys' class in 1869, her response was to say 'I am done for'.

¹²⁵Money, *History*, 45. This is in accord with the interpretation of women's citizenship as service to community in the MU and GFS.

¹²⁶Yeo, 'Some Contradictions of Social Motherhood', 122-123; See also Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*, 6-8, 41, 124, for the 'maternal' role of unmarried women and philanthropy as a rewarding and expected outlet for their energies.

¹²⁷Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 33-41. See Chapter V 'The Pilgrims at Work' for cooperation with government on employment and training; Money, *History*, 12, 44.

great army of Christ, humbly seeking the spread of his kingdom'.¹²⁸ It engaged in field manoeuvres to promote its moral standards into the wider public sphere, both nationally and overseas. 'We are' said Mrs Townsend, 'a fighting fellowship'.¹²⁹ Members were exhorted to active witness of the religiously sanctioned capital of chastity, temperance, thrift and prayer, which the GFS espoused and Mary Sumner advocated for Mothers' Union members. GFS Associates believed that their girls should and did, provide an example of desirable public conduct. According to Charlotte Yonge, reporting a conversation with a local farmer: 'the reason that the boys in this village are so much better than they were, is because the GFS has a great deal to do with it, for if the boys are not steady they say the girls will not speak to them'.¹³⁰ The GFS gave conspicuous public demonstrations of its values by running wartime temperance canteens, through the 1920 Pageant at the Albert Hall and via participation in the White Crusade, a campaign for moral regeneration, in which the MU also participated.¹³¹ The 'White Horse' project which converted a public house in inner London to a social centre at this period is suggestive of 'mission' intent.¹³²

The GFS: overseas mission and home identities

In promoting their belief in 'Purity as the true standard for the womanhood of the world' [capitalisation as source], the GFS looked overseas.¹³³ This reflected the spread of members (and potential members) whose work took them abroad but also the presence of expatriate potential Associates, frequently wives of clerics or government officials, who sustained the GFS network.¹³⁴ The department for girls

¹²⁸*History*, 47. '...because the sin we are specially banded to combat is ravaging the fold of Christ [...] lives should be devoted to this work'.

¹²⁹Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 4.

¹³⁰Winchester Diocesan Girls' Friendly Society, October 1893, Winchester Diocesan Girls' Friendly Council Minutes: HRO 33M89.

¹³¹Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 91-105, See Chapter XII 'The Motherland's Call to the Pilgrims' for patriotic fund raising, the provision of hostels and service canteens and co-operation with uniformed services.

¹³²*Ibid.*, 111-112.

¹³³*Ibid.*, 8.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, 226. GFS branches started in Scotland 1875, Ireland and the USA 1877, Canada and Australia 1883, New Zealand 1884, South Africa 1889, Argentina and the West Indies 1910.

emigrating was initiated in 1886, (the year of the diocesan adoption of the MU), under the supervision of Ellen Joyce.¹³⁵

The GFS took inspiration from the work of missionary organisations and those working on their behalf, who were seen to exemplify piety, devotion to others and fortitude in hardship, in their engagement with overseas endeavour.¹³⁶ This reflected an interest in missionary work overseas.¹³⁷ It was Mary Townsend's view that: 'Helping to sustain the work of church and the GFS in distant lands [was] - a wide and most legitimate field'. According to Mary Heath Stubbs, 'from the early days individual branches undertook the support of Missions.'¹³⁸ GFS support for promoting Christianity overseas varied according to location. A key difference was between the colonies (notably India), or transnational spaces where a non-white indigenous population was prolific and the white settler colonies (later Dominions) of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa within the empire.¹³⁹

The GFS supported overseas missions in collaboration with the SPG and the CMS.¹⁴⁰ The first was in India at Lahore in 1885 and contributions were made to a Church of England Zenana Mission Society (CEZMS) initiative dating from 1895.¹⁴¹ In 1897, the GFS undertook fundraising for mission work in Japan following the appointment of Bishop Awdry, husband of GFS Central Council member, Mrs

¹³⁵Money, *History*, 44.

¹³⁶Judith Rowbotham, 'Ministering Angels, Not Ministers: Women's Involvement in the Foreign Missionary Movement, c.1860-1910', in *Women, Religion and Feminism in Britain, 1750-1900*, ed. Sue Morgan (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). Rowbotham notes not all women workers on behalf of missions were official missionaries. Women tended to work in an auxiliary capacity as 'civilising agents' rather than evangelising.

¹³⁷Anon Monthly Packet, 'Correspondence August 1875. 48.'

¹³⁸Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 82.

¹³⁹Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen, 'Introduction in *Settler Colonialism: A Concept and Its Uses*', in *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century; Projects, Practices, Legacies* (New York, N.Y. ; London: Routledge, 2005). Settler colonialism (as in South Africa and Australia) is defined as differing from expansion by military domination or trade and an attempt to establish communities identified by ties of ethnicity and faith in lands (despite the presence of an indigenous population) perceived of as 'empty'. Attitudes to indigenous populations are thus characterised by attempts to eliminate or exclude, rather than economic exploitation which are codified in law. Settler colonies may, although dependent on the site of metropolitan power, seek autonomy from it.

¹⁴⁰Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 83.

¹⁴¹Money, *History*, 67; Heath-Stubbs, *Ibid.*, 84.

Awdry, to the diocese of Osaka.¹⁴² In China, the GFS supported one (1911), then two (1919) CMS workers: by 1924 this had increased to eight.¹⁴³ The GFS claimed their own missionary martyr, Dr Alice Marval, who in 1903 at Cawnpore, 'lost her life, owing to her indefatigable labours among the plague stricken natives'.¹⁴⁴ GFS field manoeuvres in support of missions, in collaboration with the MU as initiated under the leadership of Mary Sumner, will be noted in a following section.

Overseas links were drawn upon to consolidate the field position of the GFS 'at home'. Through the magazine *Friendly Leaves*, GFS members were encouraged to identify with missionary activity as exemplifying desirable capital, envisage links between 'home' and overseas and to note their own capital advantages defined in contrast to indigenous women. In 1907, the column, 'Our Own Affairs', included correspondence from a GFS member working as an SPG missionary in Simla and news of '*Our Own Worker* [italics as source] in Japan' who 'has a daily class of sixty eight policemen [...] who learn English and have a Bible lesson'.¹⁴⁵ Support for missionary activities and the adoption of overseas GFS branches by home branches which extended the GFS field position overseas were also featured.¹⁴⁶ There were also articles by missionary workers:¹⁴⁷ 'Foreign Missions' and 'Missions - India' were set as comprehension questions for members following the GFS Elementary Reading Union course. In answer to the question 'Name some contrasts between the lives of English and Indian girls', the candidates wrote:

... to express thankfulness for the privileges which come to them as born in our island kingdom, with the religious and social opportunities which are theirs; whilst one emphatically declares that it should make them wish to do all they could for their Indian sisters. It is to be hoped that those who

¹⁴²Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 83.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁴⁴Money, *History*, 68-69; Heath-Stubbs, 84.

¹⁴⁵Girls' Friendly Society, 'Our Own Affairs India Ceylon Ireland', *Friendly Leaves*, April 1907, 147; Anon, 'Our Own Affairs News from Japan', *Friendly Leaves*, March 1907, 115.

¹⁴⁶'Our Own Affairs Diocesan Reports', *Friendly Leaves*, June 1907, 211; 'Our Own Affairs Branch News 'a Shrewsbury Branch Member Working as an S.P.G. Missionary Writes...'', *Friendly Leaves*, November 1907, 368.

¹⁴⁷Edith Scott, 'Work at Lahore', *Friendly Leaves*, May 1907, 170; Anon, 'Our Worker in Japan', *Friendly Leaves*, May 1907, 180-181.

answered so well the questions on missionary work will keep up their interest in it all their lives.¹⁴⁸

The reference to the work of missionaries and missions in the official histories of the GFS also emphasised the links between home and overseas. In 1905, Agnes Money, reporting on GFS work in India, noted that: 'few as yet of the native Christian girls have joined' but she made particular reference to Eurasians in asserting the inclusiveness of the GFS:

Our Government classes them as Europeans; they are Christians; they dress like ourselves and their daughters go to the High Schools with our English girls. They have the greatest love for England and for all that belongs to it and will speak of England as 'home' though they have never seen it and know that they can never expect to do so. [...] We are rejoiced to welcome these girls to our Society which is for girls of the English Empire everywhere.¹⁴⁹

GFS worker Miss Townsend's report of her 1904 visit to India to a meeting of Branch Secretaries, combined an evocation of an exotic setting with an assertion of the role of the society in the imperial project that associated the growth of empire with the spread of Christianity. Like Money's, hers was a vision of Christian inclusiveness and she also claimed a space for women in the imperial field:

In that great work which England today is doing for her Indian Empire, I have proud hopes that our GFS may play its part, helping to break down racial distinctions, binding together Anglo – Indian, Eurasian and Christian native with its chord of love and sympathy and prayer [...] shall there not be room in this work for women by women? For after all is not our GFS a section of that greater and fairer Temple, the Church of Christ, "whose Builder and Maker is GOD"?¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸'Elementary Reading Union Foreign Missions and Course II Missions in India', *Friendly Leaves*, July 1907.

¹⁴⁹Money, *History*, 66-67. Money's comment overlooks the reality of racial prejudice against Anglo-Indians; See Elizabeth Buettner, 'Not Quite Pukka': Schooling in India and the Acquisition of Racial Status', in *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Buettner's analysis suggests that the prejudice against Anglo-Indians was intense because of their presumption of 'whiteness' perceived as an encroachment on the status of British expatriates.

¹⁵⁰Money, *History*, 70-71.

The GFS as a patriotic organisation identified with empire and used emigration as a manoeuvre to extend its position in the imperial field.¹⁵¹ The 'settler' destinations of South Africa, Australia and Canada were of particular interest to the GFS which promoted emigration through its own department,¹⁵² and via links with Ellen Joyce's Winchester Emigration Society, (to which Mary Sumner subscribed),¹⁵³ which later became part of the BWEA.¹⁵⁴ Emigration was seen as an opportunity for members to better themselves and contribute to the imperial project by populating the Empire with 'the right sort of woman', Christian, chaste, domesticated and (implicitly) white.¹⁵⁵

For Ellen Joyce, who misrecognised the superiority of British cultural and (Anglican) religious capital and conflated this with supposed racial attributes, emigration was a civilizing religious mission. It was, 'missionary work done by hundreds rather than units'.¹⁵⁶ This missionary work was to be achieved not just by professing the faith and upholding the implicitly 'civilized' culture of 'home': to ensure its success it required the physical reproduction of the 'race' in sufficient numbers. In 1920 she wrote:

If England believes herself and the English speaking people to be the power entrusted with the evangelization of that vast part of the globe that is entrusted to their jurisdiction, then the duty of fully populating the fringes of the huge Oversea [sic] Empire becomes paramount. If again, it is the exponent of Purity, it must focus its efforts to distribute its daughters under protection, where they can find their mates and help make homes pure, happy and Christian.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵¹Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 142-143. In addition to Laura Ridding and Ellen Joyce as leading GFS Associates was Lady Knightly of Fawsley a member of the pro-Imperial Primrose league and editor of the BWEA's magazine *Imperial Colonist*. See Appendix 2.

¹⁵²*Friendly Leaves*' column for members emigrating advocated travelling with Mrs Joyce's escorted parties which fixed contacts in the country of destination. In June 1907, the column concluded with a warning in bold type: 'Caution - Agencies are not always to be depended on: trust your own society'.

¹⁵³Anon, 'Winchester Emigration Society Appeal for Funds', *Hampshire Chronicle*, 10 April 1886. The Sumners subscribed £5 to the Society. Mary gave a further pound to the Ladies' Committee clothing scheme.

¹⁵⁴Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 219; Bush, 'Joyce, Ellen (1832-1924)'.

¹⁵⁵Bush, 'The Right Sort of Woman'.

¹⁵⁶Money, *History*, 57; Heath-Stubbs, 70.

¹⁵⁷Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 76; Katie Pickles, *Female Imperialism and National Identity: Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002). Pickles notes the activities of the pro imperial IODE which included the promotion of white emigration and motherhood.

The project of White Australia instigated in the decade following Australia's commonwealth status in 1901 introduced legislation excluding non - whites from migrating to Australia.¹⁵⁸ It codified for the first time British imperial citizenship according to colour. It was intended to protect the white man's preferential status. It was perceived as a defence of 'higher civilization' by white settlers fearful of being 'swamped' by 'black and yellow races'.¹⁵⁹ The implication for white women was to exalt them as mothers: 'Whereas white mothers were feted and remunerated in the Commonwealth of Australia, Aboriginal women's race was invoked to deny their capacity for motherhood'.¹⁶⁰ Ellen Joyce not only asserted the moral contribution of women to the Empire but made the racial dimension of the role of women explicit.¹⁶¹ In 1921, she asserted:

the absolute necessity in the cause of religion and morality, of stimulating the Protected Migration of members, to parts of the Empire where good women are really needed to preserve in those far parts of our possessions a high standard of morals, [and] in equalising the sexes, to multiply a race practising religious habits and in one part of our vast Dominions to keep for King and Empire a "White Australia".¹⁶²

The notion of 'women's mission', upheld by the GFS was informed by the gendered doxa of Anglicanism, supported by the socially dominant class. GFS organising Associates, in their misrecognition of this religiously circumscribed notion of pure maternal womanliness, were themselves subject to the symbolic violence that they perpetrated. Yet, the capital accrued by being 'good church women', gave pedagogic authority and the opportunity for self-realisation and power in a sphere of their own. GFS members were encouraged to support missionary philanthropy 'at home' and the work of missionaries overseas. In so

¹⁵⁸S. R. Mehrotra, 'On the Use of the Term 'Commonwealth'', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* 2, no. 1 (1963): 1-16.

¹⁵⁹Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, 'White Australia Points the Way', in *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 137-165.

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 156. See also 157-159 'Citizen Mothers' for discussion of eugenics and the promotion of white motherhood and the maternity bounty of £5 paid only to white mothers from 1912.

¹⁶¹Bush, 'Edwardian Ladies and the 'Race' Dimensions of British Imperialism'.

¹⁶²Ellen Joyce, *Letter to President of Winchester Diocesan G.F.S. Council* 5 Nov. 1921, Winchester Diocesan Girls' Friendly Society: HRO 33M89/25/12/1.

doing, they could contribute to the pedagogic work of Christianity by demonstrating their elevated standards of morality and conduct in public 'at home' and overseas.

Despite assertions of spiritual inclusivity for Christian indigenous populations in colonies and other contact zones, the GFS was in accord with the misrecognition of whiteness as superior racial capital. GFS emigrants to white settler colonies and dominions were presented as pioneers participating in the valorous project of exporting 'English' culture and Christianity to empty lands. It was also implicit that these women would reproduce a white population. The spread of Christianity was understood as an obligation, which served as a legitimising rationale for imperial rule. The GFS used notions of gendered religious capital to claim space for women in the imperial field: it asserted the significance of Christian women as exemplars of superior capital and the notion of maternalism could be employed to euphemise the symbolic (and actual) violence inherent in the prioritisation of a white Christian English cultural arbitrary. GFS Associates also drew upon their social status and location close to individuals in positions of authority: they also secured pedagogic authority as experts in the field of emigration. Their misrecognition of British/English racial and cultural superiority mirrored their acceptance of social stratification. At grass roots level, in return for their misrecognition of a religious doxa of class and gender stratification, GFS members could perceive themselves as belonging to a religious and contingently cultural and racial elite.

Mary Sumner: the Mothers' Union, women's mission and philanthropy as mission

Women's mission

Mary Sumner invested her experience in the GFS to inform the organisation of the MU. She also made use of the opportunities for networking that the GFS provided to promote the MU, as the previous chapter has noted. Mary Sumner's remarks from the GFS platform in 1885 (five years after her journey to the 'East') illustrate

her rationale for the MU, which saw homes as a territory where endeavour to promote allegiance to religiously sanctioned standards of behaviour was needed in order to combat immorality.¹⁶³ In her 1888 book, *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, Mary Sumner altered the GFS motto, which would have been familiar to her audience to read: 'Bearing one another's burdens and so, fulfilling the laws of Christ', in her advocacy for the pedagogic action of upper class women towards the religious reform of 'ignorant and weaker mothers'.¹⁶⁴

The account of Mary Sumner's first Church Congress speech, given in the officially authorised *Mary Sumner her Life and Work*, is evocative of missionary enterprise in its language and dramatic structure. The Church Congresses (initiated in 1861) were an exercise by the established Church to promote its messages and gain recruits. The location of the 1886 Church Congress at Portsmouth, 'a great densely populated sea port', illustrates Church outreach into an urban district in which the parochial structure and the personal sway of squire and cleric was less robust than in its rural strongholds.¹⁶⁵ The account, 'Mrs Wilberforce's Narrative', evokes need and deprivation in its description of the audience 'many of them with sad anxious faces, or bearing some unmistakable sign of poverty's cold grip'.¹⁶⁶ The account of Mary Sumner's speech is also evocative of missionary valour in its reference to her conquest of fear and by allusion to religious inspiration: 'We who listened to her felt that the Holy Spirit was manifestly guiding and strengthening her, in an undertaking which at that time called for no little courage'.¹⁶⁷ Mary Sumner's words, which associate women's domestic role with 'work for God' and nation, in which difficulties need conquest, are similarly evocative of a divinely ordained and valorous cause:

My friends, as wives and mothers we have a great work to do for our husbands, our children, our homes and our country and I am convinced that it would greatly help us if we could start a Mothers' Union, wherein all classes could unite in faith and prayer, to try to do this work for God. With

¹⁶³Sumner, 'Speech to the Annual G.F.S. Diocesan Conference at the George Hotel Winchester'.

¹⁶⁴*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 56-57.

¹⁶⁵The kind of territory subject to attention from university and public school missionaries via the settlement movement. See Scotland, *Squires in the Slums: Settlements and Missions in Late Victorian Britain*.

¹⁶⁶Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 22, Mrs Wilberforce's Narrative.

¹⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 23.

His help and inspiration we can conquer all difficulties and raise the Home-Life of our Nation.¹⁶⁸

Mary Sumner was motivated by her perception that there were social ills (drunkenness, immorality) that needed remediation and she attributed lack of parental responsibility as contributory: 'The ruin of thousands of lives is owing to the neglect of the parents - above all the mother'.¹⁶⁹ She also saw parental effort as the means to correct this state of affairs: 'The importance of a national effort to awaken the conscience of parents came upon me as time went on' and made it an object of the MU'.¹⁷⁰

The words of Mary Sumner's Portsmouth speech reflect her understanding of the notion of 'women's mission', terminology that was used to legitimise assertions concerning the domestic and maternal roles of women as divinely ordained and to signal that women performing these roles as exemplars of Christian values had a pedagogic function. Wives and mothers should 'lead their families in purity and holiness of life'.¹⁷¹ In her second address on marriage, Mary Sumner emphasised the role of the wife as a religious influence on her husband by referring to St Monica's conversion of her husband to Christianity and by asserting that: 'the Bible tells us "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife"'.¹⁷² She returned to this theme in other addresses and extolled the importance of public prayer, 'as especially blessed'.¹⁷³ Setting an example here was one way the MU member could exert a moral influence and contribute to a 'national reformation of life and morals'.¹⁷⁴ Mothers were (for example) exhorted to restrain the public behaviour of their children and to exercise civic responsibility by alerting school teachers to rude behaviour. They were also urged to encourage temperance and to avoid gossip.¹⁷⁵ Mary Sumner used her eulogy of Mrs Wordsworth (a GFS Activist and wife of the Bishop of Salisbury) as an occasion for asserting the contribution of

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Mary Sumner, 'What Is the Mothers Union?' (London: Gardner Darton and Co, n.d. surmised after 1896).

¹⁷⁰ 'Founding', *Home Life*, 10; Object of the Mothers' Union 2.

¹⁷¹ *Home Life*, 10. Objects of the Mothers' Union 3.

¹⁷² 'Marriage 2', 21, 22.

¹⁷³ 'Churchgoing', *Home Life*. 117-126. 126. 'Very often a church going wife makes a churchgoing husband'; 'Prayer', *Home Life*. 106.

¹⁷⁴ *Home Life*, 9.

¹⁷⁵ 'Purity', 45, 46; 'Words', *Home Life*. 49-59. 59.

homemakers to the wider common good: 'She held firmly to the belief that to touch the life of the community at large, it was absolutely necessary to begin with the home and to influence the wife and mother'.¹⁷⁶ The MU drew on the tradition of philanthropic patronage exercised by 'ladies' to social subordinates in the same way (and frequently via the same personnel) as the GFS. It also sought, (again like the GFS), to assert the significance of the contribution of members upholding the standards of womanhood espoused by the organisation.

Mary Sumner evoked a sense of missionary identity for the society and its members by identifying mothers as workers for a religious cause, through comments in her writing, in committee minutes and in material published in the *MUJ*. The minutes of a diocesan MU Council Meeting, in 1898, recorded that: 'Members of every class should feel that they are workers for the Mothers' Union both inside and outside their homes by their influence and example'.¹⁷⁷ In a letter to an overseas president, Mary Sumner was even more explicit: 'We must get the members of our Mothers' Union to act as missionaries amongst their relations and friends, helping to bring the Christian life into the darkened homes where as yet our dear Lord is not loved and honoured'.¹⁷⁸

The Mothers' Union in the field of philanthropic organisations 'at home'

Mary Sumner considered the MU as essentially a spiritual society, distinguished by the three 'Objects', but upholding these were seen to achieve practical improvements. Writing in the *MUJ*, Mary Sumner quoted an Associate correspondent: 'The whole of my neighbourhood has been raised since we started a Mothers' Union'.¹⁷⁹ In her undated leaflet, *What is the Mothers' Union?* Mary Sumner justified the MU in the populous field of other philanthropic initiatives:

How does the Mothers' Union affect the success of other societies and organizations - it is at the root of every one of them - if home life is good

¹⁷⁶In Memoriam Mrs Wordsworth', *MIC*, No. 16 October 1894, 202.

¹⁷⁷WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', Council Meeting at The Close 15 Nov. 1898.

¹⁷⁸Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 41.

¹⁷⁹Mary Sumner, 'Hints to Associates', *MIC*, April 1891.

and the mother is a Christian woman - cruelty to children will be checked, morality will be taught (girls self-respect, boys chivalry and self-control) - kindness to animals inculcated.¹⁸⁰

The mission of the MU and its achievements were publicised in Church and philanthropic forums and via the press.¹⁸¹ MU workers and sympathisers, including Mary Sumner herself, Laura Ridding and Ellen Joyce, were a presence at Church Congresses¹⁸² and MU representatives also participated from 1895 in the conferences of the National Union of Women Workers (NUWW).¹⁸³ Mary Sumner contributed her paper 'The Responsibilities of Mothers' to Baroness Burdett-Coutts' 1893 compendium of writing on diverse aspects of women's philanthropic work, 'Woman's Mission Congress Papers'.¹⁸⁴ Field manoeuvres also sought to secure transnational recognition for the MU. In November 1917, Miss Lucy Soulsby represented the MU at the International Congress of the World's Purity Federation in Kentucky.¹⁸⁵

Mary Sumner used her personal influence to keep MU workers active. In a letter to Mrs Sharpe, a local Branch President she wrote:

I should be so glad if you could tell me personally what has been done in your branch... meetings held ... any fresh members... it is vital that there should be weekly or fortnightly religious meetings held for Bible and Prayer

¹⁸⁰'What Is the Mothers Union?': HRO 38M499/E7/106, surmised date after 1895.

¹⁸¹*Letters to Mrs Maude*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/4, 8 April 1915; Beatrice Temple, E., Mary Sumner, E. and Eleanor Chute, J., 'Letters to the Editor - Women Workers for India', *The Times*, 27 Sep. 1907; Anon, 'Record of Events Report of the Church Congress at Hull'; 'Leading Societies and Their Work: The Mothers' Union', *Hearth and Home an Illustrated Weekly Journal for Gentlewomen*, 28 Jan. 1892; Yonge, 'Conversation on the Mothers' Union'.

¹⁸²Sumner, 'Paper Read at the Church Congress in Hull 1890'; Ridding, 'Guardianship of Working Girls'; WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910.' Report from Mrs Joyce on the Rhyl Church Conference women's work for women section, 29 Nov. 1891.

¹⁸³'Minute Book 1886-1910,' 4 Oct. 1895. The NUWW was instigated by Emily Janes, its first President was Louise Creighton an activist in the GFS and MU and Laura Ridding was its President 1909-1911; Lady Laura Ridding, *The Early Days of the National Union of Women Workers*, Selborne Papers: HRO 9/M68/73/53. Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 176-177. The National Union of Women Workers was a forum for women's philanthropic groups (including the MU and GFS). It asserted the contribution of this 'work' to the nation. Bush draws attention to the number of ladies active in the pro-Imperial Victoria League, Primrose League and BWEA who took leadership positions in the NUWW. She notes amongst others, Maude Selborne (Laura Ridding's sister-in-law), Frances Balfour, Edith Lytton, Millicent Fawcett and Lady Frederick Cavendish. See Appendix 2 Female Imperial Networks.

¹⁸⁴Burdett-Coutts, *Woman's Mission*.

¹⁸⁵Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 141.

book teaching for members and any other mothers they can bring with them.¹⁸⁶

She was defensive of the MU's identity and position as the Anglican organisation for mothers. The Winchester Diocesan Committee resolved that, 'it was not advisable to affiliate a Mothers' League which has been started in one part of Bournemouth'.¹⁸⁷ Mary Sumner asserted the distinctiveness of her organisation from the GFS: 'We are an entirely separate Society'.¹⁸⁸ The suggestion in the *Church Family Newspaper* that there should be an additional Church organisation for women drew a strong reaction.¹⁸⁹ In a 1915 letter to Lady Chichester (MU president 1910-16), Mary Sumner wrote: 'I do trust you will stop another society [...] the pamphlets [enclosed] are likely to convince Mr Corbett against the fresh society proposed'.¹⁹⁰ She repeated these sentiments to Mrs Maude, the central secretary of the MU: 'I do trust the Mothers' Union is not going to unite with other leagues and clubs'.¹⁹¹ However collaboration with other organisations sympathetic to the MU's agenda of social and moral reform was also an aspect of MU field manoeuvres (see *Figure 4* below).¹⁹² The Southwell Women's League, started by Mary Sumner's friend Laura Ridding, was given a dispensation to use the MU prayer.¹⁹³

Although distinct from the GFS, the MU did have a close relationship with it: GFS girls were likely after marriage to form the constituency of MU membership. The MU drew on the expertise of the GFS. MU members were to be warned of the dangers posed by unscrupulous employment registries to their daughters and the GFS Registry Office list was suggested as suitable. The organisations collaborated

¹⁸⁶Mary Sumner, *Letter Mrs Sharme* 22 Aug. 1915: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5. Ellipsis as source.

¹⁸⁷WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', 8 Nov. 1893: HRO 45M85/C2/1.

¹⁸⁸Sumner, 'Letter Concerning Misconceptions on the Mothers' Union'.

¹⁸⁹Princess Christian of Schleswig Holstein, *Letter to Mrs Sumner*, n.d.: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/6. Princes Christian asks for clarification as to why Mr Corbett's views are 'so objectionable'.

¹⁹⁰Sumner, 'Letters to Lady Chichester', 26 July 1915.

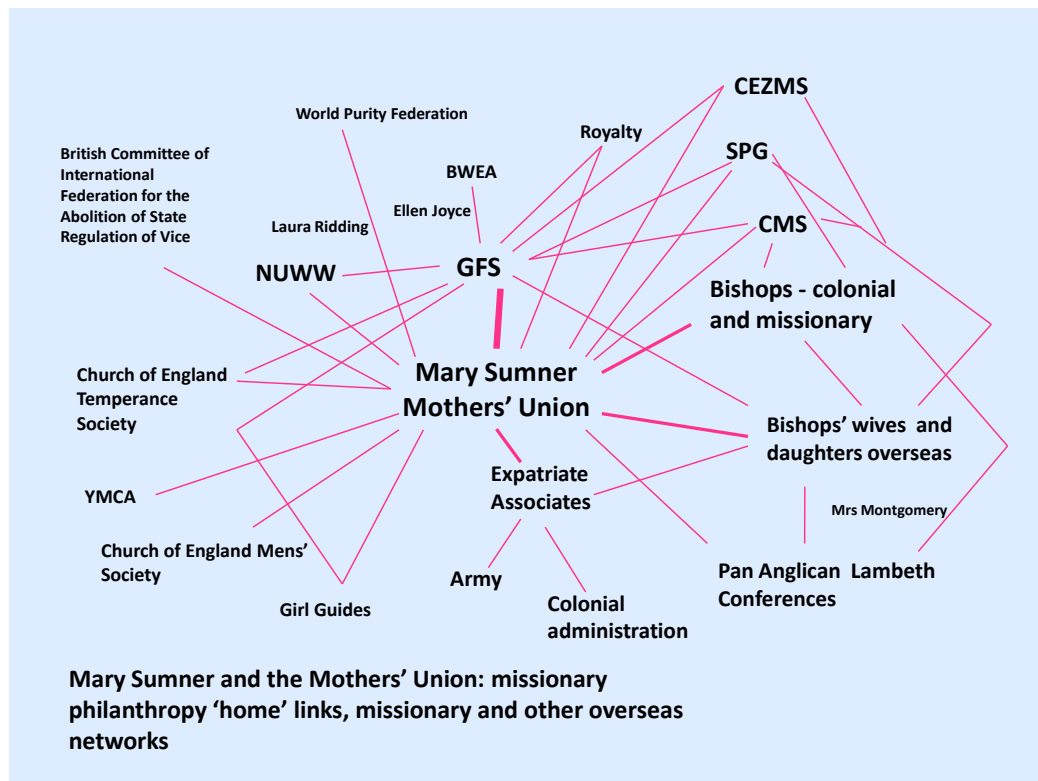
¹⁹¹'Letters to Mrs Maude', 8 April 1915.

¹⁹²C.B. Mayne, *Letters from the British Committte of International Federation for the Abolition of State Regulation of Vice*, 22 July, 25 July 1919: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/4.

¹⁹³WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', MU Council Meeting 26 November 1890. As a married woman without children Lady Laura Ridding could not comfortably lead a branch of the MU. Her solution was the Southwell Women's League, which had similar religious aims to the MU.

in seeking state regulation of employment registries.¹⁹⁴ As noted in the previous chapter, the MU and GFS were united in protesting against easier facilities for divorce,¹⁹⁵ and issued a joint ‘Protest’ in opposition to a proposed legislation to allow marriage to the sister of a deceased wife.¹⁹⁶ In 1914 the MU in cooperation with the GFS appointed a moral ‘Vigilance Worker’ for Ireland.¹⁹⁷

Figure 4: Mary Sumner’s Mission Network Connections



The MU is compatible with Twell’s category of missionary philanthropy in that its aims and practices were evangelical. Mary Sumner intended that the MU should promote the witness of faith.¹⁹⁸ Mothers should act to ‘influence’ public opinion and conduct towards standards of behaviour sanctioned by the Church.¹⁹⁹ As the previous chapter noted, the MU as a religious mass organisation achieved a prominent position in the contested field of religion, notably in the dominant sub field of Anglicanism, where Anglican women workers were recognised as

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., November 1898.

¹⁹⁵ See previous chapter Section 3.5 and 3.7.

¹⁹⁶ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 112.

¹⁹⁷ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 170.

¹⁹⁸ MU Object Three; *Home Life*, 10.

¹⁹⁹ Sumner, *Home Life*, 139-140.

supportive of the Church in the context of pressure from secularisation and rival denominations. The MU also achieved recognition in relation to other organisations in the (frequently related and overlapping) field of philanthropy.

Mary Sumner: fields and power; the Mothers' Union; missionary organisations; colonies and contact zones; Church and empire

Missionary identities and inspiration linking home and overseas

Mary Sumner, through the MU, was responsive to the extension and reconfiguration of fields in colonies and empire and to the perception of that expansion in the British metropole. The MU's expansion overseas was associated with the dispersal of women of the social and religious allegiance from which MU Associates were drawn (see *Figure 4*). This was associated with the presence of the armed forces, the outreach of the Church in colonies, imperial dominions, or in areas of missionary endeavour and emigrant destinations. In 1914, MU literature was being provided for emigrant passengers on the ships of the White Star and Cunard lines.²⁰⁰ According to Moyse, the initial focus of MU mission was to promote the upholding of Christian values amongst expatriate mothers, such as soldiers' wives. The initiative of individual activists in starting branches overseas was, as at home, significant.²⁰¹ The first individual overseas branches were established in the white settler colonies of Canada (Ontario) and New Zealand (Christchurch) in 1888.²⁰² In 1891, Mary Sumner claimed branches for expatriates in India, Africa, Tasmania and Australia.²⁰³ By 1895, the MU was organised in Ceylon. Following the central organization of the MU in 1896, an Overseas Committee was established and it was at this time that the first branches for indigenous (rather than expatriate) members were initiated in Hong Kong and India.²⁰⁴ The first conference of overseas members was in 1897.²⁰⁵ In 1899, the

²⁰⁰Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 133.

²⁰¹Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 80.

²⁰²Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 111.

²⁰³Mrs Malden, 'Wanted: Some Educated Mothers', *MIC* October 1892, January 1891, 5.

²⁰⁴Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 84.

²⁰⁵Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 41.

West Indies, Japan, Cairo, Malta and South America had MU organisation.²⁰⁶ The end of the South African 'Boer' War in 1902 was the catalyst for attempts at reconstruction in South Africa that raised questions about the conduct of colonial rule and the negotiation of 'race'. It also stimulated popular enthusiasm for and awareness of, the imperial project. It was in this year that the MU was first organised in South Africa, but as Laura Ridding observed during her 1908 tour, branches were racially segregated.²⁰⁷

As in the GFS, the field manoeuvres to extend the MU overseas also served to support the society 'at home'. The theme of connecting 'home' and overseas runs through MU literature, corporate practice and the personal networking of Mary Sumner (and other members). MU members were to see themselves as part of a network connected by their allegiance as Christian women. The Winchester Diocesan Council passed a resolution to request 'friends going to South Africa to become members before they go and to start branches on their arrival'. The resolution was proposed by Mrs Chute and seconded by Mrs Joyce, who were both prominent in the GFS and in the case of Ellen Joyce (as previously noted), the promoter of emigration.²⁰⁸ The network offered channels of communication whereby intelligence from overseas ventures could be relayed 'home' and 'home' news and values exported. The practice of twinning a 'home' and overseas branch began to develop. In 1915, Mary Sumner wrote to the MU secretary, Mrs Maude, concerning a letter she had received:

... from a branch called Sumner in New Zealand asking me if they could be linked with a Home Branch connected with me personally. I wrote to Mrs Preston [Old Alresford] asking if it were possible [...] are there any special forms or papers when a Home Branch is just linked with a foreign one?²⁰⁹

The MU magazines were an important networking medium for providing members, especially those separated by distance, with a sense of contact and unity of purpose. The *MUJ* (for ordinary members) included references to missionary activity in reports from branches such as the 'interesting address by Miss O'Connor a medical missionary' given at Rochester and the 'lantern

²⁰⁶Ibid., 36.

²⁰⁷Ibid.

²⁰⁸WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', 25 June 1901.

²⁰⁹Sumner, 'Letters to Mrs Maude', 13 Feb. 1915.

entertainment' on 'The Mothers' Union in Many Lands' with which the Reverend Miller had entertained the Manchester branch.²¹⁰ Reports also came from branches overseas. The January 1908 edition featured reports from South Africa, India and the West Indies, illustrating that MU lantern slides were used as an aid to recruitment. In India back copies of the *MUJ* were 'so much appreciated by soldiers' wives'.²¹¹ In 1917, *Mothers in Australia* was started but according to Porter (writing in 1921) 'many members however, especially those not long from their home country still take the *MUJ*'.²¹²

MIC (for 'educated' members) also featured reports from overseas including from the organisers of army branches.²¹³ A report from the MU in New Zealand hoped that 'the Union may be especially useful in the colony in helping to keep up family ties'.²¹⁴ *MIC* readers were also given news relating to overseas and mission themes such as the report of Mrs Bishop's (Isabella Bird) address, 'Home Life in Foreign Countries'. It asserted that although women in Asia (Japan, China and India) had little status, European influence, without high Christian standards, was corrupting to indigenous people, a view in accord with Mary Sumner's position.²¹⁵ Later the formal involvement of the MU in work with missionary organisations was also reported. Letters to Mary Sumner from Miss King, the SPG missionary and MU worker, featured in 1906, 1909, 1910 and 1912 editions.²¹⁶ As in the GFS, accounts of missionary success emphasised the joyfulness and simplicity of the faith of converts. One of Gertrude King's 'dear old ladies preparing for Holy Baptism [...] was disappointed after her first class because she had not been confirmed', but commented 'my heart will ascend to God'. Gertrude King noted: 'It is wonderful to see their faces change as they grow nearer the realities of the faith.'²¹⁷

²¹⁰ *MUJ*, January 1901, 23,22.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, January 1908, 7-8.

²¹² Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 144.

²¹³ *MIC*, January 1893, 57.

²¹⁴ *MIC*, October 1892, 190.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, January 1893, 249. In 1899 she addressed MU central conference on similar themes. See Moyse, 82. See also Appendix 2

²¹⁶ Gertrude King, 'Reports from Miss King in Madagascar', *MIC*, October 1906, 253; January 1909, 49; January 1910, 58-59; October 1912, 248.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, January 1910, 57-58.

Missionary activity overseas was also drawn upon to inspire activism and create a sense of missionary identity 'at home'. Mrs Malden's article, 'Wanted: Some Educated Mothers' catalogued the good work of 'bands of mothers over the Empress Queen's Dominions', before asserting the need for more Associates 'at home'.²¹⁸ In the October 1898, edition Mary Sumner advocated support for missions by prayer and subscription and also suggested that MU members might be mission workers themselves.²¹⁹

Missionary exploits were also featured in the stories that appeared in the *MUJ* to signal what the MU considered to be desirable attributes. The October 1902 edition recounted 'a true story of missionary work in prison' and the heroism of missionaries in upholding religious values in adversity was referred to in the story 'Mother's' Teaching'.²²⁰ 'The Missionary Mother' recounted the story of a 'poor tired Mother' who takes her son, as a treat, to hear a missionary speaker. The boy is inspired and overcomes many difficulties to achieve his dream of becoming a missionary in China. After winning many converts and plaudits from his Bishop, he succumbs to martyrdom (during the Boxer uprising); leaving his mother to be comforted by the thought of the great work he did for God and the anticipation of reunion in heaven.²²¹

Field manoeuvres: support for missionaries; links with missionary organisations

Support for missions was a way to demonstrate Christian virtues through philanthropy and the promotion of the faith. It was also a way to indicate concern for and difference from those considered to fall within a 'deficit' category. Mary Sumner's enthusiasm for the work of overseas missions as expressed in her travel diary, *Our Holiday in the East* and affirmed by her experiences in Algeria in 1892/3,²²² was reflected in an 1898 Winchester Diocesan MU Committee resolution:

²¹⁸ Mrs Malden, 'Wanted: Some Educated Mothers.' *MIC*, October 1892, 263.

²¹⁹ Mary Sumner, *MIC*, October 1898, 211-213.

²²⁰ *MUJ*, October 1902, 84; April 1901, 27.

²²¹ *MUJ*, October 1901, 78-85.

²²² *Our Holiday; Memoir of George Sumner*, Chapter X, Buxton and Algiers.

That it would be well to bring before members the duty of the Mothers' Union to help in sending women medical missionaries to try to raise home life in Zenanas and harems – It is strongly agreed that Mothers' Union members support Mission Zenana work through the SPG or Church of England Zenana Society.²²³

The MU and GFS jointly provided funding for workers to support their organisations and parochial work in several districts and Mary Sumner fostered network contacts with 'GFS ladies who are speaking for the Mothers' Union in India, so that they might join the Mothers' Union as Associates'.²²⁴ In 1907, Mary Sumner wrote jointly to *The Times*, with Eleanor Chute of the GFS and Beatrice E. Temple of the SPG, detailing the existing collaboration between the societies. The article canvassed lady volunteers of means, 'as full stipends cannot be paid', to contribute to nurturing the faith of expatriate and converted women. Whilst Mary Sumner and her co-authors noted that: it 'was not direct missionary work', it was 'work for the Master' and the letter claimed that: 'The uplifting of the tone of those who are representative of the Christian religion in a heathen country must tend to the spread of the Gospel of Christ'.²²⁵

The MU, working in collaboration with the Anglican SPG, CMS and CEZMS, provided further financial support for an increasing number of what were referred to as mission workers, thereby contributing to the recognition of the contribution of women in the field of mission. The MU's Overseas Department dealt with 'the vast amount of correspondence' from overseas and was a conduit for passing on missionary news to the MU membership.²²⁶ The earliest MU African Branch for indigenous women was instigated by Miss Gertrude King, circa 1901, in the French colony of Madagascar.²²⁷ From 1909, Miss Rix, at the request of the SPG, was supported by the MU in work in Southern India and Miss Davis, a worker under the direction of the CMS, 'beloved by many hundreds of friends and supporters both at home and in southern India', was appointed in 1913. Miss Loader, a worker in China amongst Christian converts was also supported.²²⁸ In 1918, a third

²²³WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910,' 24 Feb. 1898.

²²⁴Mary Sumner, *Letter to Lady Horatia Erskine* 14 Sep. 1906: LPL MU BOX 452/4.

²²⁵Temple, Sumner and Chute, 'Letters to the Editor - Women Workers for India'.

²²⁶Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years*, 30.

²²⁷Gertrude King, *Letters to Mary Sumner*: LPL MU/OS/5/13/08, 25 March 1902.

²²⁸Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 130.

worker for India was funded. Miss Gibson of the CEZMS was appointed to work specially for the MU and 'endeared herself and her work to many MU members during her furlough in England - a time that was much prolonged owing to her illness'.²²⁹ In 1920, Miss Norah Short was appointed to work with railway workers and their families in Southern Africa and by 1925, 'six Mothers' Union Workers were wholly maintained by our overseas fund'.²³⁰

Mary Sumner (like Charlotte Yonge) demonstrated her endorsement of overseas work through financial donations.²³¹ The 'Buttress Fund' established as a memorial to George Sumner and subscribed to by members from overseas, provided a surplus of £250 which Mary Sumner donated to 'overseas work' in 1915.²³²

Mary Sumner field manoeuvres: networking overseas, the mother of the Mothers' Union, attitudes to indigenous members

Just as the Queen Empress embodied the empire, Mary Sumner personified the MU. Porter, Woodward and Erskine eulogised 'Mrs Sumner's part in the world wide extension of the MU [through] her personal share by her pen, by her prayers and by that true mother's love that went out to all the daughter branches of her beloved union in far off lands'.²³³ The field manoeuvre of networking that Mary Sumner deployed to promote the organisation included giving influential workers and rank and file members a sense that they were remembered and valued by 'the Foundress'. This 1917 letter to Mrs Crawford from Adelaide is typical of Mary Sumner's approach in style and content (including the inclusion of leaflets):

Your letter has given me very great pleasure and I heartily thank you for your love and belief in our "Mothers' Union" - How thankful I am that you tell me that the union is strong in S. Australia! And will you give my heartfelt and affectionate Good Wishes when you write. I was so glad to be introduced to you at the dedication of our "Mary Sumner House" and I trust it will be the means of spreading our Christian faith in Hearts and Homes

²²⁹Ibid., 146.

²³⁰Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years*, 30.

²³¹Sumner, 'Letters to Lady Chichester'.

²³²Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years*, 31; Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 134; Sumner, 'Letters to Lady Chichester'.

²³³Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 36.

throughout our Nation and Empire [...] will you give my very special sympathy and love to the dear mothers in Adelaide Diocese who are sending their husbands and sons to fight with our home troops [...] I remember them daily in prayers and I feel God is blessing us in this Righteous war[...]Remember me to the Bishop of Stafford; will you accept a copy of my leaflet on religious education and one besides to give away?²³⁴

Three years later in 1920 (aged 91), she was still seeking to pursue overseas contacts and was 'anxious to get in touch with Bishops' wives who are coming from overseas for the Lambeth conference of Anglican Bishops'.²³⁵ The MU hosted its conference of overseas workers, many of whom were Diocesan Presidents, at the same time.²³⁶

Overseas members could identify with Mary Sumner as a celebrity. According to Porter, Woodward and Erskine, mementoes and anecdotes of Mary Sumner kept her 'linked with the loneliest member and the remotest branch'. New Zealand members appreciated 'photographs of Winchester Cathedral and particularly the one showing your own [Mary Sumner's] home'.²³⁷ An Australian Diocesan President, quoted by Porter, gives further testimony to Mary Sumner as representative of the organisation and a link with the 'mother country':

So many of our mothers lived in England once and some have been here quite a short time: and it is so touching the way they come up to me at meetings and tell me of the English Branch to which they belonged and how - in many cases they 'once' heard you speak or 'once' saw you.²³⁸

Links with members in colonial or other contact zones (such as China and Madagascar) emphasised the spatial construct of 'home' and distant places. As with the settler colonies, Mary Sumner's maternal personification of the organisation and personal touch was applied to indigenous members of the MU, as well as to expatriates nostalgic for the 'mother country'. Miss Rix from India noted that Mary Sumner's letter to mothers had been translated into Tamil.²³⁹

Correspondence between Mary Sumner and indigenous members is indicative of

²³⁴ Mary Sumner, *Letter to Mrs Crawford*, 19 June 1917, WDMU: HRO 145M85/A12; See also '*Letters to Mrs Maude*', 5 Aug. 1917, 'Mary Sumner would like to see the President of the Ottawa MU and asks for her address'.

²³⁵ '*Letters to Mrs Wilberforce*', 7 June 1920.

²³⁶ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 41.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

her 'maternalistic' attitude to non-white women and reflective of misrecognition of the legitimacy of a hierarchical stratification of 'race' and culture.²⁴⁰ The adoption of Christianity by indigenous people, in what were perceived from the British/English metropole as less civilized exotic locations, was for Mary Sumner an achievement to be celebrated.²⁴¹ 'Do you know I have 500 dear black daughters in Madagascar?'²⁴² The presentation of this material in her 1921 memoir and the account of the development of the MU are also affirmative that this was considered worthy of celebration and 'bringing home to' members. The MU branch established in Madagascar (then under French colonial rule) was notable as the earliest in Africa. It was started by Miss Gertrude King, the sister of the Bishop of Madagascar, working under the aegis of the SPG.²⁴³ Miss King corresponded with Mary Sumner via the Overseas Committee.²⁴⁴ Miss King's testimony is drawn on by Porter, Woodward and Erskine:

From the moment our foundress heard of the need of a Mothers' Union work in Madagascar, she took the Malagasy mother to her heart. Needless to say they idealised her and she became to them the embodiment of all that is highest and best in motherhood. Wonderful letters passed between them, Mrs Sumner always began, 'My dear daughters' and ended as 'your loving white mother'.²⁴⁵

The Malagasy mothers did not challenge Mary Sumner's assumption of parental authority, they replied to Mary Sumner's letter of welcome to the MU: 'We, your children, were very pleased to receive your letter of welcome into the Mothers'

²⁴⁰Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 140-141, 149. Moyse comments on the 'colonial mentality' of the MU leadership in the period 1910-1940 which she sees as reinforced by the insistence on monogamy, chastity and western notions of the nuclear family. She also notes: 'the different treatment of indigenous members on the basis that they were new to Christianity and, by implication, to civilized standards of female behaviour'.

²⁴¹Stanley, 'Church State and the Hierarchy of 'Civilization': The Making of the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910'. Stanley notes the acceptance without challenge of imperial power as a given and the embedded assumption of racial superiority and the categorisation of 'races' and cultures according to perceived degrees of 'civilization'.

²⁴²Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 37.

²⁴³Prevost, *Communion of Women*, 123-155, Chapter 'Christianising Womanhood in Madagascar'. Prevost notes that Malagasy mothers were encouraged to evangelise their faith and act as role models for other mothers with recruitment in mind in a way similar to the expectations of English members. This also accords with the onus placed on GFS girls to exemplify a moral standard and encourage faith by example. Prevost considers that the MU engagement in Madagascar under Miss King enlarged the status, opportunity and authority of women in missionary work.

²⁴⁴King, 'Letters to Mary Sumner'.

²⁴⁵Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 37; for references to 'child like natives' see *Our Holiday*, 108, 215, 278.

Union'.²⁴⁶ Porter, Woodward and Erskine include further references to appreciation of Mary Sumner as a figure of maternal authority. Chinese members wrote:

We feel it was God's grace that you were allowed to begin such a Union, thus showing your great love to the little, little children of China and by this means also to teach us women of China good methods of carefully bringing up and educating our children – a work beyond our human strength (divine help needed).²⁴⁷

The evocation of a parent child relationship and difference in colour was not only evoked by Mary Sumner. Following the themes of gratitude Porter, Woodward and Erskine recorded that following the 1914-18 war:

Touching presents of money came also from native and coloured members in South Africa for fellow members at home, to convey, in the gift-language of the child-races, their sympathy for white mothers in the bereavements of war.²⁴⁸

Mary Sumner, the Mothers' Union, empire and the Church overseas

The MU's overseas development was bound together with the growth of Empire. Its spread was frequently initiated by women with spouses associated with the enforcement of imperial rule via the army. It was also associated with women close to authority in imperial government, such as Lady Victoria Buxton, wife of the Governor of South Australia, an instigator of the Adelaide MU and the Countess of Glasgow, the wife of the Governor General of New Zealand.²⁴⁹ The MU (like the GFS) was a patriotic organisation. Its establishment of a central constitution in 1896 gave the society national identity. The MU had royal patronage from 1897. Until 1901, this was in the maternal figure of the Queen Empress, who singularly personified head of state and head of Church. For Mary Sumner (and others in her network), Christianity and nation were synonymous, as

²⁴⁶ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*. 38.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 144.

²⁴⁹ Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 80. Mothers' Union Handbook and Central Report 1897, 50, 56.

were whiteness (with Englishness prioritised) and cultural superiority.²⁵⁰ Imperial rule was justified as Christian mission and the articulation of this as the obligation of the enlightened towards those in 'darkness' illustrated the appropriation of legitimising religious language.²⁵¹ The Queen as maternal icon and the rhetoric of the 'mother country' were drawn on to identify and assert the contribution of mothers to the imperial project.²⁵² If, as Mary Sumner asserted, 'Eastern races' were 'paralysed by ignorance' and the 'advance of the nation greatly depended on the domestic life and personal influence of the mother', Christian mothers had much to contribute to the empire as exemplars of desirable standards.²⁵³

Mary Sumner was convinced of the superiority of the 'sterling purity of British Character, a character on which our national prosperity has been built'.²⁵⁴ She wrote: 'As a nation we pride ourselves on our truthfulness and not without reason. An Englishman's word is held to be sacred and men trust us.'²⁵⁵ She 'believed that: 'the English home was said to be model for the world'.²⁵⁶ For Mary Sumner, laudable 'English' characteristics were attributable to the religious identity of the nation and were the rationale for imperial rule. This ideal needed to be upheld.²⁵⁷ Mary Sumner exhorted '*all* [italics as source] English women' to set an example of the highest standards of Christian behaviour. She saw this as important because the English reputation and therefore the moral legitimacy of imperial rule were at stake.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁰Bush notes Cecil Rhodes, Charles Dilke, J.R Seeley, Alfred Milner and Joseph Chamberlain as key imperial propagandists, see *Edwardian Ladies*, 1, 107-110. 'Intrinsic to the imperial outlook was a self definition of the British (often, interchangeably 'Englishmen') as a peculiarly gifted race with an insatiable need to exercise their colonizing genius for the benefit of less fortunate others'. Bush also notes the 'gradual elision of racial and national identities. Anglo-Saxons were assumed to be British and indeed usually English'. She also draws attention to notions of racial hierarchy related to social Darwinism and Eugenics.

²⁵¹*Memoir of George Sumner*, 50-51, 93; Money, *History*, 57; Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 70, 71, 76; Lady Laura Ridding, *The Call of Empire*, Selborne Papers: HRO 9M68/73/14; Bourdieu, 'Authorised Language'.

²⁵²Moyse, *History*, 80-86; Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 69.

²⁵³Mary Sumner, 'Secular Education', *MIC* October 1894.

²⁵⁴Sumner, Erskine and Wilberforce, 'Letter to the Editor *The Times*, 'Undesirable Literature'.

²⁵⁵Sumner, 'Truth', 41; See Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 105-110.

²⁵⁶'The Home.'

²⁵⁷'A Mother's Greatest Duty', 22.

²⁵⁸*Memoir of George Sumner*, 51-52.

The South African War of 1899-1902 was significant for the MU, GFS and other women's organisations in serving to focus enquiry into South Africa, raise questions concerning racial coexistence and to engender enthusiasm for Empire.²⁵⁹ In 1902, the year of British victory and the coronation of Edward VII, the MU signalled its imperial identity with an amendment to its second object. The words 'the Empire' were substituted for 'England' so that it read: 'To awaken in mothers a sense of their great responsibility as mothers in the training of their boys and girls (the future fathers and mothers of Empire)'. In 1904, Mary Sumner claimed at the MU Central Council that the organisation was a presence in nearly every British colony.²⁶⁰ In the MU Handbook and Central Report of the same year (p30-41) Mrs Philip's account of her mission to South Africa averred that the MU had an imperial mission.²⁶¹ MU (and GFS) activist Laura Ridding, a supporter of the 1903 South African Colonisation Society (SACS), undertook an extended tour of South Africa in 1908.²⁶² While there, she kept a notebook which included reflections on social and educational issues and 'the native problem'.²⁶³ In her 1909 paper, 'The Call of the Empire' she asserted an aspirational vision of empire and explained the virtues of empire and women's role in it,²⁶⁴ an ideal not matched by the realities of colonial rule in the recent South African conflict, nor in other parts of the empire.²⁶⁵ For Laura Ridding, the empire should be 'a federation of free peoples under one flag or crown governed by their willing consent' and she considered that: 'the British government was the only one which stands for freedom for native races'.²⁶⁶ While subscribing to Christian notions of spiritual inclusiveness, she was less certain about temporal equality. She noted the failure of the MU to engage with coloured and native girls, a failure she attributed to the low standard of morals amongst the indigenous people and to the reluctance of

²⁵⁹See Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, for details of The Victoria League and South African Colonisation Society.

²⁶⁰Lancaster, *A Short History of the Mothers' Union*, 115.

²⁶¹Moyse, *History*, 82.

²⁶²Swaisland, *Servants and Gentlewomen*, 27.

²⁶³Lady Laura Ridding, *South African Note Book*, Selborne Papers: HRO 9M68/61, December 1908. See Appendix 1 for further details of Laura Ridding's activism and South African connections.

²⁶⁴Ridding, 'The Call of Empire'.

²⁶⁵A. N. Porter, *The Nineteenth Century: The Oxford History of the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). See for select examples Imperial India, 422-446; Southern Africa, 597-623; Australia and the Western Pacific, 546-572; Chapter 25 Southern Islands: New Zealand and Polynesia details conflict, resistance and dispossession despite colonization and colonialism 'being less brutal than some', 573.

²⁶⁶Ridding, 'The Call of Empire'.

whites to mix with them.²⁶⁷ Her notion of what constituted 'freedom for the native races' did not mean a rejection of notions of racial, cultural and social hierarchy. Her vision was of humane improving trusteeship and did not challenge the higher status conferred by whiteness.²⁶⁸ Laura Ridding also thought that the 'Call of the Empire' was 'to fulfil our special duty as women, to be guardians of the moral standard of the Empire'.²⁶⁹

The development of an imperial identity for the MU was associated with the overseas and imperial aspirations of the Anglican Church. MU and Anglican manoeuvres in the field of empire sought to expand their organisations and shared common religious aims. Mary Sumner canvassed the support of overseas bishops just as she had with bishops 'at home'.²⁷⁰ The 1897 Lambeth Conference, which gathered colonial and overseas bishops and their wives (several were MU Diocesan Presidents), was used by the MU as an occasion to advertise its presence overseas to an audience of clerics, as well as to the MU membership.²⁷¹

The Pan-Anglican Conference of 1908 provided the MU with the opportunity for a conspicuous demonstration of their allegiance to, and presence alongside, the Church overseas. The Conference had been instigated by the pro-imperial secretary of the SPG, Henry Montgomery, whose vision was of a worldwide imperial Anglican Church, inclusive of other 'races' but led by 'racially superior' Anglo-Saxons. He saw missionary work as a source of inspiration for this and a potentially unifying initiative in Anglicanism.²⁷² He had formerly been the Bishop of Tasmania (1889 and 1910), where his wife Maud had served as MU Diocesan

²⁶⁷Ridding, 'South African Note Book', 33; Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 113-114. Bush locates Ridding's view and anecdotes relating to fear of black men recorded in the note book in relation to a context of 'Black Peril scares' between 1893 and 1913.

²⁶⁸Andrew Ross, 'Christian Missions and the Mid-Nineteenth Century Change in Attitudes to Race: The African Experience', in *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions*, ed. Andrew Porter (Grand Rapids Michigan and Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 92. Ross notes trusteeship as the acceptance of responsibility for perceived 'lower races' who should be treated humanely as expressed in Kipling's poem 'The White Man's Burden.'

²⁶⁹Ridding, 'The Call of Empire'; Ridding's view of trusteeship on behalf of 'natives' replicates her attitude to those of lower social class. See 'Home Duties'.

²⁷⁰Sumner, 'Letter to Lady Horatia Erskine'.

²⁷¹Mrs Malden, 'Wanted: Some Educated Mothers', *MIC*, July 1897, 194-209.

²⁷²Maughan, 'Imperial Christianity? Bishop Montgomery and the Foreign Missions of the Church of England, 1895-1915'.

President.²⁷³ Mary Sumner and Lady Chichester joined Maud Montgomery on the Women's General Committee of the conference. Louise Creighton, also a MU official, was in the chair.²⁷⁴ In the autumn following the conference, the MU organised a mass meeting at the Albert Hall to which many wives of overseas delegates had been invited. Mary Sumner gave an address:

They had now nearly covered the Empire with their number of over a quarter-of-a-million members and associates and 6000 branches [...] besides that she was glad to say their objects and their rules had been translated into twelve different languages and they were winning a way in other countries.²⁷⁵

The inclusion of Mrs Oluwole, the 'wife of the African Bishop of Lagos', as a platform speaker was recorded as significant.²⁷⁶ Her speech noted:

... the deep appreciation felt by her fellow country women in Western Equatorial Africa for the Mothers' Union and of the help it brought to Christian mothers of every race and colour uniting them in an unbreakable bond of fellowship and prayer.²⁷⁷

It may also have been gratifying to the audience to hear the Bishop of the West Indies, speaking at a MU reception at Church House, say that: 'Nothing could be of greater use to his country and the colonies than the Mothers' Union'.²⁷⁸

The activity of missionaries was used to inspire, affirm identity and enhance authority in the metropole. Cooperation with Anglican Missionary Societies and the financial support of the pedagogic action of women missionary workers strengthened the identification of the MU (and its members) with the Church. Both the Church and the MU drew on imperial popularity and interest engendered in mission work to raise enthusiasm for their aims 'at home' and overseas. In locating itself as an imperial organisation, the MU was acting in accord with its patriotic identification with royalty and nation, an association with state power. Mary Sumner's attitudes to indigenous members of the MU, which

²⁷³ See appendix 2

²⁷⁴ MU members were strongly represented on the Women's General Committee of the Congress. Louise Creighton was in the chair, other members included Mary Sumner, Lady Chichester and two other MU Associates. Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 85.

²⁷⁵ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 113 .

²⁷⁶ *MIC*, October 1908, 74.

²⁷⁷ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 114-115.

²⁷⁸ *MIC*, October 1908, 93.

resonate in the views expressed in MU publications and by other MU activists, were maternalistic. Indigenous members were welcomed into the MU on the understanding that they misrecognised the imposition of the MU's gendered religious doxa as legitimate. In this and in the repeated use of colour and immaturity as signifiers of difference, Mary Sumner and others associated with the MU appear complicit with the assumption of whiteness as superior and associated with the possession of preferred cultural capital, in a hierarchical ordering of cultural attributes. The demonstration of and propagation of, perceived higher religious and cultural standards were asserted by the MU as a standard for 'Englishmen' and women to live up to and as legitimising imperial rule.

Conclusion: thinking with Bourdieu

Mary Sumner dispositions of habitus towards 'women's mission', missionary philanthropy and missionary activity

The previous chapter identified religion as a significant factor contributing to Mary Sumner's acquisition of habitus and informative of notions of desirable capital. Members of her kinship network upheld the prevailing (religious) doxa of the dominant social group in their allegiance to Anglicanism. Mary Sumner's wider social network was also Anglican and predominately clerical. The evangelical enthusiasm of the Sumners (which is also evident in the Heywood family) attached high symbolic capital value to the public witness of faith and action towards securing religious awakening or conversion of others. This religiously motivated intervention, which in Mary Sumner's kinship network was predominantly realised through philanthropic initiatives, designated here as missionary philanthropy, can be interpreted in Bourdieu's terms as pedagogic action.

Missionary philanthropy, as practised in Mary Sumner's kinship and wider social network, sought to impose the doxa of Anglicanism, the preferred doctrine within the cultural arbitrary imposed by the dominant group. It was pedagogic action, an instrument of symbolic violence, as it aimed to encourage conformity to approved

doxic standards and remediate the views and conduct of those perceived as deficient. Initially exercised in local space, towards household tenants and at parish level, this pedagogic action (located in a wider context of pedagogic work institutionally via the Church) extended spatially and organisationally to the support of, or participation in, missionary philanthropy. Deficiency concerned failure to conform to the cultural arbitrary of the dominant group, the group to which Mary Sumner and her kin claimed allegiance. Some deficiencies of capital were perceived of as particularly threatening to the cultural arbitrary upheld by Mary Sumner and her kin and were a stimulus for remediating pedagogic action. The missionary philanthropy of Mary Sumner's kinship and wider network aimed to remediate these infractions and thus were defensive of the doxa of the dominant cultural arbitrary, which they misrecognised as legitimate. Symbolic religious and social capital could be accrued from missionary philanthropy by men and women. Gendered notions of desirable womanly capital, informed by religious and social doxa allowed women sufficient capital to extend their 'women's mission' beyond the home to exercise pedagogic authority via missionary philanthropy.

Mary Sumner's responses to other Christian denominations and non-Christian religions encountered in 'the contact zone' demonstrate her complicity (in common with agents of similar habitus) with the doxic values of Anglicanism. She misrecognised the social, political and cultural attributes of 'Englishness', which the Anglican religious doxa informed, as superior. Possession of capital thus defined was assumed to give agents the pedagogic authority to assert the superiority of this capital over others perceived as deficient. This legitimised the symbolic violence perpetrated by the pedagogic work of missionaries. It also legitimised colonial rule, as long as the Anglican doxa was upheld. For Mary Sumner and those of similar habitus, complicit with the Anglican religious doxa, missionaries, perceived as pious, self-sacrificing and brave, were invested with high religious capital.

Mary Sumner capital and field manoeuvres

The symbolic capital Mary Sumner possessed by virtue of her social class and successful performance of her 'woman's mission' as mother and helpmeet to the Rector,²⁷⁹ allowed her to exercise pedagogic authority in parochial work. As a traveller in and published author on places associated with scripture, she was invested (amongst those of similar habitus) with symbolic religious and cultural capital. This enhanced her pedagogic authority by giving her an entitlement to speak from experience on the 'East'. She had sufficient capital to authorise her participation in organised missionary philanthropy in the CETS, although in the gendered area of the juvenile section. It is indicative of her capital assets that Mary Sumner was approached to be a 'Founding Associate' of the GFS. Her achievement of presidential office at diocesan level in the GFS (in the inaugural diocese of Winchester at a time when her husband was Archdeacon) was a measure of, and a source of, increasing capital. It was constitutive of a level of pedagogic authority upon which Mary Sumner drew to establish the MU and so claim the promotion of motherhood as a distinct category in the fields of philanthropy and the Anglican Church. Whilst cooperating with agents or groups that she felt might advance the position of the MU, she asserted its superiority over other organisations that might compromise its pre-eminent position.

Mary Sumner evoked religious missionary endeavour to dignify the role of mothers fulfilling their domestic 'women's mission' by associating it with the sacred, thus consecrating, the symbolic capital of motherhood. This served to assert the value of maternal capital in public and to members. By associating mothers with the work of missionaries, the MU offered for the white mother, the symbolic capital of identification with a cultural and 'civilizing' moral elite which evoked connotations of valorous endeavour and participation in work for God. For the non-white mother, the symbolic violence of conformity to the values of the dominant imperial/colonial power which prioritised Christian religion, 'western culture' and implicitly 'whiteness' as associated with 'civilization', education, socio-political maturity and equitable gender relations, was euphemised by fellowship and the inclusion in a moral elite with the promise of eternal salvation.

²⁷⁹A clerical husband with relatives of distinction in the field of the Anglican Church was a source of symbolic capital.

The direct sponsorship of women missionary workers by the MU and the GFS (sometimes in collaboration) in conjunction with Anglican missionary organisations was a direct intervention in the missionary field. Association with this proactive Church work was of benefit to the mission societies, the Anglican Church and to the MU and the GFS. It also affirmed the presence of the MU and the GFS in the field of the Anglican Church overseas by emphasising the presence of women as workers for God. It accrued capital for 'women workers' in colonial missions and served to affirm the worth of women workers in the CMS and SPG. It claimed capital for women engaged in missionary philanthropy and those working for Christian life in the home.

The Anglican Church also sought to consolidate its position in the religious field both 'at home' and further afield. Empire and contact zones were sites where preferred capital was contested and accumulated. As in the MU and GFS, missionary activity served the dual purpose of seeking to impose religious doxa in empire and contact zones but also of promoting allegiance to it 'at home'. In addition to drawing on missionary contact zones, Mary Sumner saw in settler colonies, an opportunity to extend the field position of the MU by securing wider membership and asserting its presence within and contribution to the Anglican Church overseas.

Mary Sumner, the Mothers Union, the Girls' Friendly Society, the Church and the imperial field of power

The previous chapter associated the notion of the field of power with the state and the ruler as symbolic of the nation. In this chapter the notion of the field of power is extended to reflect the overseas expansion of British domination encapsulated in the term empire. Empire was predicated on the perpetuation of the cultural arbitrary of British rule, which connects with assumptions of value, capital and legitimacy. It existed as an idea as well as an entity.

The economic, political and military circumstances conducive to British colonial expansion could be both rationalised and legitimised by asserting domination as a

'civilising' mission and claiming the superiority of the symbolic gifts, the 'civilization' and salvation it had to bestow on those complicit with its domination. Thus empire became associated, for those habituated to misrecognition of the cultural arbitrary imposed by British rule as legitimate, with positive notions of improvement and redemption. Mary Sumner and others in the MU and GFS, in common with authoritative agents within the Anglican Church, saw the upholding and propagation of religious standards as the legitimising rationale for imperial rule.²⁸⁰ Moves within the Established Anglican Church to position itself as an imperial church were also an assertion of position within the wider field of religion and an extension of the identification with state at power 'at home'.

Women's organisations, including the MU and the GFS, led by women with high social capital, played a significant part in the reproduction of the values of the dominant imperial power.²⁸¹ The legitimising of the imperial project was highly gendered. The chastity, moral sensibility and motherliness attributed to the Christian woman were asserted as exemplifying the superiority and benignity of English imperial rule. Christian English women were offered as examples of desirable capital to their 'sisters' in colonies and contact zones. This emphasis on motherliness and nurture served to euphemise the symbolic and actual violence perpetrated by imperial rule. The attribution of qualities such as fair play and chivalry to Christian ('English') manhood was similarly euphemising of domination.

Mary Sumner was confident that the doxa of the cultural arbitrary, to which she claimed allegiance and upheld, was valid transnationally and its capital superior, a superiority that was thought not only to justify attempts to impose it in extending spaces, countries and overseas, but made it a duty to do so. Assumptions of superiority based on 'race' were masked by attribution to perceived deficit in cultural and religious capital. Mary Sumner was complicit with the perpetration of symbolic violence towards indigenous people and non-Christian believers. The imperial doxa assumed a hierarchy of 'race' and culture, just as the women of Mary Sumner's habitus misrecognised class stratification as legitimate. Mary Sumner drew on the association with empire to enlarge the symbolic capital offered by the MU to its members. By associating themselves with the category of

²⁸⁰Bebbington, 'Atonement'.

²⁸¹See Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, for other women's imperial organisations.

Christian womanhood, in which 'white' and 'English' were preferred qualities, MU members in the metropole were encouraged to feel a sense of participation in the empire as exemplars of benign rule.

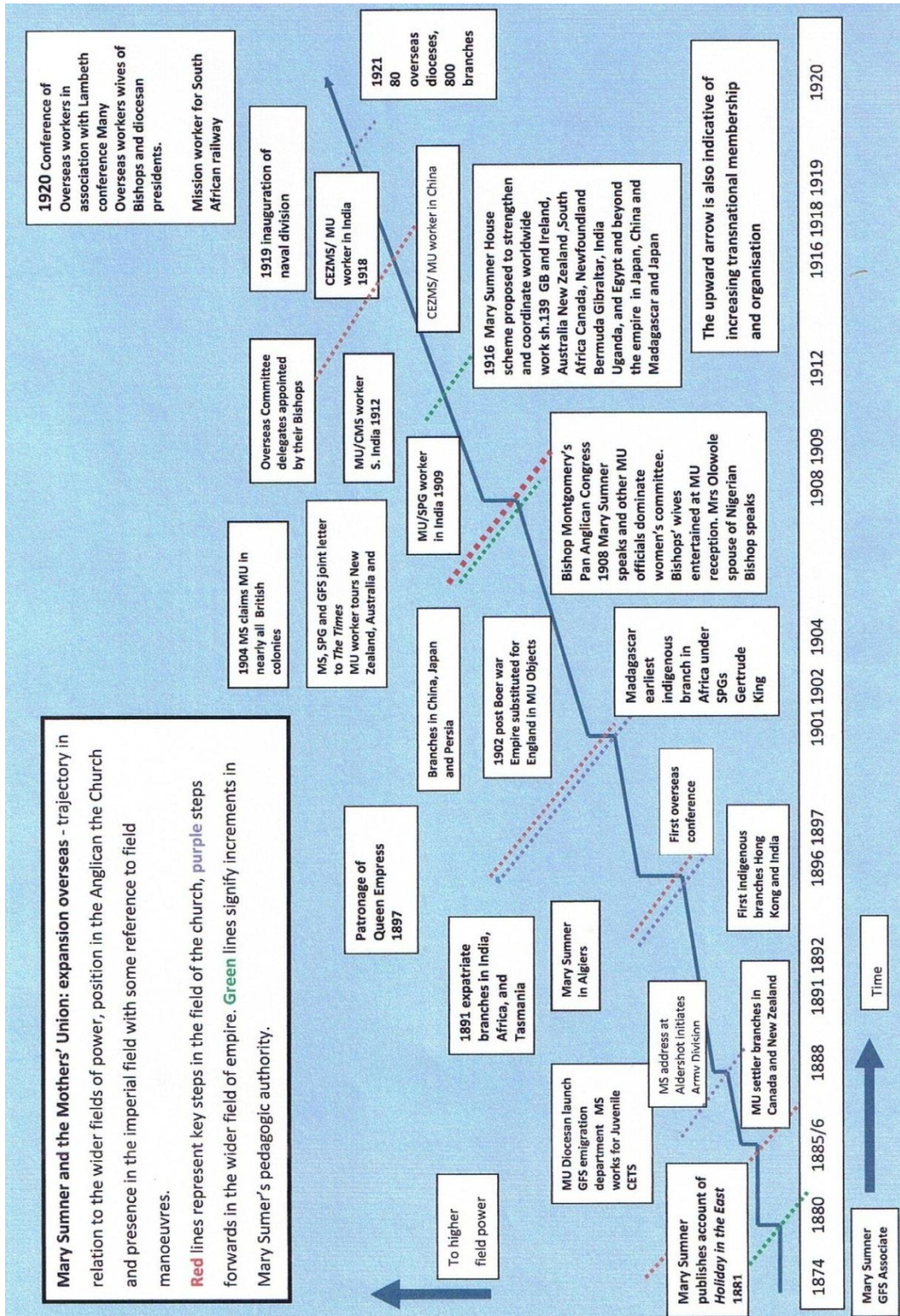
Despite assertion of the universality of motherhood and the worth of maternal capital, the MU was only inclusive of women of 'lesser' non-white 'race' if they were apparently complicit with the values of the white English Christian 'civilized' dominant cultural arbitrary. The MU was an instrument of domination as its pedagogic work and the pedagogic action of its agents, notably Mary Sumner, enacted symbolic violence by seeking to reproduce the dominant arbitrary by securing the mis/recognition of its legitimacy.

Work associated with empire could be, for women of Mary Sumner's network and similar habitus, a means of enhancing symbolic capital and exercising pedagogic authority. Association with the agencies of imperialism served as an opportunity for women leaders to accrue capital as experts in a field. This was notably the case in the GFS which was consulted by imperial government on matters relating to emigration and employment.

The MU's enhancement of women's capital through association with empire is less tangible but it did gain position in the imperial field by securing a presence all over and beyond the empire, thus making women visible. This served to identify mothers as citizens and contributors to the imperial project. The MU and the GFS gave specific opportunities for mission workers and contributed towards the normalisation of women as missionaries in their own right, rather than as missionary wives or associate workers. Through her association with the work of missionaries, the Church overseas, colonial settlement and the empire as an ideal, as illustrated in *Figure 5 Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union expansion in overseas fields* Mary Sumner secured her authority and the prominent position of her organisation, within the fields of philanthropy and the Anglican Church. She could also claim to have placed her organisation in the field of religion worldwide, where by virtue of mass membership, it could claim a high field position. In achieving recognition as the personification of the organisation that she founded

by hundreds of thousands of women worldwide, Mary Sumner could claim considerable capital.

Figure 5: Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union Expansion in Fields Overseas



Chapter 5 - Mary Sumner and Education

Introduction

Mary Sumner's life (1828-1921) and the inception and growth of the MU (from 1876) occurred at a time when educational provision expanded and reformed in ways that were contested. It was also a period in which the understanding of childhood was subject to change.¹ Mary Sumner's activism, via the MU, relates to key themes in education, the contest for power in the educational field between the Established Anglican Church, other denominations and the state and the development of mass elementary education. Her advocacy for the home as a site of religious education and the mother as a religious educator also occurred in the context of expansion in the provision of schooling for middle and upper-class girls and the articulation of aspirations for higher education amongst women. This involved the negotiation of gendered identities and roles and the negotiation of contingent curricula deemed to be appropriate.² The expansion of professional and voluntary roles for women within the sphere of education, whether as mistresses in middle-class schools, elementary teachers or as philanthropic 'workers' and members of school boards,³ was related to women's increasing pedagogic authority and thus bound up in the negotiation of the purpose and practice of women's education.⁴ These issues can be located against a context of increasing literacy and mass print communication, in which media were used to assert contested orthodoxies of religious and secular doxa.⁵

This chapter analyses Mary Sumner's negotiation of constraint and agency and her position vis-à-vis the reproduction and transaction of power in relation to education. The chapter will begin with a focus on habitus. Mary Sumner will be

¹Wardle, *English Popular Education*, 97-98; John Lawson and Harold Silver, *A Social History of Education in England*, (London: Methuen, 1978), 353-357.

²Sara Delamont, 'The Contradictions in Ladies' Education', in *The Nineteenth-Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World*, ed. Sara Delamont and Lorna Duffin (London: Croom Helm, 1978).

³Patricia Hollis, *Ladies Elect: Women in English Local Government, 1865-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987).

⁴Burstyn, *Victorian Education*; Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up*; Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*.

⁵Lawson and Silver, *A Social History of Education*, 278, 279; Delamont, 'The Nineteenth Century Woman'.

located in relation to her experiences amongst her kinship network in her childhood and earlier married life. The chapter will then move outwards to consider her wider network. Attention will be given to attitudes to childhood, women's education, women as educators and notions of capital as defined in the contested field of religious education within which members of her kinship and social network manoeuvred. The contextual circumstances that framed these manoeuvres are noted as they are considered formative of Mary Sumner's educational habitus, horizons of possibility and notions of capital in relation to education mediated by religious preferences.

The chapter will then analyse Mary Sumner's field manoeuvres in relation to education. It will note Mary Sumner's views on childhood, mothers as home educators, mothering and class and her emphasis on religious education as the rationale for the MU. Notions of educational capital and transactions of capital towards pedagogic authority will be analysed. Mary Sumner's use of the organisation to educate mothers and the wider populace by informal means and her deployment of educational strategies to promote recognition of the MU will be examined. Attention will be paid to the dissemination of religious knowledge through printed materials. The views of Mary Sumner on reading as an educational tool will be examined. Networking with other organisations in relation to the field of education will be considered.

The chapter will then relate Mary Sumner's activism through the MU to the wider field of power. Mary Sumner's stance on secular schooling will be examined and her position and manoeuvres through the MU related to the contest in the field of education between Church and state. Her position as a popular educator will be analysed in relation to the reproduction of, or negotiation of, the dominant (religious social) doxa in respect of education, with attention being given to horizons of possibility for women. The chapter will conclude with sections summarising dispositions of habitus and horizons of possibility, capital and field manoeuvres and fields and fields of power, reflective of the three levels of analysis.

Mary Sumner: educational habitus

Mary Sumner's experience of childhood, educational capital, attitudes to women and education, educational activism in her kinship network

Mary Sumner's, 'Account of Early Life at Hope End', reveals her notions of desirable educational and cultural capital by enumerating the assets possessed by her family, as exemplary parents, possessors of elite cultural knowledge and educational philanthropists.⁶ The 'Account of Early Life' also provides evidence that Mary Sumner experienced what, in the context of the time (pre 1850), may be considered a conventional but privileged and relatively extensive home education.⁷ Both her parents took an interest in her education. As former Unitarians they would have experienced a tradition which acknowledged women's intellect and valued their education, despite envisaging women's roles within family life.⁸ It was also a tradition that acknowledged women as educators.⁹ As noted in Chapter 3, Mary's retrospective account of her early life, written in the context of a proposed memoir of her life when the MU had been long established,¹⁰ emphasised the attention given to the religious education of her children by Mrs Heywood. It underscored the key aim of the MU to encourage mothers in the religious education of their children and is interpreted as a field manoeuvre intended to validate Mary Sumner's pedagogic authority.

Mary Sumner advertised the educational and cultural credentials of her father, who, as noted in the biographical outline, was recognised as an art collector, antiquarian, a German linguist and, as she noted, 'a remarkable historian'.¹¹ Thomas Heywood shared his enthusiasm for history with his daughter. Daily lessons, including readings from Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,

⁶Sumner, 'Early Life'.

⁷Burstyn, *Victorian Education*; Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*.

⁸Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England, 1760-1860*, 115-118, 165.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰The memoir was proposed by Louisa Gore Browne, Mary Sumner's daughter.

¹¹Sumner, 'Early Life'; Mary Sumner noted encounters with Thackeray, Carlyle, Ruskin, Charles Kingsley, Landseer and Sir Frederick Leighton; *Memoir of George Sumner*, 24.

were held in his library when Mary's brother, Tom, was home from Eton.¹² Thomas Heywood also encouraged the education of his family through travel abroad, which included the fashionable winter destination of Rome, given cultural distinction by its classical associations. In visits to Germany and France, Mary noted that 'French and German were spoken all the time' by the family,¹³ circumstances likely to have contributed to her proficiency in languages. Mary considered it relevant to note that she was taught literature by her governess, Miss Parker and recorded being tutored in more conventional ladylike accomplishments by 'Masters' of various kinds in London, including Herr Kroff who taught singing. Mary was also trained in operatic singing whilst in Italy. In later life, she was recognised for her proficiency as a musician.¹⁴ She drew on Herr Kroff's lessons when teaching others. She noted that: 'I taught his system to Loulie [daughter Louisa] who has a lovely voice'.¹⁵

Participation in educational philanthropy is identified in Mary Sumner's manuscript as indicative of merit. In addition to daily Bible study for her own children, Mrs Heywood also taught village children at Sunday school, a project to which her own children (son and daughters) were expected to contribute.¹⁶ Mary also recorded the educational philanthropy of other members of her family, much of which was for the improvement of the working class; such as the village school built by Mary's father, or the larger scale support of Mechanics' Institutes, which aimed to promote science, undertaken by her uncle, Benjamin Heywood.¹⁷ These initiatives may be interpreted as reflecting the Unitarian belief in education as a means towards individual 'betterment' and progress through education to public welfare, but the aspiration for improvement did not mean detachment from class perspectives.¹⁸ The educational philanthropy of the members of the Heywood family that Mary identifies was exercised after, as well as before, conversion to

¹²'Early Life'. This was a departure from family tradition. Thomas Heywood was educated at Manchester Grammar School and did not take a university degree. His brother James, who remained a Unitarian, attended Cambridge but as a Nonconformist was barred from taking his degree in England. Benjamin Heywood secured university education in Glasgow.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 16-17.

¹⁵Sumner, 'Early Life'.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Kidd and Roberts, *City, Class and Culture: Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester*; McConnell, 'Heywood, Sir Benjamin, First Baronet (1793-1865)'.

¹⁸Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England, 1760-1860*, 183.

Anglicanism.¹⁹ Thomas Percival Heywood's funding of Denstone School, as part of Canon Woodard's initiative to build Anglican schools for the middle classes,²⁰ illustrates the prioritisation of denominational religious truth as a form of knowledge and also class stratification as a mediator of schooling and curricula.²¹

The Sumners, whose family tree included headmasters of Eton and Harrow,²² like the Heywoods, celebrated their educational and cultural capital. They also saw education, mediated according to class and with religion as an essential component, as a means for the betterment of individuals and society.²³ The value of education for women, within the 'womanly sphere', was acknowledged and women's contribution as religious educators, by example, recognised.²⁴ The men of the family were educated in elite institutions. As an Etonian, George Sumner followed his father and uncle but differed from them in having his university education at Balliol, Oxford, rather than at Cambridge.²⁵ Heywood Sumner also went to Eton and Balliol but the daughters of the family were educated at home.²⁶ George Sumner's biography of his father, Charles, identifies him as a man of culture, 'well read in English and foreign literature' and an enthusiast for botany and horticulture.²⁷ Charles Sumner's promotion of public education was also noted. In his Hampshire parish (1816-20) he established a village school, researched educational practice and in countering opposition to education for the

¹⁹She makes no reference to her uncle James Heywood who did not convert.

²⁰Heywood and Heywood, *Reminiscences*, 32-33; Brian Heeny, *Mission to the Middle Classes: The Woodard Schools 1848-1891* (London: S.P.C.K, 1969). These secondary boarding schools largely for boys were intended to promote allegiance to the Anglican Church. Woodard was a Tractarian sympathiser.

²¹The 1868 Schools Inquiry (Taunton) Commission into middle-class schooling envisaged a three tier system for lower, middle and upper middle-class pupils. It noted limited provision of schools for girls who were not initially envisaged as within the scope of the enquiry. It followed the 1864 Public Schools (Clarendon) Commission; Delamont, 'The Domestic Ideology and Women's Education', 172; Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, 46.

²²Sumner, 'Memorials'.

²³Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 34.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 25-25, 37.

²⁵Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*; Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*; Scotland, *John Bird Sumner*.

²⁶Anon. *Old Alresford Parish Census 1861*, Old Alresford, Hampshire County Record Office: M285. Amongst seven resident servants Mary and George Sumner employed a nursemaid, Eliza Simpson and a French governess, Valle Laiore.

²⁷Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 30, 33.

poor, may be seen to favour the evangelical emphasis on both education in religion for individual salvation and for training in respectable social conduct.²⁸

Charles Sumner also wished for an educated helpmeet. In a letter to his bride to be, he requested not to be troubled with the details of domestic management and added: 'Nor can I conceive of anything greater than the disappointment of a man who admires a woman for her mental resources of cultivation of mind, but finds on marriage she degenerates into a mere intendente de maison'.²⁹ Mrs Jennie Sumner's moral influence on students tutored by her husband was considered worthy of comment in the memoir of his life.³⁰ Evidence of Charles Sumner's favourable attitude to educated women is given by his daughter Louisanna, who in later life published on religious themes. Louisanna's ability to give her younger brother George (prior to his entry to Eton in 1836) lessons in Latin and Greek, subjects not usually a standard part of the female curriculum, indicates that her education was more intellectually challenging than that experienced by most home or school educated middle and upper-class women at the time.³¹

In Mary Sumner's kinship and social network the appreciation of literature, art, music, history, languages and the classics, were celebrated as cultural capital. For women of higher social status, individual educational capital (and a degree of intellectual capital) was recognised if acquired and invested in ways legitimised by religiously and socially mediated notions of appropriate gendered behaviour. The provision of educational opportunities, or facilities for others less socially advantaged was asserted as a source of symbolic capital for the benefactors.

²⁸Ibid., 34. There was resistance to the education for the poor on the grounds that it might promote questioning of the established social order. Hannah More's teaching of reading was criticised from this perspective, although she was no radical: Lawson and Silver, *A Social History of Education*, 231, 235; Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*.

²⁹Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 25-26.

³⁰Ibid., 37.

³¹Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 44. Louisanna Gibson (1817-1899) married 1837 widowed 1862, was the author of *Simple Sketches of England and her Churchmen in the Middle Ages* and *First Teachings about the English Church*; Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 23, 24; Purvis, *A History of Women's Education in England*, 65-68.

Educational context, parochial work and educational initiatives affirmative and informative of Mary Sumner's educational habitus and horizons of possibility

Mary Sumner's activism began in the 'Board School era' (1870-1902) when Anglican pre-eminence in the field of elementary education was subject to challenge by the emergence of state sponsored, non-denominational schools, administered by locally elected Boards.³² Yet agents, with authority in the Church, in Mary Sumner's kinship network had been participants in pedagogic action and field manoeuvres to support Anglican ascendancy, in a contest for control of educational provision which had been ongoing from early in the century. This contest in the field of education provides the contextual background to Mary Sumner's habitus and her later trajectory of activism through the diocesan MU.

The Anglican position on education may be seen within the wider context of attempts to maintain its spiritual authority and position in the wider field of power in the face of challenge from other Christian denominations.³³ The instigation of the British and Foreign Schools Society in 1808 by the Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, which sought to promote a non-denominational curriculum, challenged the assumption that the Anglican Church should have a monopoly of educational provision.³⁴ 'The issue at stake was whether or not the Established Church was going to retain its former control over the education of the people'.³⁵

The explicitly titled National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Church of England, was the Anglican response to the threat presented by the Nonconformist British and Foreign Schools Society. Its goal was to build on existing provision to establish a school in every parish staffed by

³²Wardle, *English Popular Education*.

³³Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2, 1860-1901*. See previous chapter on religion.

³⁴Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, 4-6. There was a political dimension to the Society for it drew support from Whigs, Radicals and Socialists seeking to change the social order. Religious hostility and political opposition were frequently aligned. Anglicanism was traditionally aligned with the Tory landowning class representative of the 'establishment'. The Anglican Church also sought to educate the poor in its doxa through Sunday schools which served as an outlet for the philanthropic pedagogic action of socially advantaged women such as Mary Sumner and Charlotte Yonge. Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures'; Sumner, 'Early Life'; Yonge, 'A Real Childhood', 15-19.

³⁵Hurt, *Education in Evolution*, 16.

communicant Anglican teachers.³⁶ The committee of what was known as the 'National Society' was composed of bishops and archbishops of England and Wales. It was: 'in effect the education committee of the Anglican Church'.³⁷ Through this manoeuvre the Anglican Church was relatively successful in maintaining its position as a key provider of working-class elementary education outside cities, until the further challenge represented by the 1870 legislation. However state intervention in educational provision continued to be negotiated between interested parties, both religious and political.³⁸

Anglicanism was also influential in the education of upper-class boys through its association with elite public schools, which had undergone a religious revival in the mid-nineteenth century.³⁹ Anglican clergy formed the majority of headmasters and headmasters often became bishops, a trend illustrated by Mary Sumner's 'warm friend', George Ridding, of Winchester College, subsequently Bishop of Southwell.⁴⁰ Mary Sumner's anecdote, deployed to illustrate Christian manliness, in which a public school boy is initially 'reviled, mocked, [and] threatened' by his fellows for saying his prayers but eventually by his example 'changed the practice of a whole school', provides an illustration of the topicality of religious revival in public schools.⁴¹

The 1870 Education Act, which initiated the systematic involvement of government in the provision of mass elementary working-class education, codified the state challenge to Anglican dominance in the field of education. The identification by W.E Forster, the architect of the act, of legislation as a means to reinforce the social order suggests a manoeuvre in the field of power designed to reproduce the status quo.⁴² Yet, the act also gave women the right to serve on

³⁶Ibid., 11-38. Chapter 1 'Schism and Cohesion', for the National Society's negotiation with the state and competition with the British and Foreign Schools; Not all Anglican Schools were National Society schools. Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, Chapter 1.

³⁷Hurt, *Education in Evolution*, 17. See also 39-45.

³⁸Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, Chapters 2 and 3 explain the complexities of these negotiations and legislation.

³⁹Wardle, *English Popular Education*, 117-124; Sumner, 'To Fathers'. Thomas Arnold of Rugby School and Edward Thring of Uppingham are noted names in this revival.

⁴⁰'Letters to Lady Chichester', 24 April 191?.

⁴¹'To Fathers', 136.

⁴²Hurt, *Education in Evolution*, 223-224.

elected school boards, thereby opening up an opportunity for women's access to power in the fields of education and local government.⁴³

George Sumner's biography of his father and his own writings indicate that the Anglican Church had been anticipating state intervention for some time and had acted with this perceived threat to Church influence in mind. Charles Sumner's 1839 initiation of the Winchester Diocesan Training College for teachers may be seen as a manoeuvre to promote Anglican presence in the field of education.⁴⁴ George Sumner was also involved in the College, serving on its management committee from 1860, as treasurer from 1862 and as secretary between 1870 and 1878. In an address to schoolmasters and mistresses delivered in 1862, George Sumner claimed, 'we are now passing through a crisis in the education in this country'.⁴⁵ The crisis he perceived was the secularisation of education and he asked:

What is the true object of education? In other words, what is the ultimate end of the schoolmaster or school mistress? Now at least, I would observe that, by the schoolmaster I mean the educator, not the mere instructor. What a vast difference there is between them! You may take a young Hindu and teach him reading, writing and arithmetic, together with all the "ologies" ... [sic] but if you stop here, I maintain that you have not educated, but only instructed him. You have withheld from him that which is his inalienable right and which was in your power to have bestowed on him. You have withheld from him the knowledge of the Truth.⁴⁶

His conclusion was that secular education was: 'a contradiction in words and impossibility for the conscientious teacher'.⁴⁷ Secularisation of religion was also addressed in the 1868 essay collection, *Principles at Stake*, which George edited. The Rev. Alexander Grant, a former H.M. Inspector of Schools, contributed the chapter 'National Education'. Grant's views accord with the sentiments in

⁴³Jane Martin, *Women and the Politics of Schooling in Victorian and Edwardian England* (London: Leicester University Press, 1998); Hollis, *Ladies Elect*.

⁴⁴Sumner, *Life of C. R. Sumner*, 261-263. Charles Sumner's biography suggests secularisation of education through Government intervention was already a concern. The Diocesan Training College evolved into King Alfred's College and is now the University of Winchester.

⁴⁵Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 34.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 36.

George's speech to schoolmasters and mistresses.⁴⁸ In the same chapter Grant also commented on the party political dimension of the issue: 'The Liberal Party is making a general crusade against Denominationalism. The crusade is against all religious instruction. Its object is to wrest the office of teaching out of the hands of the Clergy'.⁴⁹ George Sumner, speaking at the Diocesan Training College prize giving in 1879, also touched on the antipathy of the Church to the influence of Board Schools:

It is possible that many of you will be compelled to take work in Board Schools; but, even if your mouths be closed to the utterance of the distinctive Christian doctrine of our Church, yet a firm believer, who has a pure mind and sincere character, will always have great influence.⁵⁰

George and Mary Sumner's support for the cultural arbitrary that prioritised Christian doxa was demonstrated in their commitment to religious education as a means of improving individual lives and public conduct. They followed family practice in considering that education and religion were bound together. As noted in the previous chapter, the philanthropy promoted by George and Mary Sumner during their years of parochial ministry was religious in intent and realised through largely informal educational initiatives.⁵¹ They supported the Christian book hawking scheme and the funding of a village library in 1878: pedagogic action that promoted Christian values by providing 'wholesome', if not exclusively religious, reading.⁵² The men's Bible study group led by Mary Sumner was also pedagogic action intended to foster Christian standards of conduct. Her mothers' meeting similarly intended to educate its members in Anglican doctrine and as exemplars of Christian behaviour.⁵³ As noted in previous chapters, the recognition of Mary Sumner's gendered social and religious capital enabled her to assume pedagogic authority in an extending sphere through the GFS, initially in a parish branch (1875) and later in authoritative positions at diocesan level. It also secured

⁴⁸Rev. Alexander R. Grant, 'National Education', in *Principles at Stake: Essays on Church Questions of the Day*, ed. George Sumner (London: 1868), 120.

⁴⁹Ibid., 118.

⁵⁰Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 32.

⁵¹Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures'.

⁵²Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 16; Rev. George Carew, *Census Book of Old Alresford*, Old Alresford: HRO 43M74PZ2. Carew's 1845 record noted a population of 578. 50% of women and 20% of men were communicants. A third of men and a quarter of women could read.

⁵³Sumner, 'Founding'.

her official status in the CETS. Holding these positions indicated recognition of, and served to amplify, her pedagogic authority as a speaker 'for the Church'. This gave Mary Sumner a position from which she was able to launch the MU.

George and Mary Sumner also acted to support the Anglican Church in the field of formal education. George Sumner extended his sphere of pedagogic action into the village school where he gave religious instruction and he also:

...took a great interest in Sunday school work and was exceedingly careful as to the manner in which the classes were arranged and the clear and intelligent method of instruction given in Scripture and catechism. He had every week a Sunday School Teachers' meeting at the Rectory.⁵⁴

In a substantial act of philanthropy, George and Mary Sumner provided £2,000 to fund the building of a new school, All Saints Church of England Primary, which was opened in 1893 in Winchester.⁵⁵ The Sumners were amongst a number of influential (and socially distinguished) Anglican supporters of the 'voluntary' movement in the district.⁵⁶ The building of voluntary schools (that is those funded by voluntary subscription such as the Anglican National Schools) had been given impetus by the 'Forster' Elementary Education act of 1870. It specified that Board Schools were to be established where voluntary provision was insufficient for the local population. The Cowper-Temple amendment (secured by Episcopal pressure) preserved religious teaching in Board Schools, albeit of a non-denominational character,⁵⁷ but Anglicans considered this unsatisfactory and favoured specific doctrinal teaching in the curriculum.⁵⁸ Ensuring sufficient voluntary places was a manoeuvre designed to prevent the election of the School Boards (a political contest in which Anglican supporters might not prevail), which were charged with the establishment of non-denominational Board Schools.⁵⁹

⁵⁴Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 20, 21.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 107.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 101-102, 106. Supporters included the Earl of Northbrook (Lord Lieutenant of the County); W.H Meyers M.P. for Winchester; Melville Portal Chairman of the County Quarter Sessions; the Warden of Winchester College; the Master of St Cross (alms house). Also present at the ceremony were 'many other clergy and laymen of importance. Mrs Sumner was one of the many ladies present'. The voluntary system relied on the collection of a voluntary rate from subscribers. It was administered by a committee which represented various denominations. George Sumner was chair of this committee in Winchester.

⁵⁷Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, 58-60; Hurt, *Education in Evolution*.

⁵⁸Roman Catholics also favoured denominational schools.

⁵⁹Lawson and Silver, *A Social History of Education*.

Despite commitment to the Anglican cause, George Sumner was noted for the 'harmonious collaboration' he achieved as Chair amongst the Council of 'Churchmen [Anglicans], Nonconformists and Roman Catholics' that managed the voluntary school rate in Winchester.⁶⁰ In resisting the dilution of denominational teaching represented by the threat of Board Schools, rival denominations found common cause in supporting the denominational influence in the field of elementary education. George Sumner commented that 'one of the great advantages of the struggle they had been carrying on in Winchester was that it brought all religious parties together'.⁶¹

Mary Sumner noted the 'Educational triumph' reported by the *Hampshire Chronicle* on the opening of the school. According to the *Chronicle*, Sir William Hart-Dyke M.P's opening speech noted: 'In Winchester they had done their best and were determined to have a secure hold over the education- the *religious* education of their children.' George Sumner 'responded that they were determined that the voluntary system should prevail'.⁶² Mary Sumner's support of formal denominational teaching through the MU will be addressed in a following section.

Amongst Mary Sumner's network, education for both men and women of the lower classes was regarded as a means of individual and collective societal betterment. Literacy was seen as enabling religious education. Yet, the dominant social and Anglican interests to which Mary Sumner and agents in her habitus claimed allegiance, considered that access to education and curricula required their mediation to ensure the transmission of their preferred doxa. Whilst intellectual and cultural knowledge was important, it was considered debased without the moral framework and purpose given by religion which, amongst Mary Sumner's network, meant Anglicanism.

In the field of (elementary) educational provision, in which voluntarily funded denominational schooling was in contest with non-denominational state sponsored provision, George and Mary Sumner sought to ensure a curriculum that

⁶⁰Sumner, *Memoir of George Sumner*, 106.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 104.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 101-105.

included Anglican doctrinal teaching. They also acted to promote Anglicanism through pedagogic action associated directly with the Church, via religious services, classes or less overtly through the pedagogic work of philanthropic initiatives. Mary Sumner was the beneficiary, by association, of George's pedagogic authority as a Churchman, circumstances that enabled and enhanced opportunities for the acquisition of her own pedagogic authority. Educational initiatives, whether formal or informal, were symbolically violent in that they offered the benefits of literacy (and salvation) in exchange for outward compliance with the Anglican religious (and social) doxa.

The habitus in which Mary Sumner was located and the action of its agents (including Mary herself) were in accord with Anglican views on educational issues that were to be codified in later years by the Lambeth Conference.⁶³ The 1908 Lambeth resolutions on education summed up the educational agenda that had been pursued for so many decades prior to that date by Mary and George Sumner. Resolution 11 stated: 'it is our duty as Christians to make it clear to the world that purely secular systems of education are educationally as well as morally unsound'. Resolution 12 added that: 'no teaching can be regarded as adequate religious teaching which limits itself to historical information and moral culture'. It followed that, in the words of Resolution 13: 'It is our duty as Christians to be alert to use in all schools every opportunity which the state affords us for training our children in the faith of their parents'. Resolution 19 in particular, endorsed Mary Sumner's MU work:

The Conference desires to lay special stress on the duty of parents in all conditions of social life to take personal part in the religious instruction of their own children and to show active interest in the religious instruction which the children receive at school.⁶⁴

⁶³Resolution 17 of the 1908 Lambeth Conference: 'The religious training of teachers should be regarded as a primary duty of the Church'. Charles and George Sumner may be considered as pioneers.

⁶⁴Anglican Church of Canada Anglican Book Centre, Toronto, 'Lambeth Conferences Resolutions Archive', By permission, the Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council 2006, [<http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/> accessed 12 July 2013].

'Education begins at home'⁶⁵

Mary Sumner's notions of childhood and childrearing

In founding the MU, Mary Sumner drew on three premises which were underpinned by the permeation of religion into education and the framing of women's roles, notions of approved conduct and horizons of possibility.⁶⁶ The first was that education in religion needed to be upheld because it was being eroded: 'the need of religious teaching is daily becoming more pressing in these days of secularism, colourless Board School teaching, irreligion and infidelity'.⁶⁷ The second premise was that education in religiously authorised standards of behaviour was the means towards alleviating social problems such as drunkenness, prostitution and poverty that were deemed to have an adverse effect on the wellbeing of the nation.⁶⁸ The third was that mothers were the most effective agents for the education of young children into religious faith and moral conduct. Mary Sumner maintained that: 'People have tried for long years to do the work of reformation by schools and institutions and agencies of all sorts [...] but they cannot succeed until the parents and above all the mothers, are awakened to their responsibilities'.⁶⁹ She also claimed: 'the character of every child is being formed day by day from the moment of his birth - he sees his mother first [...] he learns *first* from her'.⁷⁰

The assumption that motherhood was the natural province of women was in accord with (Anglican) Christian teaching and was embedded in social practice.⁷¹ In asserting the need for the MU, Mary Sumner acted to increase the symbolic capital accruing to motherhood by claiming that it required pedagogic expertise. In associating motherhood with a divinely ordained role she also invested children, as well as mothers, with symbolic value. In so doing, she may be

⁶⁵ *Home Life*, 4.

⁶⁶ Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*; Burstyn, *Victorian Education*; Spender, *The Education Papers: Women's Quest for Equality in Britain, 1850-1912*.

⁶⁷ Mary Sumner, 'When and Why the Mothers' Union Started', (Winchester: Warren and Sons, n.d. surmised 1888).

⁶⁸ 'Temperance'; 'Mothers' Work Outside'; *Home Life*, preface.

⁶⁹ *Home Life*, 4.

⁷⁰ 'Obedience', 28.

⁷¹ Gill, *Women and the Church of England*; Yeo, *Radical Femininity: Womens' Self Representation in the Public Sphere*.

considered to be in accord with changing notions of childhood that identified childhood as a stage of development to be respected.⁷²

Mary Sumner's views reflected ideas of the Unitarian, Harriet Martineau (1802-1876),⁷³ and the evangelical Anglican, Hannah More (1745-1833)⁷⁴ in emphasising the role of mothers as moral and religious educators.⁷⁵ The view expressed in Hannah More's *Strictures on Female Education* was that it was desirable for women to be educated in serious matters in order to be competent in the educative role of motherhood.⁷⁶ Mary Sumner believed that: 'The Christian Faith should be taught to children first by the Mother in early child life'.⁷⁷ She set out her view of the essential tenets of faith that children should know: 'Every baptised child should be taught the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments [...] and all other things a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health'.⁷⁸

Mary Sumner also expressed views on standards of conduct that she felt appropriate. Children should 'be perfectly and consciously obedient *at three years old*'.⁷⁹ To achieve this was not easy: it required 'faith, love, patience, method, self-control and some knowledge of the principles of character training'.⁸⁰ Mary Sumner also noted that a mother needed: 'some knowledge of the principles of education' and 'methods for the management of learning'.⁸¹ Writing with an MU audience in mind, she recalled the birth of her first child as an awe inspiring charge for which she felt unprepared:

The child's future depended on my own training and responsibility even more than that of my dear husband because during the first months the

⁷²Wardle, *English Popular Education*, 81.

⁷³Harriet Martineau, *Household Education* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1870).

⁷⁴Charlotte Mary Yonge, *Hannah More* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1888), Mary Sumner's fellow worker in the GFS and MU was a biographer of More.

⁷⁵Martineau, *Household Education*; More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education: With a View of the Principles and Conduct Prevalent among Women of Rank and Fortune*.

⁷⁶*Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education: With a View of the Principles and Conduct Prevalent among Women of Rank and Fortune*.

⁷⁷Sumner, 'Letters to Mrs Maude', 26 June 1917.

⁷⁸Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 31.

⁷⁹Sumner, 'Obedience', 28.

⁸⁰Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 31.

⁸¹'When and Why the Mothers' Union Started'.

mother has special time and opportunity to mould the character of her child. [...] I needed special teaching, motherhood is one of the most important professions and yet there was no profession which has so poor a training, one often entered upon without any sort of preparation hence the failure in character of so many children as they grow up.⁸²

If mothering was 'a solemn responsibility',⁸³ and 'the training of children is a profession',⁸⁴ it followed that mothers needed to be 'awakened' to it and equipped for the task.⁸⁵ This was the aim of the MU. Mary Sumner's supporter Bishop Harold Browne reflected the Church's emerging recognition of women's organised work for the Church. He recognised the educational potential of the MU for pedagogic work on behalf of the Church and endorsed the pedagogic authority of mothers:

It is of vital consequence to future generations that education should be conducted on the highest principles of morality and religion. The women of the nation are its earliest and most effective teachers and they specially need to be taught.⁸⁶

Mary Sumner prioritised the role of the mother as a home educator but she recognised and encouraged the role of the father in parenting and the education of the family in religious habits. Her writings exhorted wives to act to encourage their participation in family life.⁸⁷ She also demonstrated her willingness to assume pedagogic authority over working men by specifically addressing articles to them. In 'To Husbands and Fathers', published in the *MUJ* in 1905, Mary Sumner wrote: 'It will not do to say "I leave religion to the missus". Husbands you must face your responsibilities'.⁸⁸ She considered that men should participate in the religious education of their children: 'Sunday is a good day for a Father to give his children religious instruction. He should read the Bible with them and hear them repeat the Catechism'.⁸⁹ It was also the duty of the father 'to see that his

⁸²'Founding'.

⁸³'When and Why the Mothers' Union Started'.

⁸⁴Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 31.

⁸⁵Sumner, *Home Life*, 10. Object 2 of the Mothers' Union

⁸⁶*Memoir of George Sumner*, 60.

⁸⁷'Marriage 2'; 'Purity'; 'Words'.

⁸⁸'To Husbands and Fathers', *MUJ*, October 1905

⁸⁹'To Fathers', 154.

children are sent to a school where the Christian religion is taught honestly and faithfully and where the master and mistress are believers in the Christian faith'.⁹⁰

The previous chapter noted the significance Mary Sumner attached to the sacrament of baptism, 'the consecration of Child-life' which was to 'remind Mothers that their children are sacred beings' who were 'only lent to their parents to be trained up as His faithful soldiers and servants'.⁹¹ Although Mary Sumner wrote that, 'the seeds of evil are born in his [the child's] little heart',⁹² her emphasis was not on the eradication of original sin, for 'children are not, as a rule, artful or deceitful unless they are made so by mismanagement or fear',⁹³ but on the need to protect the child from falling into evil ways by training them for the 'battle of life [...] while they are as yet unsullied by the world' in obedience, truthfulness and self-control,⁹⁴ for 'every fallen man or woman [...] was once an innocent child [...] ignorant of sin'.⁹⁵ Moreover, she believed that: 'There is in every human heart an "impulse towards perfection", a divine yearning for holiness and Heaven, an instinctive straining after God'.⁹⁶ Mary Sumner's position reflected not the interpretation of Anglican doctrine upheld by the evangelical Hannah More, which regarded child nature as inherently evil, but rather a 'tabula rasa' which saw the child as having the potential to have character and achievement moulded by experience, example and educational impressions for good or ill.⁹⁷

⁹⁰Ibid., 153.

⁹¹*Home Life*, 8; This and many of Mary Sumner's views accord with Charlotte Maria Shaw Mason, *Home Education: A Course of Lectures to Ladies, Etc* (London: Kegan Paul & Co., 1886). See below for further elaboration.

⁹²Sumner, 'Obedience', 27.

⁹³'Truth', 36.

⁹⁴'Obedience', 34; See also 'Purity', 42-43 for training to resist evil taking hold.

⁹⁵'Words', 53.

⁹⁶*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 2.

⁹⁷Wardle, *English Popular Education*, 81; Sumner, *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 2. The Anglican Thirty Nine Articles (Article IX) expressed the issue thus: 'Original sins stands not in the following of Adam, but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam whereby man is very far from original righteousness and is of his own nature inclined to evil.'

[<http://www.cofec.org/The%2039%20Articles%20of%20Religion> accessed 24th October 2013]. Mary Sumner's interpretation emphasises the first phrase and the word inclined.

Mary Sumner's memoir suggests that she had enjoyed a carefree childhood that included adventurous riding and boating escapades with her brother.⁹⁸ As an adult she relished 'childish merriment' and took pleasure in the company of children.⁹⁹ Cathedral choir boys were regularly entertained for games and tea and grandchildren, nephews and nieces were welcomed in The Close.¹⁰⁰ Mary Sumner considered the warmth her husband displayed towards children on his school visits worthy of comment: 'He often came in with a smile and a pleasantry ready for some child; usually a laugh was heard before he had been there many minutes - even the youngest child would feel at home with him'.¹⁰¹ The educational methods advocated by Mary Sumner and mentioned in the pages of MU magazines also suggest that she (and her organisation) were sympathetic to 'child centred' conceptions of childhood (and contingent educational methods), which sought the happiness of the child and acknowledged the child as a thinking being, rather than an empty vessel to be filled by instruction, ideas exemplified in the work of Friedrich Froebel and Johan Heinrich Pestalozzi. Mary Sumner's stated views accord in particular with those of Charlotte Mason the advocate of home education.¹⁰²

Mary Sumner considered that: 'Habits formed at home and in childhood are formed for life'.¹⁰³ She appeared to follow (but did not make reference to) the view expressed in Harriet Martineau's *Household Education* that every home is a school.¹⁰⁴ Mary Sumner was an advocate of the curriculum proposed by Charlotte Mason (1842-1923) the founder of the Parents' National Education Union (PNEU). Charlotte Mason was, from 1874 to 1878, located in the Winchester diocese as Vice Principal of Bishop Otter Teacher Training College, Chichester. Her book *Home Education*, published in 1886, was recommended reading in the leaflet 'When and Why the Mothers' Union Started'.¹⁰⁵ Although Mary Sumner (as with

⁹⁸'Early Life'.

⁹⁹'Obedience'.

¹⁰⁰Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 51, 52.

¹⁰¹*Memoir of George Sumner*, 107.

¹⁰²Wardle, *English Popular Education*; Mason, *Home Education*. See Appendix 2 for Charlotte Mason.

¹⁰³Sumner, 'Obedience', 27.

¹⁰⁴Martineau, *Household Education*, 7; Sumner, 'Example', 95, 'Home is the child's first school. The parents are the child's first teachers.

¹⁰⁵'When and Why the Mothers' Union Started'; Barbara Caine, 'Mason, Charlotte Maria Shaw (1842-1923)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press,

Harriet Martineau) made no direct references to Charlotte Mason in her writing, many similarities in conceptions of childhood rooted in religious faith, the purpose of education and approaches to learning can be discerned.¹⁰⁶

Charlotte Mason was a practicing Anglican. Her attitude to childhood and educational method were informed by faith. She upheld the notion of children as a divine charge. Like Mary Sumner, her interpretation of Anglican doctrine acknowledged the human potential for corruption but emphasised the role of the parent in the preservation of the innocent nature of the child.¹⁰⁷ Charlotte Mason noted that a loving, respectful and ambitious code of education was to be found in the New Testament in words, 'laid down by Christ himself: OFFEND not - DESPISE not - HINDER not - one of these little ones'.¹⁰⁸ She suggested that this encapsulated 'whatever is included in training up a child in the way he should go', words that Mary Sumner used in modified form for the motto of the MU. Similarly, the quotation from Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*, 'trailing clouds of Glory we come from God who is our home', which continues, 'Heaven lies about us in our infancy', used by Charlotte Mason, was later used to accompany a cover illustration used on *MIC*.¹⁰⁹

In *Home Education*, Charlotte Mason asserted her view that children were a public trust rather than the property of their parents and should be nurtured as citizens for the benefit of society.¹¹⁰ Mary Sumner's views were also in accord with Charlotte Mason's on the mother's educational role and significance. Charlotte Mason reproduced Pestalozzi's assertion that 'the mother is qualified by the Creator Himself to become the principal agent in the development of the child'.¹¹¹ She also advocated the need for mothers to have an appreciation of educational

2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37743>, accessed 29 Aug. 2013]. *Home Education* was conceived of either in addition to schooling or as a substitute.

¹⁰⁶Search of the Armit Library Ambleside, where Charlotte Mason's archive is housed, has not revealed any correspondence with Mary Sumner. The destruction of Mary Sumner's personal papers after her death leaves potential correspondence between them a matter for speculation.

¹⁰⁷Mason, *Home Education*, 330.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 11.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*

theory.¹¹² The curriculum advocated by Charlotte Mason was described by her as 'generous'. Her motto for children, 'I am, I ought, I can, I will', placed emphasis on the moral and spiritual empowerment of the child and her method of learning and curriculum content fostered enquiry and richness of experience in literature, music, the arts, physical expression and the natural world, in addition to grammar, languages, history and geography.¹¹³

Mary Sumner's message was voiced according to audiences stratified by class. Her writing reveals her assumption that less socially advantaged homes would have different expectations of curriculum and schooling to the socially advantaged home.¹¹⁴ Indeed, the term 'educated mothers' was deployed by Mary Sumner to indicate middle and upper-class women in the way that the term 'cottage mother' indicated working-class women and masked their disadvantage in euphemistic language. Her advice on the education of children, although specifying desirable religious knowledge, concentrated on childrearing and the development of character and morals. She echoed Charlotte Mason in asserting that the mother should be 'regular and methodical', for 'babies are law abiding creatures' who should be brought up in 'an atmosphere of love and cheerfulness, of order and obedience to rule'.¹¹⁵ Mary Sumner considered that the training of children should be undertaken by example, consistent discipline and protection from dangerous influences: 'Children are gifted with two powers during the first seven years, Observation and Imitation. They watch their parents and must be taught strict obedience and self-control'.¹¹⁶ Parents should demonstrate the exercise of self-control in disciplining their children:¹¹⁷ 'The best trained schoolmistresses and masters are taught to rule children by a quiet, self-controlled manner and we advise parents to try the same method at home.'¹¹⁸ Mary Sumner considered

¹¹²Ibid., 3.

¹¹³Spencer, 'Knowledge as the Necessary Food of the Mind: Charlotte Mason's Philosophy of Education'; Mason, *Home Education*.

¹¹⁴This reflects assumptions in social practice and in government thinking as in the Clarendon and Taunton Commissions and the Forster Act.

¹¹⁵Sumner, 'Obedience', 28; Mason, *Home Education*, 13. Charlotte Mason notes children as 'law abiding'.

¹¹⁶Sumner, 'Letters to Mrs Maude', 26 June 1917.

¹¹⁷ See 'Parental Discipline' in Mason, *Home Education*, 15-16, for similar views on parental example.

¹¹⁸Sumner, 'Words', 64.

kindness and consistency not only to be appropriate womanly (and manly) virtues but to be effective educational measures. Here she echoes Harriet Martineau:¹¹⁹

Remember that obedience is not taught rightly to children by beating, hitting, slapping, rough angry words and ill usage, but by gentle, loving firmness and self-control. Mr Rarey the great horse tamer has told us that he has known an angry word raise the pulse of a horse ten beats a minute; think then how it must affect a child! The ill usage of children by thoughtless, intemperate and passionate parents is terrible and they oftentimes satisfy their conscience that they are severe only for the good of their children, while in fact, they are merely giving way to their angry passions. Children are completely at the mercy of those around them they are often timid and acutely sensitive.¹²⁰

Nor did Mary Sumner approve of issuing threats: 'Who can tell the misery and terror and nervous excitement such language causes to children'. Her recommendations were to 'speak lovingly, gently but decidedly' and 'think before you give any order and be quite sure your child *can* obey your command'. She advised: 'never give unnecessary orders or more than one at a time, but, when the order is given, see that it is obeyed, even if it costs you time and trouble'.¹²¹

Mary Sumner also noted: 'It is by imitation far more than by precept that we learn everything'.¹²²

The reverent treatment of children should involve treating them with courtesy,¹²³ it also involved treating them with justice. Mary Sumner believed that it was:

a parent's duty to love each child equally and to be fair and just and loving in dealing with each one [...] It is impossible to overestimate the grief caused to a sensitive child by neglect or indifference, or the bitter feeling of being less appreciated, less loved, less admired and less cared for than the beautiful, clever or fascinating brother or sister. The sorrows of sensitive children are very acute and very secret, but terribly real.¹²⁴

Whilst (as noted in Chapter 3) conceding authority to men,¹²⁵ Mary Sumner felt that the different qualities of the sexes were complementary and should be appreciated and respected. In her 1888 book, *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*,

¹¹⁹ Martineau, *Household Education*, 46-48.

¹²⁰ Sumner, 'Obedience', 30.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 30-35.

¹²² 'Purity', 50.

¹²³ 'Words', 63.

¹²⁴ *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 24; Mason, *Home Education*: 17.

¹²⁵ Sumner, 'Paper Read at the Church Congress in Hull 1890'; 'To Husbands and Fathers'; 'Mothers' Work Outside'.

Mary Sumner made a specific comment on the damage to the character of boys by spoiling them at the expense of girls, which also implied recognition of the worth of girls:

There is one mistake made very commonly in home education, which lies at the root of much evil in men and that is the preference given by parents (notably by mothers) to their sons. They are more often prized than daughters, especially if there is an ancient name or vast inheritance to be possessed by the eldest son. From his birth he is an object of admiring interest to parents and relations, to friends and servants. They conspire together to spoil him in his childhood: the sisters are put in the shade and he is the pet and idol of the family. Later on, as a school boy he is indulged in every possible way; and his sisters are expected to submit to his boyish tyranny, to wait upon his whims and wishes until he grows to think that the world in general and his sisters in particular were made for him. This sort of home training of boys *versus* girls, which encourages the tyranny of the boys over the girls, is very general, it is a prodigious wrong done to the children and it is impossible too strongly to deprecate the short sighted folly of such an education.¹²⁶

If boys were trained to respect women it would lead them to 'purer and nobler lives' and 'prevent the contempt and disrespect for the honour and happiness of women which causes such dark pages to be written concerning the lives of some men'.¹²⁷

Parents should set an example of 'truth and honesty'. Children should always be told the truth even if it was unpalatable. Again, Mary Sumner's view accords with Charlotte Mason's that children's utterances are a window into the child's mind from which those concerned with pedagogy may gain insight.¹²⁸ Questions asked by children:

... must be treated, not only truthfully but respectfully, for the child-mind is fresher from God and more unsullied than our travel stained minds and they teach us marvellous things by their quick-sighted simplicity and thoughtful, innocent impression of the new world upon which they have entered.¹²⁹

Mary Sumner made references suggestive of a strategy for tackling sex education in remarks made on 'puzzling and perplexing questions'. Parents might postpone

¹²⁶ *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 22-23.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ Mason, *Home Education*, 5.

¹²⁹ Sumner, 'Truth', 38-39.

answering difficult questions in the case of 'a religious or any other sort of difficulty which it is beyond the capacity of a child to understand'. Mary Sumner suggested saying: 'My child I will answer this when you are older. Meanwhile do not ask anyone else to explain to you. Always come to me or father when you are puzzled; we will tell you what is the truth only trust us'.¹³⁰ In later years she made reference to sex education in an undated letter to Lady Chichester, her successor as MU Central President. Whilst she endorsed parents as the educators of children in sexual matters:

I heartily agree [with you] in explaining to children the consecration of body and soul-Holy Baptism and then self reverence and then later on sharing the sacred facts of a child's birth. This every mother is bound to do-It is a mother's duty it is a father's also (to his sons).¹³¹

She felt it was: 'a mistake to discuss the sex question in public when clergymen and laymen are present'.¹³²

The model boy or girl of any class, as envisaged by Mary Sumner, had been taught to pray, to tell the truth, be obedient, to honour parents, to demonstrate self-restraint and to have a growing understanding of what was forbidden as sinful or impure. Mary Sumner's message that children should be cherished as the handiwork of the Creator, was an assertion of their worth. She associated them with the religious symbolic capital of innocence; thus its preservation was a source of capital for parents, especially mothers who were deemed to be divinely ordained as primary carers. In order to uphold their responsibility to God, child and nation (for the right religious education of children represented a capital investment in future citizens), mothers should possess symbolic religious capital as 'good' women. They also needed the pedagogic expertise necessary for moulding character and equipping the child with religious faith. As mothering was a divine charge, it was appropriate that the mother herself should lay the foundations for the future spiritual life of the child. Thus motherhood, identified with the highest authority of religion, was invested with symbolic capital.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ *Letters to Lady Chichester*.

¹³² Ibid.; For attitudes to sex education informed by moral, scientific and eugenic viewpoints see Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change in Britain since 1880*, 33, 44, 88-89.

Sanctifying motherhood may also be interpreted as a strategy for the recruitment of pedagogic workers on behalf of the Church.

Education in mothering for all classes

Mary Sumner believed that the MU should embrace ‘all ranks and classes, for the duty and responsibility of a mother to her child is in principle, identically the same from the highest to the humblest of mothers’.¹³³ She noted that ‘the rules on the [MU] card concern every mother’ and asserted the value of all mothers’ work in rearing good citizens by claiming that: ‘the future of England depends greatly on the home training of the children of today’.¹³⁴ The socially and educationally advantaged mother should lead by example,¹³⁵ but moral authority was also needed. Although the ‘educated’ mother ought to ‘know best’, Mary Sumner did not assume that social status equated with better parenting and noted: ‘There is quite as much need of stirring up the hearts of Mothers in the higher ranks of life to a sense of their responsibility. It is hardly fair to cast all the blame of neglect on one class of Mothers’.¹³⁶ Writing directed at middle/upper class mothers repeatedly asserted the importance of active parenting and identified it as a source of symbolic capital. Mothers should be interested in their role, like Charlotte Yonge’s exemplary mother Lady Merrifield, in her 1885 novel *The Two Sides of the Shield*, who ‘preferred the company and training of her children to going into society in her husband’s absence’.¹³⁷

Mary Sumner revealed her evangelical emphasis on the need to witness religion in all aspects of life when she chastised the ‘worldly’ mother, ‘busy with society - paying visits, yachting, receiving large shooting parties or going abroad for weeks and months’, for allowing her children ‘to spend the greater part of their lives with nurses and maid servants, or later with tutors and governesses who even if most excellent and conscientious, as they often are, could never be to the children what the mother if faithful should be’.¹³⁸ This was a recurrent theme in

¹³³ *Home Life*, 3.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 9. See *Table 3* for wording of MU cards.

¹³⁵ *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 11.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

¹³⁷ Yonge, *The Two Sides of the Shield*, 22.

¹³⁸ *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 16-17.

Mary Sumner's writing and was pursued in the pages of *MIC*.¹³⁹ Her concern was that whilst other aspects of education were well attended to, moral and religious education was not. Despite her intention to dignify the capital of motherhood by emphasising it as a religious responsibility, Mary Sumner's position also suggested an anxiety, shared amongst upper/middle class mothers who employed staff for childcare, focused on suspicion of the motives, competence and morals of the lower-class employee. Charlotte Mason's *Home Education* warned that 'coarseness and rudeness in his nurse does the tender child lasting harm. Many a child leaves the nursery with his moral sense blunted and with an alienation from his heavenly Father set up which may last his lifetime'.¹⁴⁰ Charlotte Yonge repeated an anecdote concerned with the subversion of her childhood discipline by a well-meaning but morally misguided maid.¹⁴¹ Mary Sumner pointed out that French and German governesses were not equipped 'to teach the tenets of our faith'.¹⁴² Consequently some upper-class children received a worse religious education 'than the children in our National Schools and are [...] not grounded at all in the doctrines of our Church'.¹⁴³ Mary Sumner considered this a 'disgrace' and her suggestion that 'uncertainty in matters of religion and the growing scepticism of the present day, may be traced [...] to the want of clear and definite religious teaching in our homes', demonstrates her view that good citizenship and social cohesion were related to conformity to religious standards of behaviour.¹⁴⁴ In seeing the remedy for societal ills in parental interventions she was asserting the worth of the symbolic capital of the mother. She further affirmed the symbolic capital of the mother by associating it with divine authority. Speaking in 1887 at the first MU Diocesan Conference, she said it was: 'the duty of every mother with her own lips to teach her child that he is God's child'.¹⁴⁵ To help dispel 'the miasma of doubt and disbelief' mothers should engage with their children in daily Bible reading and prayer.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 12, 13, 15, 17; *Letter to Mrs Maude on the Mothers' Union in London Failing to Reach Educated Mothers*, 28 Sep. 1917: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/3; *Letter to 'Dearest Minnie' Concerning Revision of the Mothers' Union Cards*: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/1.

¹⁴⁰ Mason, *Home Education*, 18.

¹⁴¹ Yonge, 'A Real Childhood'.

¹⁴² *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 18.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁴⁵ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 31.

¹⁴⁶ *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 20.

Mary Sumner acted to motivate and educate upper-class women in her notions of good parenting, so that they might act as educators amongst women of their own class and rank and file members. In order to achieve pedagogic authority these women needed to exemplify religious conduct: they also needed expertise as speakers on educational themes. Speaking on behalf of an organisation authorised by the Church gave them additional pedagogic authority.

The messages Mary Sumner directed at the upper-class mother in *To Mothers of the Higher Classes* were the same as those addressed to less socially advantaged mothers and some passages were reproduced verbatim.¹⁴⁷ When advice differed, it concerned the practicalities of supervision. Upper-class mothers were unlikely to allow their daughters out without chaperones, or to the public house. Similarly, the upper-class mother did not have to exercise ingenuity in segregating girls and boys at bed or bath time but modesty and the avoidance of bad company were advocated for all classes. Mary Sumner emphasised training in obedience, truthfulness and habits of temperance across the social spectrum.¹⁴⁸ Fostering habits of self-restraint were similarly advocated for all mothers and advice against spoiling children was also a uniting theme. The overriding message was that children should be educated in religion and morality by the example and involvement of mothers and fathers.

The MU's local branch meetings (as noted in Chapter 3) included educational content in the form of talks or Bible study.¹⁴⁹ These initiatives required qualified 'lady' speakers. Further education for an Associate's role was addressed in 'Drawing room' meetings which included the reading of informative papers such as, 'The most satisfactory way of promoting Church teaching through the State Schools'; 'The advantage of higher education in women'; 'The desirability of restricting the publication of Police reports in the Press' or 'The conditions of women at work in factories',¹⁵⁰ which indicate the MU engagement in matters of topical concern beyond the home.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 33, 35, included the same wording as 'Obedience', 33, 'Truth', 39.

¹⁴⁸ 'Temperance'; *To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 26, 27.

¹⁴⁹ *Hearth and Home*, 'Leading Societies'.

¹⁵⁰ Coombs, *George and Mary Sumner*, 110.

Mary Sumner noted that: ‘principles of physical moral and religious education should be studied and reproduced in simple form to the poorer mothers, instruction should be given in sanitary, medical and industrial subjects on cookery and thrift’.¹⁵¹ At the Winchester Diocesan Committee meeting of May 1889, Mary Sumner suggested subjects that would be suitable for Associates to initiate for discussion at branch meetings.¹⁵² Later that year the committee resolved ‘to form a band of speakers’ who could be called upon to address meetings.¹⁵³ Later a list of speakers was given in *MIC*.¹⁵⁴ Mary Sumner encouraged women to become speakers by asserting the ‘wonderful nearness of Christ’ that the committed speaker might experience.¹⁵⁵ She also gave practical advice. ‘Hints to Associates’, also published in *MIC*, offered directions for taking a meeting. Church halls should be made as much like a drawing room as possible, with flowers, a carpet and comfortable chairs not like a hall or a servants’ hall.¹⁵⁶ Associates were encouraged to recommend *The Illustrated Catechism* and *Good News Told in Simple Words* as an aid for mothers in Christian Teaching¹⁵⁷ and were kept up to date with the latest MU publications.¹⁵⁸ In 1899, a lending library for the use of Associates was proposed.¹⁵⁹

Speakers for the MU (as noted in Chapter 3) disseminated information in more public arenas through Diocesan Conferences, Church Conferences and mass meetings. These were educative in affirming the message of the MU amongst its membership and wider audiences, who included clergy and upper and middle-class men. As these occasions were reported in the press they also served to raise the public profile of the organisation and its identification of mothers as religious educators.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵¹ ‘When and Why the Mothers’ Union Started’; For the gendered and class stratified influence in informing curricula for working-class girls See Gomersall, *Working-Class Girls in Nineteenth-Century England: Life, Work and Schooling*.

¹⁵² WDMU Committee, ‘Minute Book 1886-1910’, May 28th 1889.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, November 8th 1889

¹⁵⁴ Anon, ‘List of Speakers’, *MIC*, April 1891, 120.

¹⁵⁵ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 40.

¹⁵⁶ Sumner, ‘Hints to Associates’, 113. ‘Cottage’ indicated working class.

¹⁵⁷ WDMU Committee, ‘Minute Book 1886-1910’, 14th November 1894.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, May 28th 1890.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, November 2nd 1899.

¹⁶⁰ Ridding, ‘Home Duties’; Sumner, ‘Paper Read at the Church Congress in Hull 1890’.

In her efforts to 'stir up' all mothers to exemplify 'the higher life',¹⁶¹ Mary Sumner exalted the symbolic capital of motherhood by associating it with the joy of religious experience and an 'understanding of the value of things eternal'.¹⁶² Through informally educating advantaged women to her notions of religious and educational capital, Mary Sumner sought to recruit them to exercise pedagogic action towards their peers and women of lower social status. By this manoeuvre she sought to offer the rewards of maternal capital and to extend the pedagogic authority of motherhood to include less socially advantaged women, who, in turn, might act as pedagogic workers in upholding the Christian doxa and notions of childhood and childrearing that Mary Sumner professed.

Spreading the word: further field manoeuvres in education

The dissemination of religious knowledge through printed materials

Expansion in institutional educational provision coincided with a trend towards expansion in the mass production of popular media that reflected the increasing literacy of those lower down (but not at the very bottom of) the social scale.¹⁶³ Advisory literature on religious themes in the form of tracts, pamphlets and magazines proliferated, as those seeking to uphold a religious doxa, notably the Religious Tract Society, used publication to promote their views.¹⁶⁴ Disapproval of the 'wrong sort' of literature, as epitomised by the sensational 'penny dreadful' aimed at working-class youths, reflected concern amongst upholders of religion, or the social status quo, that reading had the power to corrupt morals and encourage anti-social behaviour.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹To *Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 11, 60.

¹⁶²*Ibid.*, 60, 59.

¹⁶³Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*; Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750-1914*. Vincent suggests that there is no evidence to link directly formal schooling and the growth of literacy.

¹⁶⁴The Religious Tract Society (1799) reflected evangelical revival. Sympathetic to Protestant denominations but anti-Roman Catholic, it published *The Sunday at Home* from 1880, the *Boys Own Paper* 1879 and *The Girls Own Paper*.

¹⁶⁵Knight, *The Nineteenth Century Church*, 37; Religious publishing was profitable. Williams, 'Is There a Bible in the House?' Gender Religion and Family Culture'; Kelly Mayes, 'The Disease of Reading and Victorian Periodicals', in *Literature in the*

Mary Sumner used publishing to disseminate her views and to counter ideas or material she felt ran counter to the doxa she upheld. Despite the regularity of branch meetings and the large scale attendance at mass meetings, leaflets and in particular the MU magazines that members were obliged to buy, provided a means to spread educational material to a much wider audience.¹⁶⁶ Printed material had the advantage that it might be passed to neighbours or other family members. Written material also reached members overseas.

The distribution of literature was given attention at Winchester Diocesan Committee meetings. Existing Church organisation and other methods were employed to circulate material. In 1888, the committee resolved to circulate MU pamphlets to parishes where there was as yet no MU and request their distribution amongst parishioners.¹⁶⁷ Four years later, back numbers of the *MUJ* were distributed to soldiers' wives on troop ships at Portsmouth.¹⁶⁸ Free grants of literature were made to poor parishes in the diocese and to one in east London.¹⁶⁹ Associates were urged to obtain fresh subscriptions towards the cost of literature.¹⁷⁰

The power of reading: education through the Mothers' Union Magazines, Charlotte Yonge, Mothers in Council, the Mothers' Union Journal

The rules on the MU card encapsulated Mary Sumner's understanding of the power of reading to influence the reader for good or ill: 'The power of books and general reading in particular in forming character and opinion is well known'.¹⁷¹ The original card for 'ordinary' members, advocated daily Bible reading in Rule 8 and the admonishment, 'Be careful that your children do not read bad books or

Marketplace: Nineteenth-Century British Publishing and Reading Practices Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture Series, No. 5., ed. John O. Jordan and Robert L. Patten (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995).

¹⁶⁶Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 147.

¹⁶⁷WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', 5th June 1888.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 8 June 1892.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 21 Nov. 1890

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 14 Nov. 1894

¹⁷¹*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 25.

police reports', came further up the list as Rule 5.¹⁷² Mary Sumner's feelings on the subject were unequivocal. In an address to members she wrote:

Bad reading is like poison; it injures, it destroys, not the body, but the mind and conscience [...] some of the worse suggestions to break God's laws are taught in print. I dare not speak of the infidel books and papers which are circulated in this country.¹⁷³

Mothers of the 'Higher Classes' had a similar message:

Unprincipled or trashy novels, whether French or English should be strictly forbidden, because the habit of reading bad novels dissipates and weakens the energies of the mind [...] But the best literature - poetry, fiction and history - should be given freely and in this way a wholesome taste is formed for that which is good and ennobling.¹⁷⁴

Mary Sumner was not alone in her belief in the power of reading to influence the conduct and character of the reader.¹⁷⁵ She shared the middle and upper-class anxiety about the stability of the social order that was reflected in the belief that sensational literature was an incentive to crime.¹⁷⁶ Mary Sumner considered that 'bad books' and material on scandalous topics would corrupt the national as well as individual character.¹⁷⁷ Her interest in promoting the 'right' sort of reading was shared by members of her network.¹⁷⁸ Literature and plays were selected as subjects for discussion at the MU London Conference of 1896.¹⁷⁹ Educational materials such as 'Mr Rule's scheme for Bible reading' were discussed and recommended at Diocesan Committee meetings,¹⁸⁰ and in the MU quarterlies, which exemplified the 'right' sort of reading.

¹⁷²*Home Life*, 6. Police Reports published in newspapers or the sensational Police Gazette might contain details of violent crime, sexual misdemeanours, drunkenness or other examples of immorality. Similar sentiments were expressed on the card for 'educated' mothers.

¹⁷³'Reading', *Home Life*, 84.

¹⁷⁴*To Mothers of the Higher Classes*, 25.

¹⁷⁵John Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies* (Nelson: Hendon, 2000 (f/p1865)), provides an influential example.

¹⁷⁶Patrick A. Dunae, 'Penny Dreadfuls: Late Nineteenth-Century Boys' Literature and Crime', *Victorian Studies* 22, no. 2 (1979); Anon, 'A Youthful Burglar', *The Hampshire Chronicle*, 6 Jan. 1877. The Chronicle reported that he was 'inflamed by the study of sensational literature'.

¹⁷⁷Mary Sumner, *Letter to the Editor The Times, 'Improper Books'*, 9 Dec. 1909; Sumner, Erskine and Wilberforce, *Letter to the Editor The Times, 'Undesirable Literature'*.

¹⁷⁸*Letter to the Editor The Times, 'Undesirable Literature'*.

¹⁷⁹WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', 4 Oct. 1895.

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 8 Nov. 1893.

The magazine *Mothers in Council (MIC)* (1891) was initially funded by George Sumner.¹⁸¹ It added to a well-established tradition of material aimed at a female readership located in the 'leisured' middle class.¹⁸² *The Mothers' Union Journal (MUJ)* (1888) reflected the trend in publication catering for a market for increased mass literacy.¹⁸³ The two tier editions, aimed at different classes, followed the pattern adopted previously by the GFS. *Friendly Leaves*, its magazine for members, with its mix of news, stories and notes on Bible study, was similar in format to the *MUJ* and some material appeared in both magazines.¹⁸⁴ There were further links between the MU and GFS publications. Charlotte Yonge who was to edit *MIC* was the GFS's Diocesan Literature Correspondent and submitted material to its publications.¹⁸⁵ Her protégée, co-editor and successor as editor of the *Monthly Packet*, Christabel Coleridge, also became the editor of *Friendly Leaves*.¹⁸⁶

The MU magazines addressed religious themes, including missionary activity and issues of concern, such as secular schooling, with the intention of informing the views of readers.¹⁸⁷ The theme of educating the readers to be educators was common to both MU magazines and Mary Sumner was a regular contributor. *MIC* assumed a highly literate readership of middle and upper-class women, who were likely to have received, like Mary Sumner and the magazine's editor, Charlotte

¹⁸¹George Sumner edited *MIC* 1901-8. He contributed a report on the proceedings of the Anglican House of Laymen on the religious education of the Middle and Upper Classes, *MIC*, April 1891, 69-71. Sales of magazines and other literature were a key source of income for the MU. In 1914, an additional magazine, *The Workers' Paper* was published.

¹⁸²Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*, 65-80. *The Monthly Packet* is an example.

¹⁸³Sally Mitchell, 'The New Herione: Penny Weekly Magazines of the 1870s', in *The Fallen Angel: Chastity and Women's Reading 1835-1880* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1981).

¹⁸⁴M. Bramston, 'In the Workhouse', *MUJ*, July 1903, 65.

¹⁸⁵Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*.

¹⁸⁶Georgina O'Brien Hill, 'Charlotte Yonge's 'Goosedom'', *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*, no. 8.1. [<http://www.ncgsjournal.com/issue81/hill.htm>, accessed 21 Aug. 2012]; Elizabeth Lovegrove, 'Dangerous Display': Charlotte Yonge, Christabel Coleridge and Pseudonyms in the *Monthly Packet*', *Women's History Magazine* 2013, 12-18. Christabel R. Coleridge and Charlotte Mary Yonge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge: Her Life and Letters* (London; New York: Macmillan & Co., 1903). Through *The Monthly Packet* and the privately circulated *Barnacle*, Charlotte Yonge acted as mentor to young women writers. Christabel Coleridge (1843-1921) mentored by Charlotte Yonge as one of the 'Goslings' was her first biographer.

¹⁸⁷Rebecca Styler, 'The Contexts of Women's Literary Theology in the Nineteenth Century', in *Literary Theology by Women Writers of the Nineteenth Century* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 3-18, discusses the uses of secular writing to pass on religious doxa and construct women's religious identities.

Yonge, the kind of education evoked in the latter's novels. The *MUJ* included entertaining fiction that was intended to counter 'the low bad stories sold from a penny to a shilling to the masses of people who crave for exciting literature', the effects of which Mary Sumner (and others) were so fearful.¹⁸⁸

In requesting Charlotte Yonge (her fellow Associate in the GFS) to edit *MIC*, Mary Sumner associated the magazine with a figure invested with considerable symbolic capital as a 'good churchwoman' and with pedagogic authority as a popular educator. Charlotte Yonge was a prolific novelist noted for her morally improving works.¹⁸⁹ She was the author of text books such as *English Church History*¹⁹⁰ and historical tales for children.¹⁹¹ She also had a reputation as editor of the highly respectable *Monthly Packet* (1851 to 1890), in which 'appropriate' reading was discussed, a theme that was pursued in *MIC* and in the *MUJ*.¹⁹²

Charlotte Yonge, like Mary Sumner, had been home educated to a good standard by interested parents¹⁹³ and brought up in the expectation that she should participate in the education, particularly the religious education, of the 'lower' classes. Her reminiscences of a disciplined and somewhat austere childhood, which featured in *MIC*, note that:

...from seven years old my mother took me to the Sunday-school, first to learn and then to teach, when however I was much too young to be put in authority. I was a more conscientious than a religious child. Except [for] a vehement pleasure in the Sunday-school - which was not so much for religion's sake as for the love of teaching...¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁸Sumner, 'Reading', *Home Life*. 83 -94. 86.

¹⁸⁹Dennis, *Charlotte Yonge (1823-1901): Novelist of the Oxford Movement: A Literature of Victorian Culture and Society*.

¹⁹⁰Charlotte Mary Yonge, *English Church History, Adapted for Use in Schools, Etc* (London: National Society, 1883), an example of her National Society publications.

¹⁹¹*Aunt Charlotte's Stories of English History for the Little Ones* (London, 1873), an example of her large output for children.

¹⁹²Moruzi, "Never Read Anything That Can at All Unsettle Your Religious Faith!: Reading and Writing in the *Monthly Packet*'.

¹⁹³Yonge, 'A Real Childhood'. Charlotte's mother followed the Edgeworth book on education; Charlotte Yonge, 'A Real Childhood - the Teens', *MIC*, January 1893. 3, 4. Her Father taught her arithmetic, geometry and Latin.

¹⁹⁴Yonge, 'A Real Childhood'; The childhood memories of another MU and GFS activist can be found in Creighton, *Memoir of a Victorian Woman*.

Charlotte Yonge sustained a life long association with village schooling, both Sunday and day.¹⁹⁵ Her notes on 'Sunday School Tickets', in the November 1876 *Otterbourne Parish Magazine*, illustrate her understanding of children and notions of pedagogy:

A ticket is the reward for a sacred lesson repeated by heart or writing answers to a question. It ought to be understood that ill repeated lessons do not deserve a ticket and that it is unfair and unjust to give one not properly earned. Some children can learn more easily but the amount must be proportional to their capacity by the teacher. Tickets are encouragements not so much coin to be purchased by repeating anything however badly as some little girls seem to think.¹⁹⁶

She provided an appealing portrait of a fictional school and its pupils in the 'Langley' tales,¹⁹⁷ which Christabel Coleridge (c.1903) anticipated would be 'in 1950 or so... valuable evidence of what the Church of England did for education and civilization when she still had the village schools in her hand'.¹⁹⁸ Christabel Coleridge also asserts Charlotte Yonge's influence in encouraging young ladies to act as educational philanthropists, by providing fictional role models who start a school (*The Daisy Chain*) or take GFS classes, as in *The Two Sides of the Shield* and by making schoolchildren appealing, via the 'Langley School' stories.¹⁹⁹ Just as the 'Langley' tales give a picture of village schooling for the poor, Charlotte Yonge's novels²⁰⁰ give an insight into the educational experience and aspirations of home educated young ladies, themes that were reflected in the pages of *MIC*.

Charlotte Young's childhood reminiscences were not the only articles on the upbringing of children in *MIC*. Following an introduction from Mary Sumner that explained that the purpose of the magazine was to aid its readers in gaining the expertise required in order to accomplish the 'exalted mission' of childrearing in

¹⁹⁵ Austin Whitaker, *Winchester Memories (20)*, *Mrs Elliot Talks About Her Old Schoolteacher Charlotte Yonge*, Winchester Memories Oral History Recordings: HRO AV/2/28/51.

¹⁹⁶ Charlotte Yonge, *Otterbourne Parish Magazine*, November 1876: HRO 77M78 M/Z1.

¹⁹⁷ Charlotte Mary Yonge, *Lads and Lasses of Langley* (London: W. Smith, 1881); *Langley Little Ones. Six Stories* (London: Walter Smith, 1882); *Langley Adventures* (London: Walter Smith, 1884), represent the series.

¹⁹⁸ Christabel Coleridge is quoted in Ethel Romaines, *Charlotte Mary Yonge an Appreciation* (London: Mowbray, 1908), 34.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁰⁰ Charlotte Mary Yonge, *The Daisy Chain, or, Aspirations: A Family Chronicle* (London: Virago, 1988 f/p 1856).

the 'sphere which God has appointed' in the home,²⁰¹ the initial editorial announced the intention that:

Essays will be given in babyhood, childhood, boyhood, girlhood and youth, notices of books likely to be useful [...] in each number some difficult points in training will be propounded and a few pages devoted to mothers' meetings and literature for men.²⁰²

Mary Sumner's, 'Concerning Infants', emphasised the importance of the affectionate maternal attention to young children: 'Do not fail to abundantly caress him and speak kindly'.²⁰³ Articles that signalled the dangers of parental neglect were designed to prick the consciences of upper/middle-class women: 'Who Can Prevent It? Physical Dangers', gave anecdotes of illness and accidents attributable to excessive delegation of child care to servants.²⁰⁴ The following issue also reflected implicit anxiety about class in enumerating the moral perils the child of the neglectful mother might face.²⁰⁵ The importance of the parental role in moral training was also addressed in articles such as 'Willy's Will', which dealt with moulding the character of the young child. The Reverend E. B. Layard, in 'Boys and Religion', advised mothers to become the confidantes of their boys in order to fortify them against the moral perils of school.²⁰⁶

Authors of *MIC* articles were interested in developments in pedagogic method.

Mary Johnson's, 'Bend the Twig and Shape the Tree', advocated the pedagogy of Froebel:

The system of amusement and instruction formulated by Froebel and his disciples is so valuable and comprehensive I earnestly advise all parents to visit a genuine kindergarten to study the principles as well as to copy the practices there inculcated. For all mothers and indeed fathers it is right to know how to teach their children [...] it is a pity to let them all have to begin at School, when we know and they can learn.²⁰⁷

²⁰¹ Mary Sumner, 'Introduction', *MIC*, January 1891, 5, 6.

²⁰² Charlotte Yonge, 'Editorial', *MIC*, January 1891, 11-12.

²⁰³ Mary Sumner, 'Concerning Infants', *MIC*, July 1891, 138-145.

²⁰⁴ A Mother, 'Who Can Prevent It? Physical Dangers', *MIC*, January 1891, 14-20; See Charlotte Mary Yonge, *The Daisy Chain; or, Aspirations. A Family Chronicle. By the Author of the Heir of Redclyffe, Etc.* (London: John W. Parker & Son, 1856). It includes a cautionary tale of a baby poisoned by laudanum by the ignorant unsupervised nursemaid.

²⁰⁵ A Mother, 'Who Can Prevent It? Moral Dangers', *MIC*, April 1891, 85-88.

²⁰⁶ Rev. E. B. Layard, 'Boys and Religion', *MIC*, January 1891. 'Boys and The Formation of Character', April 1892, 98-107 addressed similar themes.

²⁰⁷ Mary Johnson, 'Bend the Twig and Shape the Tree', *MIC*, January 1891, 33-41.

The pages of *MIC* reflected the concern of 'lady mothers' and attitudes to the education of daughters against the context of developments in the provision of formal secondary schooling and higher education for middle and upper-class girls.²⁰⁸ Whilst *MIC* did not challenge the purpose of girls' education as preparation for motherhood and home duties, it reflected the negotiation and diversity of interpretation as to what means of education were most appropriate. The tone and content of *MIC* locates it as responding to an aspiration amongst women to be better informed and more authoritative. The key issue identified in articles on the choice of educational setting was that the religious faith and moral standing of the girl should not be compromised. Yet, the insistence on femininity and respectability emphasised in the curricula and ethos of intellectually aspirational girls' schools and the discouragement of social mixing in elite establishments such as Cheltenham Ladies' College,²⁰⁹ suggests that readers of *MIC* may have also been concerned to preserve their daughters' social status as young ladies.²¹⁰

The article 'High Schools and Home Education' considered that there were potential drawbacks to both. It urged mothers to be vigilant in the choice of school or staff for home teaching so that moral standards might not be compromised.²¹¹ What the article left unvoiced was the concern that schools might be a source of social contamination if girls mixed with those of inferior social status. 'The Modern Education of Girls' and 'Foreign Studies', addressed the recurrent theme of the dangers of foreign governesses, whose religion and moral standards might be misguided and inferior.²¹² In 1892, 'Girls and University Education', gave a cautious welcome to university education for girls as compatible with the development of womanly talents, with the proviso: 'never let

²⁰⁸Burstyn, *Victorian Education*.

²⁰⁹Joyce F. Goodman, 'Girls' Public Day School Company (Act. 1872-1905)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, Oct. 2005), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/theme/94164>, accessed 28 Aug. 2013]. Girls' Public Day School Company schools were more socially inclusive of a broader predominantly middle-class spectrum.

²¹⁰Delamont, 'The Nineteenth Century Woman', 158. 'Schools had to fight to be allowed to teach girls all the subjects boys received', 'The Domestic Ideology and Women's Education', 174-177; Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*: 105-109.

²¹¹Mrs Knight, 'High Schools and Home Education', *MIC*, April 1891, 107-113.

²¹²Anon, 'The Modern Education of Girls', *MIC*, January 1892, 43-46; 'Foreign Studies', *MIC*, April 1892, 108-113.

a girl enter the battlefield of university life whose religious convictions are confused'.²¹³

Prominent members of the MU reflected varying interpretations of appropriate educational provision for girls. Whilst Louise Creighton, Diocesan President for Peterborough and member of the NUWW,²¹⁴ was a keen advocate of university education,²¹⁵ Lucy Soulsby, MU delegate at international conferences on morality and Girls 'Public Day School Company headmistress, opposed the opening of degrees to women.²¹⁶ They were united however, in envisaging a more serious education for women and arguing for it, as enhancing conventional religiously legitimised notions of womanliness.²¹⁷

Charlotte Yonge's shifting position on educational provision for girls illustrates the cautious negotiation of women's access to the expanding field of education reflected in the pages of *MIC*. Although an advocate of education for women and sympathetic to the pleasure of intellectual endeavour, she initially (1886) resisted the idea of a college for women, claiming that superior women were formed by home influence and best educated there by their own efforts.²¹⁸ Through her writing in the *Monthly Packet* and the privately circulated *Barnacle*, Charlotte Yonge nurtured a generation of women in this category, some of whom went on to be pioneer educators.²¹⁹ Amongst other notable educationalists and writers in Charlotte Yonge's circle was Elizabeth Wordsworth,²²⁰ the first principal of the

²¹³Edith Robson, 'Girls and University Education', *MIC*, January 1892, 29-32.

²¹⁴See chapter on mission for the remit of the National Union of Women Workers and Chapter 3 for Louise Creighton, wife of Bishop Mandell Creighton.

²¹⁵Two of Creighton's daughters attended university, Lucia (1874-1947) at Newnham and Gemma (1887-1958) at Lady Margaret Hall. Creighton, *Memoir of a Victorian Woman*: 134; Covert, *A Victorian Marriage*: 130, 238.

²¹⁶Delamont, 'The Nineteenth Century Woman', 154-160. Delamont identifies 'uncompromising' and 'separatist' views on appropriate higher education. The former favoured existing curricula aimed at males, the latter felt reform was needed to suit women and men; Kate Flint, 'Soulsby, Lucy Helen Muriel (1856-1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/48573>, accessed 21 June 2013]. See Appendix 2. At Cambridge Emily Davies established Girton on separatist lines; Jemima Clough at Newham favoured special women's examinations. At Oxford, Somerville was uncompromising and Lady Margaret Hall separatist.

²¹⁷Bush, 'Special Strengths for Their Own Special Duties'.

²¹⁸Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 146; *Letter to Emily Davies*.

²¹⁹O'Brien Hill, 'Charlotte Yonge's 'Goosedom''.

²²⁰Romaines, *Charlotte Mary Yonge an Appreciation*, 137-158. For Elizabeth Wordsworth, see Appendix 2.

Oxford women's college, Lady Margaret Hall (1878), to which Charlotte Yonge gave a guarded welcome, hoping that it would be run on religious principles to raise the standard of womanhood.²²¹ By 1893, Charlotte Yonge acknowledged public examinations as a means for a girl 'to be useful with your talents'²²² and her reconciliation in old age, to the idea of university life for women was marked by the inauguration of a university scholarship fund in her name in 1899. This was available to girls of the Winchester High School, which had its founder and first headmistress in Charlotte Young's protégé Anna Bramston. Charlotte Yonge was a member of the school's governing body.²²³

MIC offered advice on reading to support parental pedagogic expertise. The article 'Mental Growing Pains' advised on fiction as an aid to discussing character for adolescent girls.²²⁴ In 'Books for the Nursery', Charlotte Yonge suggested that fairy tales should be an occasional treat. It was her view that reading should be 'above the intellect rather than below'.²²⁵ For older boys and girls she noted:

Generally the same books that boys like are pleasant and exciting for girls. But boys after they are scholars do not much care for books about school boys - they know their own world too well - they like real information, if they must have adventure fiction designated as 'books for boys' Ballantyne and Henty provide interest and morality.²²⁶

There was occasional advice on what adult readers might read on religion in the interest of self education. Charlotte Yonge disagreed with John Ruskin's assertion that women should avoid theology. In order to teach their children, 'parents should imbibe good doctrine'. Amongst her recommendations were the sermons of Charles Kingsley and 'Bishop Pearson's "On the Creed" ... strong meat but a really able woman would be all the better for it'.²²⁷

²²¹Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 146-147.

²²²Charlotte Yonge, *The Girl's Little Book* (London: Skeffington and Son (f/p1893)), 38.

²²³Margaret Mare and Alicia Percival, *Victorian Best-Seller: The World of Charlotte M. Yonge* (London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1947), 234-235; Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 161-162. For Anna Bramston, see Appendix 2.

²²⁴Charlotte Yonge, 'Mental Growing Pains', *MIC*, January 1891, 42,45.

²²⁵'Books', *MIC*, January 1891, 57-60, 57,58.

²²⁶*Ibid.*, 58. Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*. Henty's and Ballantyne's manly Christian heroes' adventures had an imperial context; Susan Walton, *Imagining Soldiers and Fathers in the Mid-Victorian Era: Charlotte Yonge's Models of Manliness* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2010).

²²⁷Charlotte Yonge, 'Church Catechism', *MIC*, January 1891, 24-29.

Recommended reading compatible with Anglican Church views was also a regular feature in the *MUJ*. The April 1902 edition recommended a selection of missionary stories for children but regretted (following a reader's complaint) that W.T. Stead's 'Bairns' Bible' was not after all to be recommended.²²⁸ Mary Sumner considered that parents should encourage children to find pleasure and learning through good reading, both religious and secular. Advice on appropriate material could be sought from the clergyman or schoolmaster and interest should be shown in what children have read.²²⁹ She thought that good parents should read for their own self education in order to teach their children and included girls in her advocacy for education in scientific and technical principles:

Sensible parents will read up certain subjects so as to be able to 'talk well and wisely' for the education of their children. A Father can help his boys and girls to understand a great deal about the moon and stars ... or if he be a mechanic, he will explain to his children, in simple language the elementary laws of mechanics and some of the interesting discoveries of modern times.²³⁰

Mary Sumner elaborated on the theme of reading for self-improvement and gave a list of men of substance, who had made good despite humble origins through 'healthy reading'.²³¹ Her (implicitly ambivalent) attitude was that 'good' reading might enable social progress and would not lead, if undertaken in the religious home that accepted the social order as divinely ordained, to challenges to social stratification.²³² The encouragement of reading for self-culture was also promoted in the GFS, which was united with the MU in its stance on morality. Both the GFS and MU saw educational self-culture as an aid to the awareness of and interest in, public affairs that they considered contributory to good citizenship.²³³

Suggestions in *Friendly Leaves* in an article titled, 'How Working Girls May Help Their Sex and Country', for good 'but not highbrow reading', included Ruskin and Carlyle. Mrs Henry Wood's *Danesbury House* 'promoted a warm interest in the Temperance question' and 'on the lighter side', for 'it is quite impossible for working girls to jump on the plane of elevated literature at one bound', George

²²⁸Anon, 'Recommended Books', *MUJ*, April 1902. The recommendation was regretted on the grounds of the omission of key stories.

²²⁹Sumner, 'Reading', 97.

²³⁰*Ibid.*

²³¹*Ibid.*, 92.

²³²'To Fathers', 160-161.

²³³Beaumont, *Housewives and Citizens*.

Elliot, Mary Craik, Charles Kingsley, Miss Yonge, Annie S. Swan, Miss Braddon, Walter Scott and Louisa M. Alcott were recommended.²³⁴

There was an expectation that readers might contribute material for publication in *MIC*. In 1899, it was resolved that writers of special articles in *MIC* were to be rewarded with presentation copies of the edition to which they had contributed.²³⁵ *MUJ* readers were also given the opportunity to submit short articles but contributions had to conform to editorial scrutiny in respect of subject and standards of literacy.²³⁶

The *MUJ* encouraged its readers to recognise the religious doxa as encapsulated in the Objects and Rules of the MU through a mixture of advice and exhortation, often via fictional examples. In addition to reading [Rule 5], Mary Sumner wrote on a variety of topics, including marriage and 'Mothers' Work Outside the Home', of which she disapproved on the grounds that working mothers had neither the time nor energy to fulfil their homemaking and educative duties.²³⁷ Parental responsibility for their children's religious education was prioritised. Mary Sumner specified what children should know and how it should be taught in articles that elaborated on the rules on the MU card, these included: Bible study [Rule 8], parental example [Rules 6 and 7], purity [Rules 1 and 4 and truth [Rule 1]. The *MUJ* gave ideas for teaching children religious knowledge, contributed by other authors. The series, 'Mother's Teaching' [Rule 8], ran over several numbers from April 1902 and took the form of a question and answer dialogue between a mother and her children on religious themes.²³⁸

²³⁴Priscilla E. Moulder, 'How Working Girls May Help Their Sex and Country, by a Working Woman', *Friendly Leaves*, March 1907, 112-114. The GFS had a reading union scheme which required members to answer questions on recommended texts both biblical and secular as noted in Chapter 4.

²³⁵WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', 20 Feb. 1899

²³⁶Lady Jenkyns, 'On Poetry', *MUJ*, April 1903. 17.

²³⁷Gerry Holloway, 'Let the Women Be Alive!': The Construction of the Married Working Woman in the Industrial Women's Movement, 1890-1914', in *Radical Femininity; Womens' Self Representation in the Public Sphere*, ed. Eileen Janes Yeo (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 173-177. Holloway gives context to Mary Sumner's views and a working-class perspective on them as out of touch with the realities of working-class life.

²³⁸Anon, 'Mother's Teaching', *MUJ*, January 1902, 15-16. The series continued through the year.

Readers were also informed on matters of health with topics including vaccination, children's clothing and ventilation. There was an overlap between practical advice and moral exhortation which reflected eugenic concerns. The January 1905 edition of the *MUJ* included the article, 'Are we Growing Worse? Gleanings for Mothers from the Report on Physical Degeneration 1904'.²³⁹ Ventilation was linked to temperance in the article 'How wives are to Blame for their Husband's becoming Drunkards'. In addition to bad food, bad temper and slovenly dress, badly ventilated bedrooms were suggested as a stimulus to drinking.²⁴⁰ Temperance [Rule3] also featured repeatedly in the *MUJ* fiction which took the form of cautionary tales. 'A Dangerous Errand' was typical: it recounted the tragedy of brothers sent to fetch alcohol from the public house where they taste gin. On the way home the inebriated younger child strays into the traffic, is run over and dies, leaving the elder to vow never to touch strong drink.²⁴¹ Stories also illustrated the virtues of thrift and the perils of gambling.²⁴²

Articles in the *MUJ* indicate its conservative and moral perspective on social issues. 'Girls' Professions', a series that considered the advantages and disadvantages of employment open to girls with Rules 1 and 4 in mind, commenced in January 1904 with advocacy by 'an old grandmother' for domestic service as a morally safe occupation. A subsequent article in the October 1904 issue condemned bar work as morally dangerous on the grounds that girls would be exposed to the twin evils of drink and rough male company: 'We beg parents to forbid girls becoming barmaids'.²⁴³ The *MUJ* did not discuss the choice of occupations for boys but did comment on expectations of their behaviour and

²³⁹'Are We Growing Worse? Gleanings for Mothers from the Report on Physical Degeneration 1904', *MUJ*, January 1905. There was a conflation of moral and physical failings which reflected eugenic concerns. It was assumed that both could be passed on to the next generation. According to Mary Sumner, maternal neglect 'is one cause of the deterioration of the race in some classes'. See Sumner, 'Mothers' Work Outside', 131.

²⁴⁰Lucy A. Hudson, 'How Wives Are to Blame for Their Husbands Becoming Drunkards', *MUJ*, January 1902, 11-12; Mason, *Home Education*, 29-34.

²⁴¹'A Dangerous Errand', *MUJ*, April 1902, 42-43. 'Camomile Tea', January 1902, 4-7 and 'Bobbie's Halfpenny', July 1902, 61-63 provide further examples of the temperance theme. Recipes for non-alcoholic drinks were also featured.

²⁴²Anon, 'Three Scenes in a Woman's Life', *MUJ*, January 1903, 5-7; Holloway, "Let the Women Be Alive!", 175-176. Holloway comments on the assumption that working-class women needed the advice and patronage of middle-class women who assumed the right to impart moral and practical knowledge to their social inferiors.

²⁴³*MUJ*, January, 1904. 5, 6.

training.²⁴⁴ Mary Sumner and writers for the *MUJ* were keen that working-class men should receive the MU message. Wives were encouraged to exert ‘influence’ over husbands but some articles included passages directed at fathers.²⁴⁵ However, no such presumption of pedagogic authority over middle or upper-class men occurred in the pages of *MIC*.²⁴⁶

The pages of the *MUJ* and *MIC* were a medium for pedagogic action in that they sought to inform and shape opinion towards conforming to and supporting, the gendered and socially stratified religious doxa with which the MU was identified. Readers mis/recognising the doxa upheld by the MU were invited to identify themselves with the pedagogic authority of the organisation as pedagogic workers, via the Christian upbringing of their children for Church and country. They could also share by association the pedagogic authority invested in the foundress and other bearers of symbolic religious and educative capital.

Education matters in the Mothers’ Union and networking with other agents and organisations

As the MU expanded, its educational activity also grew in scope. In 1898, two years after the formal centralisation of the MU, Charlotte Yonge and Mrs (later Lady) Jenkyns were made Central Council members in acknowledgement of the significance of their editorial roles in MU publications.²⁴⁷ In response to the demand for publications and their contribution to the income of the MU, in 1906 the Central Council appointed a literature committee, chaired by Lady Horatia Erskine.²⁴⁸ The success of the MU as a recognised ‘brand’ is indicated by Porter, Woodward and Erskine, who noted that an advantage of the legal incorporation

²⁴⁴Sumner, ‘Purity’. The article collected in *Home Life* (see above) first appeared in the *MUJ* October 1888, 25-26.

²⁴⁵*Ibid.*

²⁴⁶The addresses were reprinted in *Home Life*.

²⁴⁷Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 10. Lady Jenkyns resigned in 1919 after 31 years at the *MUJ*. The publication of the magazines was passed to the S.P.C.K.

²⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 113. By 1921, three sub-committees dealing with publications, libraries and education had been established.

of the MU as a Church body was that it would allow redress against publishers, or other societies appropriating the name of the MU.²⁴⁹

The MU worked to endorse the (Anglican religious) doxa by collaboration in educational projects with likeminded groups and individuals in religious and educational and philanthropic fields. Cooperation with the Bishop of London's 'Council for the Home Training of Children in Religion', in 1907, marked MU progress in the field of education and is noted by Porter, Woodward and Erskine as the genesis of the society's religious education department. The MU had sustained aspirations to influence school curricula for many years previously. 'How the Mothers' Union May Help the Moral and Religious Work of Schools' had been on the Central Conference agenda a decade earlier.²⁵⁰ However, it was not until 1913 that Mrs George Chitty was appointed Correspondent of the Religious Education Scheme. The scheme sought to advise on a syllabus and to produce and vet material suitable for religious teaching. According to the author of *Fifty Years*, 'No publication is passed until it has been read and passed by several people of responsibility and experience'.²⁵¹

The similarity of the ideas of Charlotte Mason the founder of the PNEU, to those expressed by Mary Sumner has been noted above.²⁵² There was a crossover of personnel between the PNEU and the MU at leadership level. Mrs Francis Steinthal, who had given evidence to the 1909 Gorell Commission on Divorce on behalf of the MU (as noted in Chapter 3), had been involved in the PNEU from 1886. She was noted in the July 1912 edition of the PNEU magazine, *The Parents' Review*, along with future MU President, Mrs Wilberforce, amongst PNEU Vice Presidents.²⁵³ The previous year, the appointment of MU representatives to serve on the central council of the PNEU formalised this relationship.²⁵⁴ At the 1912 PNEU conference in Winchester, MU delegates included religious education

²⁴⁹Ibid., 124. This was accomplished in 1912 and defined the MU as a Church body and gave it legal status in holding property. It required a revised constitution and a single membership card.

²⁵⁰WDMU Committee, 'Minute Book 1886-1910', 22nd November 1897.

²⁵¹Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 131-132; Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years*, 19-20.

²⁵²'When and Why the Mothers' Union Started'.

²⁵³Charlotte Mason, (ed) *The Parents' Review*, July 1912; .See also Armitt Library, Charlotte Mason Collection: CM31 and CM51.

²⁵⁴Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 126.

Correspondent Mrs George Chitty and Lady Laura Ridding who chaired a lecture session on voluntary work for girls.²⁵⁵ Two years later, in 1915, the MU held a joint conference with members of the Headmistresses' Association 'with a view to cooperation in the religious training of girls'.²⁵⁶ It was also sympathetic to the Girl Guides, who in 1917, were considered to be 'providing a wide and sound training for the wives and mothers of tomorrow'.²⁵⁷

The MU also drew on supporters with an expertise and reputation outside the sphere of schooling (such as purity campaigner Ellice Hopkins) to advocate its aims and methods via printed material.²⁵⁸ Ellice Hopkins' *Early training of Girls and Boys: An Appeal to Working Women*, first published in 1882,²⁵⁹ was reissued in 1902, with the subtitle, '*Especially intended for Mothers' Unions*. It covered themes that Mary Sumner was to tackle in very much the same way. Mary Sumner's address 'Purity' from the *MUJ* of October 1888, mirrors Ellice Hopkins' advice on separate bathing, the contrivance of segregated sleeping arrangements for boys via the use of hammocks, preventing girls from mixing with loose company in the streets and not sending children to the public house.²⁶⁰

MU Council member, Lucy Soulsby, noted above for her opposition to girls taking degrees, had secured her reputation as the Headmistress of Oxford High, a Girls' Public Day School Company establishment.²⁶¹ She produced numerous pamphlets on educational and religious themes including *Stray Thoughts for Mothers and Teachers* (1897) and *Talks to Mothers* 1916.²⁶² Her *Two Aspects of Education* (1899) *I Self Control* and *II Fortitude, Humility and Large Heartedness*, advocated

²⁵⁵Ibid., 68-69; Charlotte Mason and Henrietta Franklin, *Parents' National Education Union Children's Gathering 1912*, Charlotte Mason, Armit Library: CM 23/CMC 158.

²⁵⁶Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 135.

²⁵⁷Ibid., 143.

²⁵⁸Morgan, *A Passion for Purity*.

²⁵⁹Ellice Hopkins, *On the Early Training of Girls and Boys. An Appeal to Working Women, Etc* (London: Hatchards, 1882). See Appendix 2.

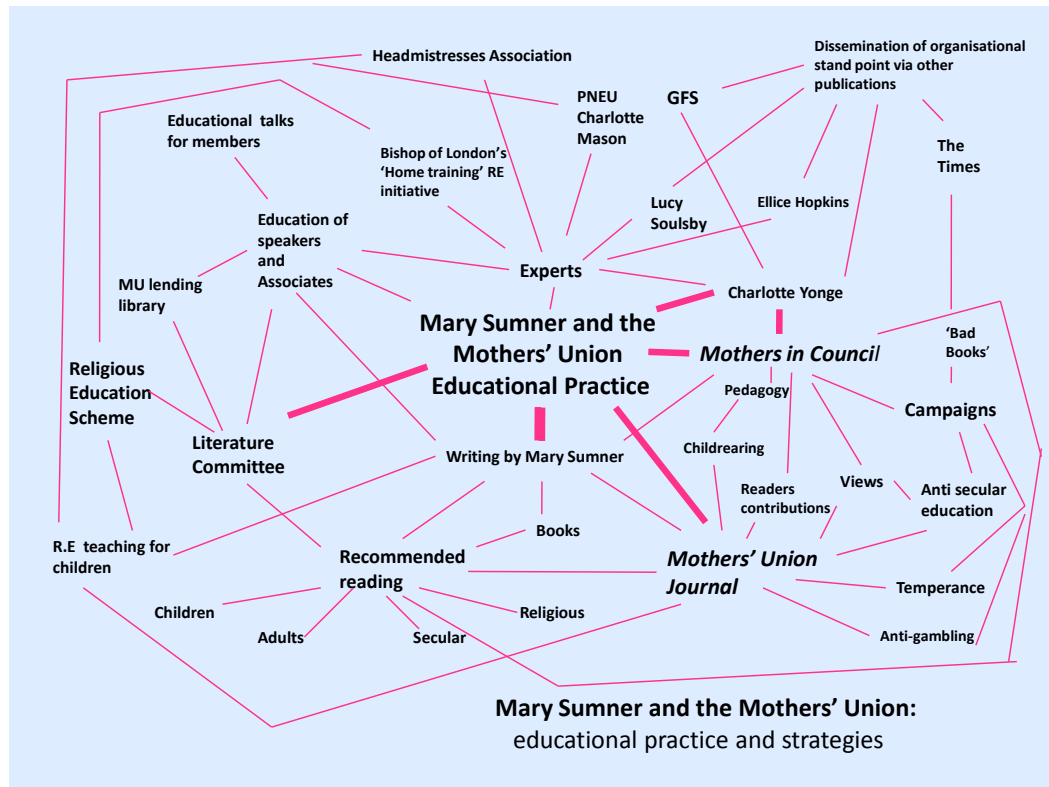
²⁶⁰Sumner, 'Purity'. *MUJ*, October 1888.

²⁶¹Flint, 'Soulsby, Lucy Helen Muriel (1856-1927)', An obituary by Mrs Hubert Barclay appeared in *MIC*, July 1927, 160-2. Mrs Chitty also wrote in the *Workers' Paper* the same month.

²⁶²Lucy Soulsby, *Stray Thoughts for Mothers and Teachers* (London: Longmans, 1897). Lucy Helen Muriel Soulsby, *Talks to Mothers* (London: Longmans & Co., 1916).

notions of good womanly conduct in accord with those as asserted in the writings of Mary Sumner and Charlotte Yonge and the publications of the MU and GFS.²⁶³

Figure 6: Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union Educational Practice.



Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union: Resistance to Secular Education

In Mary Sumner's writing the notion of promoting religious education was expanded to encompass resistance to what she perceived as the encroachment of secularisation into educational provision. Although parents should be the foremost religious educators of their children, their responsibility extended to watchfulness over other agents or institutions involved in the religious education of their children. For Mary Sumner, parental influence could and should be exercised to influence public educational provision.

The threat to religious education represented by the provision of non-denominational Board Schools and legislation on the status of voluntary

²⁶³ Lucy H.M. Soulsby, *Two Aspects of Education* (London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1899).

denominational schools, was the subject of MU campaigning. MU magazines and publications were used to encourage parental support to promote the position of the Anglican Church in the field of education and by implication to reproduce its position in the wider field of power by associating its doxa with national values and identity.²⁶⁴ Mary Sumner advised parents to 'select schools [...] where the Christian Religion is taught [...] in the forefront and not the background of education'.²⁶⁵ In a letter to Lady Chichester, she wrote 'win the parents for God [and] they would demand their children should have Christian schools, schoolmasters and teachers'.²⁶⁶

Mary Sumner's 1894 article, 'Secular Education', exemplified her concern with 'the struggle which is going on around us in the educational world'.²⁶⁷ It raised objections to the limited religious education offered in Board Schools, claiming that religion was made meaningless by the avoidance of dogma and that Christian teachers were inhibited from professing their faith through teaching and thus Board School teaching was drifting to secularisation. Mary Sumner warned that: 'Every effort is apparently being made to advance this [Board School] system and starve out the voluntary and denominational schools'. She urged mothers to recognise and resist the 'dangerous wave of infidelity lying behind the whole question of secular education'.²⁶⁸

The political dimension of the anti-secular education campaign was manifest in the use of the *MUJ* as a platform to influence public opinion and mobilise support. Its readers were of the class most directly affected by school provision for the masses. Moreover, since their [partial] enfranchisement in 1867, working-class men represented a category whose allegiance was sought by political interests. In *MUJ* articles, men were reminded that they could use their votes to influence educational provision.²⁶⁹ The MU welcomed the 1902 Education Act, which secured the funding of voluntary denominational schools (that is those founded by charitable donations such as the Anglican National Schools), by providing for

²⁶⁴ Divorce was the other key campaign, see Chapter 3 Religion.

²⁶⁵ Sumner, 'What Is the Mothers Union?'

²⁶⁶ 'Letters to Lady Chichester', n.d. (after 1910).

²⁶⁷ 'Secular Education', 193-202.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ 1867 Reform Bill extended the franchise, subject to a financial qualification to include many but not all working-class men.

the cost of running them from within local authority funds levied from property owners as a 'rate'.²⁷⁰ In April 1903, 'The Education Act a Word to Fathers', sought to justify the financial aid given to denominational schools 'on the rates', in the 1902, legislation on the grounds that the 'sacrifice' of volunteers, which provided initial funding for these schools represented a substantial gift to the nation. The superiority of denominational religious education was asserted: 'It is only in Voluntary Schools that steps are taken to secure one [a head teacher] who really cares about the religion which he teaches'.²⁷¹ The following year 'Passive Resisters' (a term applied to objectors who withheld local payment of rates for Church, or religiously endowed schools), reiterated the justice of supporting the voluntary school rate.²⁷² The October 1904 edition of the *MUJ* carried the article 'Fathers Please Read This', in which enfranchised men were asked to 'insist on your MP and your various councillors pledging themselves to a hearty support of the Voluntary Schools'.²⁷³

Struggle continued over the religious content of the curriculum. Proposed legislation in 1906, by the Liberal government (which broadly represented Nonconformist and anti-denominational educational opinion), which would transfer voluntary schools in single school areas to Local Education Authority control (and thus end denominational teaching) was resisted by Anglicans (and Roman Catholics).²⁷⁴ Mary Sumner consulted Lady Frederick (Lucy) Cavendish, a Liberal party sympathiser but stalwart Anglican, to discuss raising a petition against it.²⁷⁵ The bill prompted articles in the *MUJ*: 'The Bible in our Schools', April

²⁷⁰ Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 70.

²⁷¹ 'A Member of a School Board', 'The Education Act: a Word to Fathers', *MUJ*, April 1903, 41-42.

²⁷² Anon, 'Passive Resisters', *MUJ*, July 1904, 61. Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, 66. Passive resistance was a national movement amongst Nonconformists to withhold payment of rates until the 1902 Education Act, seen as preferential to Anglicans (and Catholics), was withdrawn.

²⁷³ Mary A. Lewis, 'Fathers Please Read This', *MUJ*, October 1904, 74.

²⁷⁴ Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, 96-99. The proposed Liberal bill which was passed in the Commons but blocked in the Lords would have ended the public subsidy of schools with a denominational foundation and thus would have reduced denominational teaching.

²⁷⁵ Mary Sumner and Lady Frederick Cavendish, *Correspondence*, February 19th and 21st 1906: LPL MU/CO/PRES/5/5; G.C. Boase and H.C.G. Matthew, 'Cavendish, Lord Frederick Charles 1836-1882', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4932>, accessed 28 Aug. 2013]. Lucy, Lady Frederick Cavendish was a supporter of education for women via the Girls' Public Day School Trust and served on the Royal Commission on Education 1894.

1906, suggested that there was a danger of Bible teaching being dropped from the curriculum.²⁷⁶ The same issue also included an extract from Mary Sumner's 'Religion in the School' that similarly made a case for religious teaching on denominational lines.²⁷⁷ In July of the same year, an extract from Mary Sumner's 'Responsibilities of Parents' suggested that: 'parents should openly resist proposals to exclude elementary school religion' because it was 'a cruel injury to the character of the child to have it as a mere extra'.²⁷⁸

Political views were also manifest in concern expressed over Sunday school provision that highlighted Mary Sumner's suspicion towards Socialism, which she (and others of similar habitus), perceived as not only leading to godlessness but in its advocacy for class struggle constituting incitement to overturn the social order.²⁷⁹ Mary Sumner feared the 'peril of Anti-Christian Socialist Sunday schools' and the quality of Sunday school provision was the subject of a Lambeth Conference resolution in 1908.²⁸⁰ In 1911, Mary Sumner returned to the theme in her leaflet, 'A Grave Peril', which alerted parents to this encroachment on religious education. The strength of concern felt on the issue in the MU is indicated by the reprint of the leaflet in 1921.²⁸¹

The position of Mary Sumner and the MU on secularisation was supportive of the official stance of the Anglican Church. The resolutions passed at the Lambeth Conference of 1908,²⁸² which addressed secularisation, teaching of explicit doctrine and the role of parents which reflected Mary Sumner's agenda, are indicative that her activism had been successful in positioning the MU, in the educational work of the Church. This position in the overlapping fields of

²⁷⁶ Anon, 'The Bible in Our Schools', *MIC*, April 1906, 24-27.

²⁷⁷ Mary Sumner, 'Religion in the School', *MUJ*, April 1906, 36; Goodman, 'Girls' Public Day School Company (Act. 1872-1905).'

²⁷⁸ Mary Sumner, 'Responsibilities of Parents', *MUJ*, July 1906, 51.

²⁷⁹ Moyses, *History of the Mothers' Union*, 67; Lawson and Silver, *A Social History of Education*.

²⁸⁰ Mary Sumner, *Letter to Dearest Minnie, Lady Addington Anti Christian Sunday Schools*. 23 Sep 1912: LPL MU/CO/PRES5/1; 'Letters to Mrs Maude', 17 Nov. 19? MU/CO/PRES/5/3 [<http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1908/1908-14.cfm> accessed 12 July 2013]

²⁸¹ Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 64.

²⁸² [<http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1908/> accessed 12 July 2013]

Anglicanism and education was a vindication of Mary Sumner's conviction that the MU 'could not possibly stand outside a battle for the children's faith.'²⁸³

Conclusion thinking with Bourdieu

Dispositions of habitus and horizons of possibility

Mary Sumner's habitus recognised educational and cultural capital (frequently symbolic) manifest in attributes such as appreciation of art and music, knowledge of literature and languages or historical scholarship.²⁸⁴ Mary Sumner, as the beneficiary of the interest of her antiquarian father and the services of educational professionals, possessed many attributes which were recognised within her habitus as indicative of personal cultural capital.²⁸⁵ These varieties of capital were defined and upheld by the dominant social group (also possessors of economic capital) who had, if male, access as a matter of routine,²⁸⁶ to the elite institutions in the field of education dedicated to the reproduction of this capital.

Anglican manoeuvres in the field of education overlapped with manoeuvres in the field of religion. The dominance it sought to uphold in education and religion was marked by the high position of individual agents with pedagogic authority across both fields. The Anglican Church also had the power to invest economic and symbolic capital in educational institutions. Educational capital was both authorised and defined by complicity with Anglican doxa and its recognition by the social and religious elite.²⁸⁷ Mary Sumner and members of her network demonstrated mis/recognition of this cultural arbitrary by accepting that education was inseparable from education in religion.²⁸⁸ For Mary Sumner and her network, behaviour considered undesirable indicated a deficit in religious capital that could be redressed through education. The dominant group, to which she claimed allegiance, saw themselves, by virtue of their self-defined superior capital (cultural and religious), as authorised to provide education and determine

²⁸³Porter, Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner*, 64.

²⁸⁴Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*. See *Distinction* for Bourdieu's analysis of the attribution of value to cultural products and practitioners.

²⁸⁵Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 119.

²⁸⁶From the 1860s women were gaining access to 'academic' schools and university but during Mary Sumner's formative years this was exceptional.

²⁸⁷See Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 119, for overlapping fields and sub fields.

²⁸⁸Bourdieu and Nice, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 164.

curricula, particularly for those of inferior social status, in an enactment of symbolic violence.²⁸⁹ This pedagogic action towards upholding the doxa of the dominant group was a means for the acquisition of symbolic capital and pedagogic authority.

Assumptions as to the role and nature of women, asserted (and legitimised) by Anglican religious doxa, informed notions of desirable educational capital for women. In Mary Sumner's network, the pedagogic role of women conforming to the gendered doxa, as home educators of their children in morality and religion, was recognised and accrued symbolic capital.²⁹⁰ Women might accumulate pedagogic authority from pedagogic action to perpetuate the doxa beyond the home directed towards social inferiors, both men and women. This could be realised through philanthropy, an overlapping category with education as in the mothers meeting, Sunday school class, or the men's Bible class run by Mary Sumner. Women in Mary Sumner's network were recognised for their intellectual achievements within the parameters of their discharge of home duties. In her family and wider habitus, women could accrue symbolic capital and achieve pedagogic authority in the public sphere through (intellectual) activity legitimised by complicity with the religious and social doxa, such as in writing on religious themes. In initiating the MU, Mary Sumner drew on existing pedagogic authority accrued from her position in the GFS, educational parish work to men and women and as a published author on the Holy Land.

Field manoeuvres

By founding the MU, Mary Sumner entered the field of religion: in so doing she also entered the field of education. Educational manoeuvres may be seen as significant in securing the field position of the MU within the Church and the acknowledgement of the capital of women as educators and thus endorsement of their pedagogic authority. The genesis of the MU occurred in the context of the acceptance of female engagement in the field of philanthropic work.²⁹¹ This

²⁸⁹Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*, 5, 8, 9.

²⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 9, 5.

²⁹¹Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*.

allowed Mary Sumner and women of similar habitus, a means to move, via philanthropy, into the field of education as an organised body.²⁹² The 1870 school board legislation extended opportunities for women's participation in the field of local political and educational policy, which had hitherto been available only to a few women.²⁹³ This legislation also offered Mary Sumner an opportunity to exploit a contest in the field of education to demonstrate the value of women's pedagogic action in support of Anglican doxa.

Mary Sumner's emphasis on the acquisition of intangible symbolic capital through approved conduct, characterised by reputation, piety and good parenting, rather than the alleviation of physical want, gives emphasis to the educational character of the MU. In her aspiration to modify behaviour by educating mothers in childrearing according to religious principles and the production of material to disseminate its message, the MU can be located in the sub field of popular education. Its association with Anglican field manoeuvres relative to the provision of schooling and higher education also indicates that the MU can be considered within the field of education.²⁹⁴

The initiation of literature and education committees reflects expanding activity in these areas and can be seen as manoeuvres towards advancement in the field of education and the related sub field of educational publishing. Whereas *MIC*, which reached an audience from the socially dominant group, advantaged in the field of power and endorsed by the doxa of the Anglican Church, was symbolically violent in its perpetration of a gendered religious arbitrary, the *MUJ*, in its attempt to secure the misrecognition/ complicity of the less advantaged to the doxa of the Church, also perpetrated symbolic violence in relation to class.²⁹⁵ MU magazines made a substantial and sustained contribution to the pedagogic work of the Anglican Church.²⁹⁶ The use of printed materials enhanced the pedagogic authority Mary Sumner had accrued by prior public speaking. Pedagogic authority was also enhanced by the wide spread circulation of her name in association with

²⁹²Mumm, 'Women and Philanthropic Cultures'.

²⁹³Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 108; Joyce Goodman and Sylvia A. Harrop, *Women, Educational Policy-Making and Administration in England: Authoritative Women since 1800* (London: Routledge, 2000).

²⁹⁴Hurt, *Education in Evolution*.

²⁹⁵Bourdieu and Nice, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 164.

²⁹⁶Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*.

organisations (notably the MU and the Church, but also the GFS and CETS) identified with attributes invested with high symbolic capital, including motherhood, purity, temperance and piety. As in the case of platform speaking, MU publications endorsed their authority by drawing in contributors with existing symbolic capital and pedagogic authority, such as Charlotte Yonge, who embodied religious, literary and educational capital, or Lucy Soulsby, who had achieved a high position in the sub field of girls' education. Collaboration on educational initiatives with bodies such as the CETS and PNEU also endorsed pedagogic authority in a mutual exchange of capital and pursuit of common goals.²⁹⁷

Fields and fields of power

Mary Sumner's most overt engagement with the field of power in relation to education was in the stance taken on the secularisation of education. Through *MIC*, other publications and in particular through the *MUJ*, which addressed a substantial working-class audience, the MU claimed the necessity of denominational religious instruction in order to be fully educated. It asserted the superiority of Anglican doctrine and thus its superiority over secular, or other doctrinal curricula.²⁹⁸ MU publications, which expressed the views of Mary Sumner, took a stance in support of the Anglican Church in its contest with the state for power in the field of education.²⁹⁹ Articles sought to mobilise readers' opinions in the choice of schools and in interaction with politicians. Education in Anglicanism was also supported by exhortations to home religious education and the provision of exemplars of Anglican doctrinal teaching. Whilst it is not possible to evaluate the impact of the MU message on the secularisation of education, the Anglican Church did gain concessions from the legislature on the inclusion of a religious syllabus in Board Schools (1870) and LEA (Local Education Authority) Schools (1902) and secured the denominational integrity of voluntary (Anglican or other denomination funded) provision of elementary education. The MU's support for the position of the Anglican Church in the field of education worked to

²⁹⁷ Goodman and Martin, 'Networks after Bourdieu: Women, Education and Politics from the 1980s to the 1920s'; Fuchs, 'Networks'.

²⁹⁸ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction*.

²⁹⁹ Postone, Li Puma and Calhoun, 'Introduction', 10; Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 78, 121.

the mutual advantage of both organisations. The resolutions passed by the Lambeth Conference in 1908, reflect the anti-secularisation agenda that Mary Sumner had pursued through her publications for decades previously. The resolutions also resonate with Mary Sumner's agendas around parenting, the pedagogic authority of women as individual mothers and also collectively as represented in the MU, a recognised body in the Church. See *Figure 7 Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union Trajectory Towards Power in the Field of Education*.

Mary Sumner's view of women as educators was entirely compatible with notions of superior 'womanly' capital recognised within the Anglican Church. In return for their mis/recognition of the superiority of Anglican doxa, MU mothers were offered several symbolic 'gifts'.³⁰⁰ These included identification with educational expertise and the assurance of doing the best for their children by protecting them from sin and thereby securing their future salvation. Readers could identify themselves as 'Churchwomen' belonging to a moral elite.³⁰¹ They might also identify with the 'Foundress' as a celebrity recognised beyond the MU for her pedagogic authority.³⁰² More tangible rewards offered through the society's publications were education in aspects of childrearing, hints on the religious education of children, advice on appropriate reading and engagement with, and the opportunity to identify with, a body with a 'voice' beyond the home on topical issues such as schooling.

Mary Sumner's activism through the MU may be seen to contribute to, and reflect modifications in, horizons of possibility relating to women and education.³⁰³ Mary Sumner was supportive of aspirations for popular education and education for motherhood, but the pages of *MIC* illustrate some ambivalence towards the schooling and higher education of middle/upper-class women. This ambivalence reflected a diversity of opinion amongst MU activists on appropriate curricula and educational setting but activists did not challenge the gendered (and socially stratified) doxic notions of womanhood misrecognised as invested with distinct

³⁰⁰Skeggs, 'Exchange, Value and Affect: Bourdieu and 'the Self''.

³⁰¹They might also have a sense of superiority associated with the assumed/misrecognised capital of 'race' and 'civilization'. See the previous chapter on mission.

³⁰²Poupeau, 'Reasons for Domination: Bourdieu Versus Habermas', 71, 72.

³⁰³Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 20.

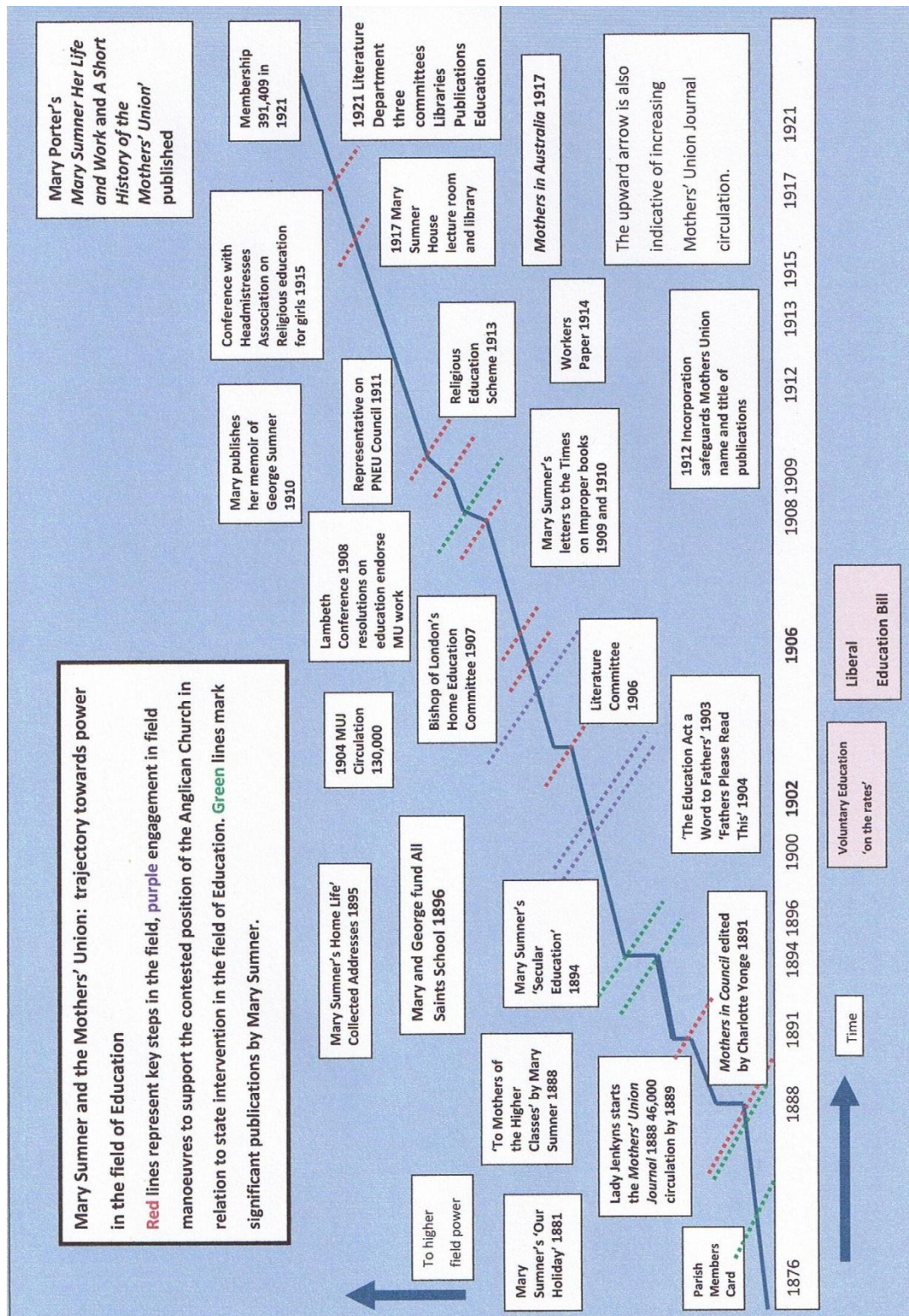
'natural' characteristics and contingent roles as helpmeet, carer and exemplar of religious and moral sensibility.³⁰⁴

Mary Sumner claimed the value of maternal educative capital on the grounds that mothers did pedagogic work for the nation in moulding the character of future citizens. She also asserted the capital of mothering because it required expertise that needed to be acquired through education, thus investing motherhood with pedagogic authority. Mary Sumner also promoted the value of active mothering to an upper-class audience and engaged them in the principles of childrearing and educational practice. This, whilst not originally innovative, reflected developments in pedagogy and evolving notions of childhood.

MU publications may also be seen in the context of the expansion of recognised women's spheres of interest and activity. They articulated a collective women's viewpoint on public affairs and also offered individuals (both professional writers and amateurs) a respectable platform for articulating ideas in a public forum. Whilst Mary Sumner and the MU did not make radical claims for women's education, they may be seen to contribute to some enlargement in the interpretation of esteemed womanly capital and to the familiarisation of women invested with pedagogic authority. Mary Sumner herself achieved unprecedented recognition amongst a mass audience and in the field of religion as a pedagogic authority.

Figure 7: Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union Trajectory Towards Power in the Field of Education

³⁰⁴Burstyn, *Victorian Education*; Gorham, *The Victorian Girl*.



Conclusion: Thinking Mary Sumner with Bourdieu, Reproduction, Symbolic Violence and Changes in the Doxa

The introduction to the thesis identified the aim of analysing Mary Sumner's negotiation of constraint and agency and her position in the upholding and transaction of power across domestic, local and global spaces in relation to the fields of religion, mission and education with gendered notions of womanhood as a connecting theme. The conclusion synthesises analysis via the intersecting thinking tools of habitus, field and capital discussed in the preceding chapters. These placed Mary Sumner as an agent in networks of other agents,¹ located within a context of structures, that is institutions and social practice, that informed her identity, understanding of social reality and horizons of possibility and delineated spaces (fields) of opportunity for action. It draws on Bourdieu's concepts of reproduction, symbolic violence and misrecognition to position Mary Sumner relative to agency and constraint, as dominated and/or dominating. It also positions her in relation to the reproduction or negotiation of power with attention to change or modification in gendered horizons of possibility accruing to women.²

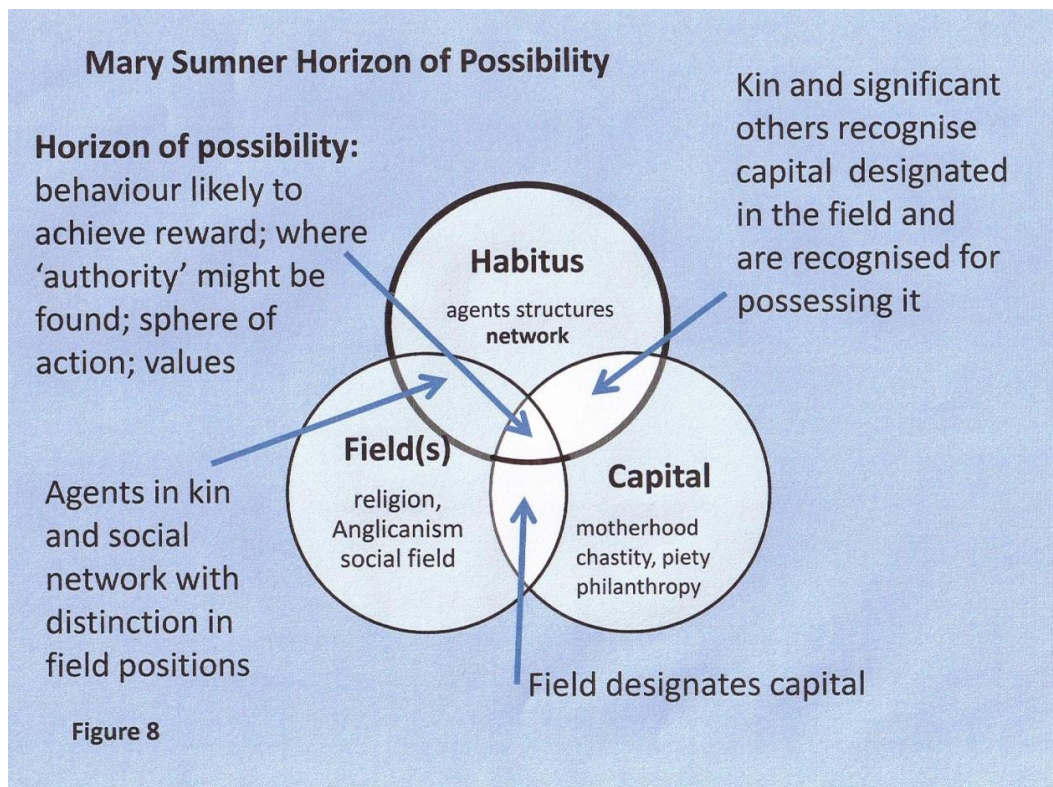
Mary Sumner's acquisition of beliefs and notions of appropriate conduct as an Anglican 'Churchwoman' illustrates the relationship of habitus, field and capital in informing her horizon of possibilities. The capital recognised as of worth by agents whose pedagogic action contributed to her habituation was delineated by the fields in which agents were 'players' and to which they claimed allegiance.³ *Figure 8* visualises these relationships, with some examples of capital.⁴

¹Yeo, 'The Creation of 'Motherhood' and Women's Responses in Britain and France 1750-1914'; Martin and Goodman, 'Individual Lives and Social Histories'; Cunningham, 'Innovators, Networks and Structures'.

²Bourdieu, Passeron and Nice, *Reproduction*.

³Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*.

⁴Further examples of capital might be added and other fields such as education are related to religion and the social field.



Mary Sumner's life also illustrates how the possession of capital contributed to advantage in field(s) (where it was recognised) for agents acknowledged as possessing it. Recognised capital could be transacted to secure pedagogic authority, the right to speak in and for the field. Pedagogic work by structures (family, institutions) and pedagogic action by agents functioned towards normalising recognition or misrecognition of the legitimacy of the capital asserted despite its arbitrary nature. This assertion by dominant groups of preferred values, behaviour and knowledge favourable to their interests, deemed by Bourdieu the cultural arbitrary, involved the enactment of symbolic violence.⁵ Mis/recognition of legitimacy required complicity with symbolic violence on behalf of the dominated group. Yet the enactment of symbolic violence was also a variety of complicity because the arbitrary nature of the doxa (apparently self-evident cultural practice and understanding of social reality) is unrecognised by its enacting agents and misrecognised as legitimate.⁶

⁵Bourdieu, Passeron and Nice, *Reproduction*.

⁶Poupeau, 'Reasons for Domination: Bourdieu Versus Habermas'; Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 20, 58, 54.

Members of Mary Sumner's network, which included religious specialists with high field position in the Anglican Church, prioritised capital delineated within the field of Anglicanism above that of religious non-believers, other religions and other denominations. Men and women habituated to what they deemed to be the superiority of Anglicanism, asserted the value of the rewards accruing to complicity with its delineated notions of capital (such as doctrinal orthodoxy, piety, chastity) and were active (according to gendered parameters) in field manoeuvres to uphold it. This pedagogic action also served to further their own acquisition of symbolic capital as delineated in the religious and social field in which they were located and was thus conducive to self-realisation and transactable into pedagogic authority. Anglicanism was advantageously positioned in the social field and field of power because it was aligned with the interests of the dominant upper/middle class to which Mary Sumner's network claimed allegiance and was drawn upon to legitimise their arbitrary advantage. Thus for Mary Sumner, 'Church work' was an authorised and accessible sphere for activism in which she could find support from amongst a network of agents with a shared investment in (and possession of) religious and social capital.

Arbitrary notions of gendered difference accruing to women as a category, place Mary Sumner as the object of symbolic violence.⁷ Mary Sumner's organisational activism commenced (c.1876) against the context of a predominant but contested and defensive Anglican religious doxa that upheld and misrecognised as legitimate, the advantage of a dominant patriarchy invested with religious authority, educational advantage, economic power, superior legal status, (and ultimately the means of physical coercion). Anglicanism, similarly to the majority of Christian denominations, asserted divine authority to justify the arbitrary gendered ascription of characteristics to both men and women. This informed notions of desirable capital and legitimised contingent prohibitions and expectations of role. Desirable attributes of Christian womanhood accrued around the conflation of woman with motherhood and prioritised domestic responsibility, sexual continence and submission to patriarchal authority. The misrecognised authoritative and dominant positions ascribed to men were euphemised by the notions of protectiveness and chivalry.

⁷*Masculine Domination.*

Mary Sumner's simultaneous positioning as object of and agent of symbolic violence is demonstrated in her advocacy for chastity and the sacrament of marriage and in her apparent complicity with patriarchal authority in family and Church. However, 'woman' as a category was mediated by class which was a significant factor in Mary Sumner's horizon of possibilities.⁸ Pedagogic action by agents and the pedagogic work of structures informed dispositions of habitus complicit with the advantage of the dominant group. As in the case of arbitrary understanding of gender, Mary Sumner accepted social stratification as 'the natural order'. Social stratification was also mis/recognised as legitimate by those in the MU who were its objects and Mary Sumner enacted symbolic violence in her assumption of authority over men and women of lesser social status. Yet, her insistence on the distance between the 'good' women of the MU and GFS from the deficit model of sexually incontinent women, and her insistence on the distinctive contribution of women in the moral and educative sphere of home life, may be interpreted as advocacy for an increased recognition of the capital worth of activity assigned to women. In the context of the struggle for ascendancy by interest groups, factions or denominations played out within fields, this may be seen as a manoeuvre towards increasing, although within gendered parameters, the pedagogic authority of woman as a category that would advance women in the religious field. By founding an Anglican organisation, run by and for women, Mary Sumner advanced the field position of women in the Anglican Church. Through the MU, pedagogic action to support Anglicanism in its contest with other denominations for 'the goods of salvation' was exercised.⁹ This duality occurred across the inter-related fields with which Mary Sumner was associated.

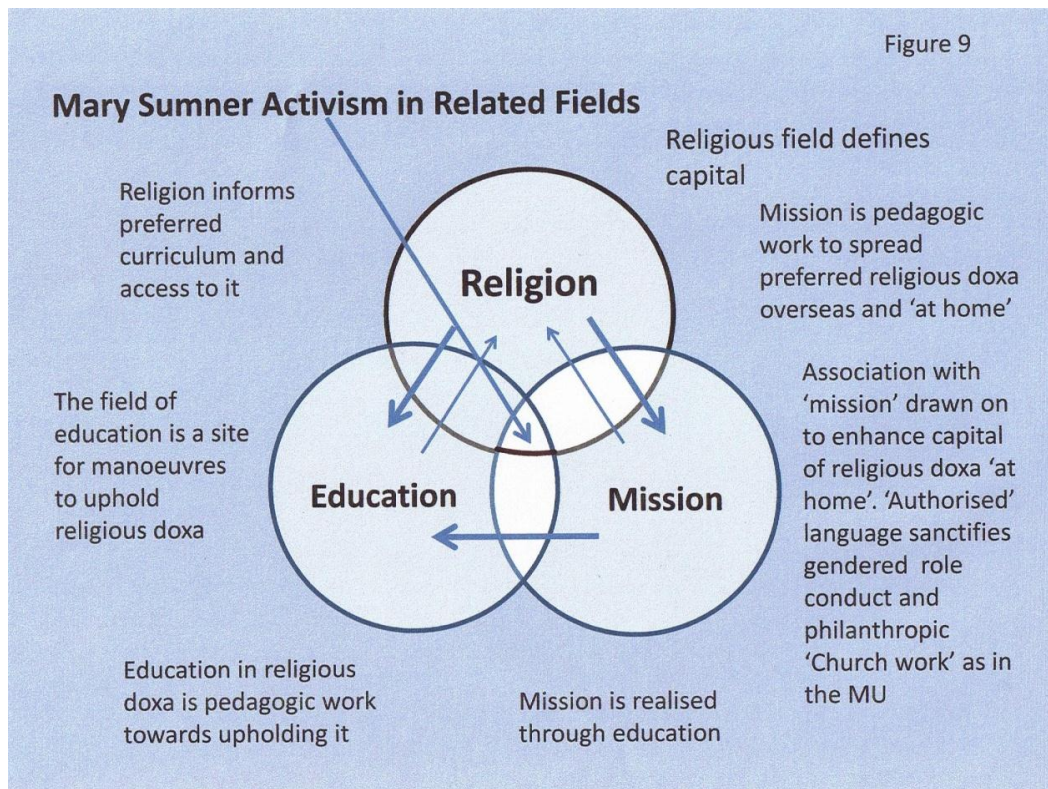
Shared notions of capital served to inform mutually advantageous activities within and across fields and sub fields.¹⁰ Religion may be seen as the decisive element in Mary Sumner's habitus and the advancement of her preferred religious doxa informed and responded to manoeuvres in the related fields of mission and

⁸Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*; Morgan, *The Feminist History Reader*; Moi, *What Is a Woman?*, 291, 293.

⁹Bourdieu, 'Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field'; *Practical Reason*, Appendix; Remarks on the economy of the Church, 124-126; Rey, 'Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion'.

¹⁰Keck and Sikkink, *Advocacy Networks*; Fuchs, 'Networks', Concept of exchange theory.

education that, like habitus, field and capital, may be visualised as overlapping (Figure 9).



Mary Sumner's preferred religious doctrine identified the symbolic capital to be gained from evangelical outreach with the aim of winning converts through 'mission', domestically, locally and in more distant spaces. The use of 'mission' is an example of the appropriation of language associated with institutions or agents of distinction that is recognised as invested with capital. By using such authorised language, Mary Sumner and others in her network claimed to speak for and assumed the authority accruing to religion, of agents invested, by virtue of the recognition of their capital, with distinction in the field.¹¹ Drawing on the distinction attributed to missionaries, the religious terminology of mission was applied by Mary Sumner, those in her networks and others of similar habitus, to legitimise the prescribed domestic role of women as maternal 'angels' in the house, a position of complicity with the symbolic violence perpetrated by the dominant patriarchal interest served by the doxa of Anglicanism. The conflation of women with mothers in a dominant discourse of motherhood,¹² allocated symbolic 'maternal' capital to the respectable unmarried woman. The

¹¹Bourdieu, 'Authorised Language'; Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*.

¹²Yeo, 'Some Contradictions of Social Motherhood'.

appropriation of authorised language also ‘sanctified’ this maternal capital so that it could be transacted as pedagogic authority for women invested with it. Similarly, the term mission was applied to the symbolically violent imposition of doxa through philanthropic endeavour, activity complicit with doxically framed notions of the ‘maternal’ character of women. This appropriation of the religious terminology of mission served to enhance the capital accruing to participation in philanthropic activity that could be drawn on as a source of pedagogic authority.¹³

Mary Sumner’s association of the MU with Church work overseas supported Christianity and specifically Anglicanism, in the competitive transnational religious field. The sponsorship of women missionary workers who exemplified gendered notions of desirable capital as self-sacrificing, valorous workers for Christianity by the MU initiated by Mary Sumner, was instrumental towards securing their position in the religious sub field of missionary work. This also served to secure the field position of the MU as a body within the Church recognised for pedagogic action in support of overseas mission. Mary Sumner’s field manoeuvre of associating with women missionary workers as religious specialists invested with high religious capital and contingent pedagogic authority enabled capital by association to be claimed for women of the MU. Exemplars of ‘English Christian womanhood’, capital attributes delineated within the Anglican field, whether colonial settlers, transnational expatriates or women ‘at home’ could claim pedagogic authority from upholding its doxa. This also served to advance the field position of the MU by indicating the capital that members could share in by association, so enhancing the desirability of belonging to it. Overseas manoeuvres (as did those ‘at home’) also served to reinforce Mary Sumner’s pedagogic authority by identifying her as the personification of ‘her’ religious organisation and the capital invested in it.

Engagement in the religious field overseas intersected with manoeuvres within the wider field of power. The Anglican Church sought to reproduce its advantaged position in the wider field of power in the context of British intervention overseas.¹⁴ Just as imperialists, who included Mary Sumner and members of her network, notably Laura Ridding and Ellen Joyce, saw the propagation of what they

¹³Twells, *The Civilising Mission*.

¹⁴Porter, *Imperial Horizons*.

regarded as a superior religious doxa, as a legitimising rationale for the imposition of a political arbitrary, the Anglican Church was reciprocally complicit with the symbolic violence enacted through imperial rule. Through drawing on notions of patriotism and imperial destiny, the Anglican Church sought to claim capital by association and so to reinforce the legitimacy of the religious arbitrary and thus revitalise the Church 'at home'.¹⁵ Likewise, Mary Sumner and other speakers and writers for the MU (and also the GFS) laid claim to the capital associated with overseas endeavour. The rhetoric of patriotism and empire was combined with a discourse of motherhood,¹⁶ to assert the capital of women as, in the case of the GFS, 'civilizing' pioneer colonists or as emphasised by Mary Sumner, the maternal educators of imperial citizens possessing superior moral capital and 'race' attributes. Whilst this manoeuvre was pedagogic work towards upholding and legitimising national pre-eminence in the imperial field of power, it also served to advance the field position of the MU.

Through the MU, Mary Sumner offered symbolic gifts (membership of an 'elite' category and 'the goods of salvation') to 'different' ethnicities complicit with the Christian/Anglican doxa.¹⁷ This perceived inclusiveness was celebrated by Mary Sumner as an indicator of its success. Yet, Mary Sumner enacted an implicit embedded racialisation by conflating ethnicity and religious and cultural difference into the category of 'race'.¹⁸ Mary Sumner and members of her network were agents of symbolic violence in imposing a doxa which prioritised capital attributes that were predominantly located in persons also embodying 'whiteness'. However colour was not the single arbiter of the ascription of racial stereotypes as Mary Sumner made categorical judgements on European peoples.

Symbolic violence was not only enacted on 'other' religions, cultures and 'races'. Contrast with the religious, social and cultural 'oppression' of indigenous women was drawn on to affirm the capital of the Christian woman and served to disguise her own constraint by gender and class. Women 'at home' could draw, by implication, symbolic capital from association with the superior attributes of

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*.

¹⁷Rey, 'Marketing the Goods of Salvation: Bourdieu on Religion'.

¹⁸Bush, 'Edwardian Ladies and the 'Race': Dimensions of British Imperialism'.

‘civilized’, ‘white’, Christian and ‘English’.¹⁹ For the upper/middle class, as exemplified by members of Mary Sumner’s network, the assertion of symbolic maternal capital in the context of an empire, with the matriarchal Queen Victoria as its figurehead, opened a space vis-à-vis the wider field of power in which they could be active and manoeuvre to advance their personal capital.²⁰

Mary Sumner upheld religious (specifically Anglican) doxa in prioritising religious knowledge and in considering educational capital of limited worth unless it included a Christian religious dimension: the MU was educational in intent and practice. Mary Sumner was an agent of symbolic violence in seeking to impose conformity to the cultural arbitrary to which she (and others of similar habitus) claimed allegiance and misrecognised as legitimate.²¹ Yet, in her insistence on the recognition of mothers as educators and the strategies she deployed to enhance maternal pedagogic authority, sources of empowerment for them may be discerned.

Capital delineated in the religious field was transacted to authorise mothers as participants in the educational field. If the habituation of children, claimed by Mary Sumner to be invested with the symbolic capital of the highest order ‘as gifts from God’ into religion was important, it followed that mothers needed to be educated in order to accomplish this role. The notion that Christian capital was an essential attribute for compliant citizenship (which transacted religious capital into the social field and wider field of power), was also used to validate the significance of mothers as educators. Mothers should be recognised for the significance of their pedagogic action in upholding Church and nation.

Maternal educative capital, as envisaged by Mary Sumner, was vested in the possession of the moral attributes and biblical knowledge of Christian womanhood, delineated within the field of religion. Maternal educative capital was also vested in the possession of the pedagogic expertise in childrearing. Both aspects were asserted as sources of pedagogic authority. The pedagogic work and

¹⁹Rendall, ‘The Condition of Women, Women’s Writing and the Empire in Nineteenth Century Britain’.

²⁰Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*; Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930*.

²¹Hurt, *Education in Evolution*.

field manoeuvres of Mary Sumner were dedicated to substantiating and securing recognition of these claims, firstly, amongst mothers themselves. A further dimension of pedagogic action pursued through personal lobbying, public speaking, correspondence and publications, was the education of the clergy, fathers, and agents with power in the wider field, to recognise the worth of maternal educative capital.

Mary Sumner valued literacy, varieties of 'culture' and intellectual achievement. She used educational capital to validate maternal/womanly pedagogic authority. Mary Sumner and the women activists she recruited to forward the MU classified themselves as 'educated' and therefore authorised to speak for themselves and on behalf of, the 'less educated' (a category which translated into working-class or indigenous women overseas). MU publications drew on contributors likewise invested with pedagogic authority. They included 'experts' in fields where women were gaining access, such as educationalist Lucy Soulsby, moral campaigner Ellice Hopkins and writer Charlotte Yonge. Contemporary developments in pedagogic theory received a positive response. Mary Sumner's emphasis on the capital worth of children, informed an attitude sympathetic to pedagogy that envisaged the child as a person and used positive strategies for reinforcing behaviour and fostering learning. Through the pages of MU publications, mothers across social classes were offered not only the affirmation of their possession of symbolic religious capital but fellowship in a community of mothers. MU magazines kept the attention of readers focused on missionary and MU activity in distant places.²² Mothers could also gain practical pedagogic advice and draw symbolic capital from the notion that childrearing was expert work.

The use of printed media that educated informally through news, stories and informative articles to a mass audience, locates Mary Sumner as a popular educator.²³ She exploited increasing literacy to promote her notions of desirable capital and as a means to counter the perceived corrupting influence of material considered 'undesirable'. The scope of MU publications in circulation and spatial distribution and as representative of the voice of a women's organisation, may be

²²Thorne, 'Religion and Empire at Home'; Watts, 'Education, Empire and Social Change in Nineteenth Century England'.

²³Wardle, *English Popular Education*.

considered as indicative of a substantial presence in the sub field of educational publishing. The *MUJ* in particular was innovative as a special interest 'quality' publication devoted to the interest of working-class mothers.

Mary Sumner's prioritisation of maternal home education and informal education may be seen as a manoeuvre to secure the transmission of Anglican religious doxa against institutional encroachment, where religious doxa (if any) might not meet preferred standards. An overt example of this can be seen in Mary Sumner canvassing the support of mothers and enfranchised fathers, through the pages of the *MUJ*, for the place of the Anglican Church in formal education. For Mary Sumner, the provision of state elementary schooling was a threat not only to Anglicanism but also to the recognition of religious capital in the field of education and the wider field of power.

Prioritising Anglican religious doxa also informed Mary Sumner's attitude and the stance adopted in MU publications to the expansion of curricula for middle/upper class girls in school and the emergence of institutional higher education for women.²⁴ Formal education was largely approved (although with some diversity of interpretation on appropriate curricula) if moral and religious 'womanly' attributes were not compromised. Whilst assuming the destiny of women was as wives and mothers, in line with the dominant gendered arbitraries of Church and social practice, education was agreed as desirable capital for the successful accomplishment of this role and the participation of women in related 'caring' or 'educative' spheres was considered legitimate.

An understanding of agency as the ability to act (notwithstanding a degree of circumstantial constraint) towards the realisation of (self-defined) goals,²⁵ can be applied to Mary Sumner and to other women within her network whose gendered horizons of possibility accommodated, albeit within gendered parameters, opportunities for the acquisition of symbolic capital and the exercise of a degree of authority. Mary Sumner was richly rewarded with symbolic capital for conformity with arbitrary, but doxically approved, notions of gendered religious and social 'womanly' conduct informed by and misrecognised as legitimate in her

²⁴Burstyn, *Victorian Education*.

²⁵Aiston, 'Women, Education and Agency 1600-2000: an Historical Perspective', 1-8.

habitus. This symbolic capital gave opportunities for further capital acquisition and delineated/authorised a space for 'useful' action/agency that allowed Mary Sumner to move into the field of the Anglican Church and the field of popular education. By working within notions of gendered capital delineated within Anglicanism and transacting pedagogic authority from it, she was able to move from the limited localised authority of helpmeet to a clergyman, to become the iconic leader of a worldwide women's organisation, which achieved an acknowledged voice in the Church, a position in the field of popular education and a distinctive presence in the social fabric of the nation, with a reach into settler colonies and empire. Mary Sumner achieved recognition for embodying the religiously sanctioned notions of capital she promoted through the MU. She appeared to personify the rewards it promised for complicity with these notions of good womanhood.

Mary Sumner's activism was strongly facilitated by her network location in relation to the field of the Anglican Church and agents with positions of advantage within it (including her supportive husband George). Contextual circumstances, such as the recognition of women in philanthropy, aspirations for education and towards citizenship and the expansion of empire also framed her activism.²⁶ However, in the rapid growth and extensive spread of the MU, Mary Sumner's role should not be overlooked. As an agent located between other agents and structures, she was highly effective in her negotiation of horizons of possibility towards realising her aims. In her ability to mobilise those of similar habitus by drawing on, transacting and accumulating recognised notions of capital towards pedagogic authority and field position, she operated as a successful 'player' in the gendered fields of religion, mission and education, in which her activism was realised.²⁷ Mary Sumner also sustained her trajectory of activism over a considerable period of time and the sources consulted assert her persuasiveness as a speaker and writer, and ability to suggest the personal inclusiveness of her message.

The degree of agency Mary Sumner achieved on behalf of other women raises questions in respect of working-class and indigenous women, whose missing

²⁶Gill, *Women and the Church of England*, 63, 84, 91, 104.

²⁷Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*, 120; Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 66.

voices represent a gap in the evidence base. This limitation invites further investigation. This absence reflects Mary Sumner's assumption of authority over and right to speak for, those of assumed lesser status. Not only were working class and indigenous women objects of a symbolically violent imposition of doxa but complicity with it accrued capital that was largely symbolic. However the discourse of motherhood offered by Mary Sumner to women whose horizons of possibility were framed by gendered assumptions and circumstances that allocated them a domestic role was an assertion of its value.²⁸ The MU also represented mothers collectively in an authoritative Church organisation, personified by a woman of distinction, which claimed a women's voice in the wider field of power. Membership numbers confirm that Mary Sumner's MU did appeal to large numbers of women.

Mary Sumner's activism was located in a context of imperial expansion, educational development, the contested orthodoxies of (religious) belief and the negotiating of access to citizenship, mediated by gender and class. In respect of women advantaged by class, the MU offered a field of action that built on the accommodation of women as philanthropic and educational activists. It opened a (sub) field for women with aspirations towards leadership and 'influence' on religious, social and national life, which despite diverse positions held on the franchise, translates as an appetite for power. Through the MU, such women were offered an organised network of likeminded contacts and a platform for their views. As speakers for the Church, they were invested with pedagogic authority. Access, via an organised body, into the field of Anglicanism represented a significant expansion of women's authority and could be drawn on to legitimise engagement in other fields, notably in relation to empire.

The use of Bourdieu's thinking tools towards an analysis of Mary Sumner as an agent temporally and spatially located in a network of other agents and structures demonstrates that she was simultaneously an object of and an agent of domination. As a woman she was categorically disadvantaged by the religious and social doxa: yet through her misrecognition of its legitimacy and her complicity with this arbitrary imposition of notions of gendered capital, she was able to

²⁸Moyse, *History of the Mothers' Union*. Moyse asserts the spiritual sustenance offered by the MU.

accrue symbolic capital and transact it towards considerable pedagogic authority and distinction in her field. Her position amongst the socially dominant group alleviated, to an extent, the disadvantage of gender. In her pedagogic work on behalf of reproducing the power vested in Church, class and country, she was an agent of symbolic violence.

Bourdieu's methodological approach and thinking tools are rooted in practice and the scrutiny of evidence, 'theory and data are in relationship to one another'.²⁹ The deployment of Bourdieu's approach has provided 'a way of investigating the link between lived lives and the choices in intellectual work with the context, both institutional and social, that structures and shapes those choices'.³⁰ Bourdieu's approach has enabled an analysis of Mary Sumner as a historically situated agent negotiating constraint and agency. The notions of habitus, field and capital applied to Mary Sumner as a central subject locate her values, aims and activism informed by and mediated in the context of networks of other agents (such as Churchmen and upper/middle class women) and associations both formal and informal (the GFS for example) in a gendered horizon of possibilities. Mary Sumner's life trajectory illustrates how pedagogic action, by agents and institutions (family and Church), informs habitus. For Mary Sumner, pedagogic action gave her an internalised unquestioning conviction, that is mis/recognition, of the legitimacy of the gendered cultural arbitraries of Church, class, nation and empire that she sought to uphold through her own pedagogic action. For Mary Sumner, there was a close accord with internalised misrecognised cultural arbitraries and opportunities for agency and self-realisation through the acquisition and transaction of capital. Her initial horizon of possibility allowed for the acquisition of capital transactable for pedagogic authority and thus the enlargement of her horizons of possibility.

Bourdieu's understanding of field provides a way to envisage social structures, institutions and spheres of activity such as the Church, religion, mission (as defined in the thesis) and education in which Mary Sumner as an agent made meaning and realised her activism. As sites of power, fields inform assumptions of

²⁹Gunter, 'Education Management in England and Wales', 624.

³⁰Gunter, 'Purposes and Positions in the Field of Education Management: Putting Bourdieu to Work', 9.

value and belief and are sites where hierarchies of knowledge are contested and meaning established. This is exemplified in Mary Sumner's prioritisation of Anglican capital; her manoeuvres in the field to promote it; her claims to authority drawn from embodying recognised capital attributes and in her association with agents and institutions invested with authority. Bourdieu's concepts of reproduction, symbolic violence and misrecognition, encompassing the imposition of, and securing the recognition of, the preferred knowledge and values of the dominant majority, allow the negotiation of power to be theorised. Thus arbitrary ascendancies of power such as class and gender as misrecognised as legitimate and negotiated by Mary Sumner can be accommodated within Bourdieu's theoretical stance.³¹ For Bourdieu 'the logic of gender domination [...] seems to be the paradigmatic form of symbolic violence'.³²

³¹Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*; Adkins and Skeggs, *Feminism after Bourdieu*; Kraus, 'Gender and Symbolic Violence'; Lovell, 'Thinking Feminism'; Moi, *What Is a Woman*; Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category'.

³²Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation*: 170.

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Appendix 1 - Mary Sumner and the MU: her activities and corporate development

Year	Mary Sumner's Activity	Corporate development
1875	Mary Sumner is a 'Founding Associate' of the GFS in Winchester. Starts parochial GFS Branch.	[The GFS is an officially sanctioned Anglican organisation with Diocesan organisation and constitution]
1876	Parish mothers' meeting is distinguished by cards for mothers.	This date is marked as the founding of the MU.
1883-1884	Mary Sumner's friend Mrs Maclagan starts parish Mothers' Union in Lichfield.	
1885	Speaks at the Portsmouth Church Conference on her vision of a religious society for mothers. Canvasses support through correspondence.	Winchester Diocese adopts Mary Sumner's MU as official organisation.
1887	Presides over the Winchester Diocesan Conference of the MU.	First Diocesan Conference held in November. There are 57 Branches 11 are just starting.
1888-1889	Deals with all MU correspondence and enquiries. The <i>MUJ</i> is conceived as a newsletter from Mary Sumner.	<i>MUJ</i> published, edited by Mrs Jenkyns circulation 46,000 by 1889. MU Branches in Ontario Canada and Christchurch NZ.
1890	Addresses meeting to instigate the London Diocesan MU and continues correspondence and writing articles for <i>The MUJ</i> . Reads paper at Hull Church Conference.	Lady Horatia Erskine and the Hon Evelyn Hubbard start London Diocesan MU.
1891	Asks Charlotte Yonge to edit the new publication <i>MIC</i> for 'educated mothers'.	
1892	Winchester Diocesan MU under the leadership of Mary Sumner considers central organisation. Mary Sumner invites Diocesan presidents to meet.	Conference to discuss centralisation in London. 28 dioceses, 1,550 branches, 60,000 members
1893	Leads Committee of Diocesan Presidents.	Discussions towards centralisation between branches.
1895	Her collected addresses from <i>The MUJ</i> published as <i>Home Life</i> .	
1896	Becomes the official Central President of the MU.	First Central Council, constitution adopted. Office space in Church House Westminster, London.
1897	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President.	Royal patronage begins. 'Bracket Clause' exempts Scottish and New Zealand branches from requirement for officials to be communicants of Anglican Church. Feast of the Annunciation March 25 th adopted as Annual Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving.
1898	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President.	Charlotte Yonge and Mrs Jenkyns made members of Central Council in recognition of their editorial work on MU journals
1899	Central President (she continues as Winchester Diocesan President).	MU Almanac sells 20,000 copies.
1900	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President.	Annual Service in St Paul's Cathedral.
1901	George Sumner becomes editor of <i>MIC</i> until 1908.	Year of National Mourning for Queen Victoria; Death of Charlotte Yonge
1902	Mary Sumner Central President and	Empire substituted for England in Second

	Winchester Diocesan President.	Object. Protest against Parliamentary Bill to allow marriage to deceased wife's sister. Finance Committee instigated. Branches in China, Japan ,Persia Madagascar and other overseas locations.
1903	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President.	MU pledges to resist attacks on marriage.
1904 - 1905	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President.	Mission of Help to South Africa following South African War.
1906	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President.	Literature Committee established.
1907	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President.	Religious education book scheme. A representative of Central Council tours Australia, New Zealand and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).
1908	Central President and Winchester Diocesan President. Insists on infant baptism and protests at alteration of card wording by Australian Baptists not in favour of this. Chairs, speaks at and receives a standing ovation at the first MU Mass Meeting at Albert Hall. It is addressed by her friends Archbishop Maclagan of York and Bishop Lang of Stepney.	Pan-Anglican Congress - Mrs Oluwole wife of the African Bishop of Lagos speaks. MU hosts reception for overseas delegate bishops and their wives.
1909	Resigns as Central President; continues as Winchester Diocesan President. Diamond Wedding celebrations are marked by MU and royal patrons. Death of George Sumner. Mary Sumner writes for advice concerning an anti-divorce petition to Archbishop Lang of York. She signs letter of protest against legislative relaxation of ground for divorce addressed to Lord Gorell as chairman of Divorce Commission.	Presidents informed of anti-divorce campaign and forms for registering protest circulated. MU supports missionary worker in India- Miss Rix of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG).
1910	Deemed Honorary President of the MU. Continues as Winchester Diocesan President. Corresponds with Lady Chichester the new MU Central President. Lady Horatia Erskine visits Mary Sumner to keep her in touch with the anti-divorce campaign.	Mary Sumner is succeeded by the Dowager Countess of Chichester. Death of Edward VII. Evidence presented to Divorce Commission Mrs Hubbard speaks for 'educated mothers' and Mrs Steinthal and Mrs Church present evidence against divorce representing working classes. MU becomes Incorporated Society to legally protect use of the name Mothers' Union. Support for 'Morality Bill' to increase the age of consent to 16.
1911	Honorary President and Winchester Diocesan President. Corresponds with Mrs Maude Central Secretary of the MU and others on MU matters until 1920. Continues to write journal articles and pamphlets.	Lady Horatia Erskine's (a central Vice president and friend of Mary Sumner) Golden Wedding is celebrated; Representatives sent to Central Councils of Women's Church Work and Parents' National Educational Union (PNEU). Literature Committee issues Coronation cards. George Sumner's memorial Buttress Fund started. Meeting to warn against dangers of Mormonism. Committee to oppose disestablishment of Welsh Church, Mrs Gell and Mrs Wilberforce preside.

1912	Honorary President and Winchester Diocesan President. Yields to pressure to revise wording of membership cards.	Laura Ridding initiates 'Watch Committee' to give information and to advise on desirable action with regard to legislative proposals in Parliament concerning matters affecting the welfare of the mothers of the nation. MU invited to discussion of minority report of Divorce commission. MU Constitution which defined status as Church Society and rescinded 'Bracket Clause' revised and published for workers. Scottish MU opts for affiliate status to avoid the requirement for official workers to be Anglican Communicants. Church Mission Society (CMS) worker Miss Davis supported in Southern India.
1913	Honorary President Winchester Diocesan President. 'Great Northern speaking tour to Newark, Sunderland, Durham and York. Annual Conference hosted at York by invitation of Mary Sumner's friend Archbishop Lang.	MU resolution against birth control. Bishops asked for ruling- but their response is indecisive.
1914		Launch of Workers Paper Magazine. Mothers' Union Religious Education Scheme
1915	Donates Winchester Cathedral Buttress Fund surplus to promote overseas work.	First Official Handbook issued. MU joint conference on Religious Education with the Headmistresses' Association.
1916	Resigns as Winchester Diocesan President.	Patriotic message of sympathy to women of France. Fund established for building 'The Mary Sumner House'. Mrs Wilberforce becomes Central President.
1917	Attends opening of temporary Mary Sumner House opened by Princess Christian and the Bishop of London	Miss Lucy Soulsby attended as MU representative the International Congress of the World's Purity Federation Kentucky, USA. Mrs Russell Walker daughter of Mrs Wilberforce becomes Central Correspondent for Temperance Work. Marriage Defence Committee formed to oppose Matrimonial Causes Bill which made three years of separation a ground for divorce- this was withdrawn but issue remained topical. <i>Mothers' in Australia</i> launched.
1918		Inauguration of Naval Division of MU. Church of England Zenana Mission Society worker for Punjab Miss Gibson adopted. Evidence collected on declining birth rate.
1919		Anti-Birth control resolution. Queen and Princess Mary visit Mary Sumner House.
1920		Mass meeting at Albert Hall 10,000 women sign anti divorce petition. Conference of Overseas Workers – over 100 – many bishops' wives from Lambeth Conference at same time. 80 Overseas Dioceses, 800 branches, 10,000 members. Mrs Hubert Barclay elected as Central President.
1921	Death of Mary Sumner 10 th August. Her funeral in Winchester Cathedral is attended by 4,000 mourners.	Diamond wedding of Lady Horatia Erskine celebrated. Concern expressed about dangers of cinema and anti – Christian Sunday Schools.

		Mass meeting. Worldwide membership 391,409.
1925-1926		Opening of purpose built Mary Sumner House July 1925 by Princess Mary, Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Southwark guests of Honour Princess Beatrice, Mary Sumner's daughter, Mrs Gore Browne. Jubilee pageant June 21 st 1926 at the Albert Hall service in Westminster Abbey 490.000 members worldwide.

Data from Mothers' Union MU/ CO/Pres and MU/MSS; Porter Woodward and Erskine, *Mary Sumner Her Life and Work and a Short History of the Mothers' Union*; Mothers' Union, *Fifty Years*; Heath Stubbs, *Friendships High way*.

Appendix 2: Biographical notes on women activists

Anna Bramston (1847- 1931)

Anna Bramston, the daughter of John Bramston Dean of Winchester Cathedral (1872-1883), was active in the GFS. A friend of Charlotte Yonge, she became the first Headmistress of Winchester High School for girls. Her sister **Mary Elizabeth Bramston** (b.1841- 1912) also a Yonge protégé, was a novelist on religious and moral themes who wrote for MU and GFS magazines. She took positions supervising school boarding houses between 1875 and 1896 when she moved back to Winchester.¹

Isabella Bird Bishop (1831-1904)

Isabella Bird Bishop was the daughter of an evangelical Anglican vicar. She travelled to New Zealand and Australia in 1872. She also travelled to Hawaii and the published an account of her travels in the Rocky Mountains in 1879. She married a doctor. After the death of her husband the doctor John Bishop in 1876, Isabella studied practical medicine and during the 1880s and 90s travelled to Japan, India, Korea, Persia and Tibet, where she was involved in medical missions. She was made a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 1892.²

Lucy, Lady Frederick Cavendish (1841-1925)

Lucy, Lady Frederick Cavendish, wife of Lord Frederick Cavendish, was a supporter of education for women via the Girls' Public Day School Trust and served on the Royal Commission on Education in 1894. She is commemorated in Lucy Cavendish College Cambridge.³

Christabel Coleridge (1843-1921)

Christabel Coleridge (1843-1921), the daughter of Derwent Coleridge a son of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was a journalist and novelist. Mentored by Charlotte Yonge she

¹ Georgina Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge the Story of an Uneventful Life* (London: Constable & Co., 1943); Georgina O'Brien Hill "Charlotte Yonge's 'Goosedom'," *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*, no. 8.1. [<http://www.ncgsjournal.com/issue81/hill.htm>, accessed 21st August 2012].

² Dorothy Middleton, "Bishop [Bird], Isabella Lucy (1831-1904)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2005). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31904>, accessed 3 Jan. 2014].

³ G.C. Boase and H.C.G. Matthew, "Cavendish, Lord Frederick Charles 1836-1882." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4932>, accessed 28th Aug 2013].

was one of the 'Goslings' and was Yonge's first biographer. Christabel Coleridge succeeded Charlotte Yonge as editor of the *Monthly Packet* from 1890 and edited the GFS magazine *Friendly Leaves*.¹

Louise Creighton (1850-1936)

Louise Creighton was the wife of Bishop Mandell Creighton (Peterborough 1891, London 1897). She was friends with Laura Ridding and Mary Ward and was initially anti-suffrage. Louise Creighton was the first president of the National Union of Women Workers (NUWW) (1895), was active in the MU and GFS and addressed women's sessions at Church congresses. In 1901, she initiated the Girls' Diocesan Association, her daughter Beatrice serving as its first president. She was a prolific author notably of biography and as editor of her husband's letters. She served on the Venereal Disease Commission of 1913. In 1908, she chaired the women's meetings at the Pan-Anglican Congress. She was involved in the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and participated in the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910.²

Jane Ellice Hopkins (1836-1904)

Ellice Hopkins was an evangelical purity campaigner notable for her 'rescue' work for 'fallen' women and her attempts to reform male morals through the White Cross Army.³ She was a prolific pamphleteer and her *Early Training of Girls and Boys: An Appeal to Working Women*, first published in 1882, was reissued in 1902 with the subtitle '*Especially Intended for Mothers' Unions*'.⁴

Hon. Ellen Joyce (1832-1924)

The Hon Ellen Joyce was the daughter of Baron Dynevor. Her son was the incumbent of St Martin's Winchester, where she lived from 1887. She was a founding Associate of the GFS and active in the Mothers' Union. She was an exponent of women's emigration and initiated the GFS Emigration Department in

¹ Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge the Story of an Uneventful Life*.

² James Thayne Covert, 'Creighton, Louise Hume (1850–1936).' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³ Sue Morgan, *A Passion for Purity: Ellice Hopkins and the Politics of Gender in the Late-Victorian Church* (Bristol: Centre for Comparative Studies in Religion and Gender, University of Bristol, 1999).

⁴ Ellice Hopkins, *On the Early Training of Girls and Boys. An Appeal to Working Women, Etc* (London: Hatchards, 1882).

1885. She founded the Winchester Women's Emigration Society which later amalgamated with other societies to become the British Women's Emigration Association (BWEA) in 1888. She was a keen imperialist and supported the Conservative Primrose League and the campaign for a 'White Australia'.⁵

Gertrude King (1867-1954)

A social worker and missionary, Gertrude King, whose religious beliefs were evangelical and High Church, acted as the helpmeet to her clerical brother in his parochial work between 1885 and 1899. In 1900, Gertrude followed her brother to the French colony of Madagascar where he had been appointed as Bishop of this missionary Diocese. Here, working through the women's section of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) she started the first branch of the Mothers' Union for indigenous members in Africa. By 1910, there were seventeen branches with 1000 members. She corresponded with Mary Sumner and pioneered the practice of linking overseas branches of the MU with 'home' branches, thus helping to promote the MU as a worldwide organisation and to shape its missionary stance. On her return from Madagascar in 1919 she served as MU overseas secretary and was influential in setting up the first overseas MU conference.⁶

Lady Knightly of Fawsley (1842-1914)

Lady Knightly of Fawsley, like Ellen Joyce, a keen imperialist, was a prominent figure both in the GFS (Diocesan President for Peterborough 1887-1905) and in the Conservative pro imperial Primrose League (1885). She edited *The Imperial Colonist*, the journal of the British Women's Emigration Society (1902).⁷ Lady Knightly also served as the president of the South African Colonisation Society (SACS) an offshoot of the BWEA which was instigated in anticipation of increased

⁵ Julia Bush, 'Joyce, Ellen (1832-1924)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2006). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/74348>, accessed 26 Nov. 2012]

⁶ Elizabeth Prevost, "King, Gertrude May (1867-1954)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/103386>, accessed 3 Jan. 2014].

⁷ Julia Bush, "The Right Sort of Woman': Female Emigrants and Emigration to the British Empire, 1890-1910', *Women's History Review* 3, no. 3 (1994); *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000). 68, 79, 194.

emigration after the Boer war in 1903.⁸ The GFS sent Lady Knightly on a visit to South Africa in 1905.⁹

Charlotte Mason (1842-1923)

Charlotte Mason was the founder the Parents' National Education Union (PNEU). Charlotte Mason, a practising Anglican and advocate of female suffrage, was from 1874 to 1878 located in the Winchester Diocese as Vice Principal at Bishop Otter Teacher Training College, Chichester. Her book *Home Education* was published in 1886.¹⁰ *Home Education* (which ran to repeated editions) was followed by further volumes, *Parents and Children; School Education; Ourselves; Formation of Character* and *A Philosophy of Education*. In 1891 she established her own training college The House of Education in Ambleside Cumbria.¹¹

Charlotte Annie Moberly (1846-1937)

Charlotte Annie Moberly was the daughter of George Moberly, head master of Winchester College and later Bishop of Salisbury. She wrote under the alias of Elisabeth Morrison and served as the first principal of St Hugh's College Oxford (1886-1915). She recorded a memoir of her father and family.¹² Charlotte's sister, Edith, started the GFS in Salisbury when her father became Bishop there. George Ridding, the next Headmaster of Winchester College, had been married to another Moberly sister, Mary, who died after a year of marriage in 1859. He married Lady Laura Palmer in 1876. The Moberly family were close friends with Charlotte Yonge.¹³

Lady Laura Ridding (1839-1949)

Laura Ridding was the daughter of Roundell Palmer, First Lord Selborne and a supporter of philanthropic projects. In 1876 she married George Ridding

⁸ Cecillie Swaisland, *Servants and Gentlewomen to the Golden Land: The Emigration of Single Women from Britain to Southern Africa, 1820-1939* (Oxford; Providence: Berg ; Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: University of Natal Press, 1993).

⁹ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway*, 160; Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power*.

¹⁰ Barbara Caine, 'Mason, Charlotte Maria Shaw (1842-1923).' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37743>, accessed 29 Aug. 2013]. Home Education was conceived of either in addition to schooling or as a substitute.

¹¹ David. Wardle, *English Popular Education, 1780-1970* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970). 92-94.

¹² C. A. E. Moberly, *Dulce Domum: George Moberly, His Family and Friends* (London: John Murray, 1911).

¹³

Headmaster of Winchester College, the successor to George Moberly, who became Bishop of Southwell in 1884. She was an early GFS committee member and instigator of the MU Watch Committee (1912). She was president of the NUWW, gave frequent addresses to Church congresses and was a prolific diarist. Pro-suffrage and a keen imperialist she was friends with Louise Creighton and Ellen Joyce. Laura Ridding's brother, Lord Selborne, served as Governor General of South Africa (1905-1910) and his wife, Maud, was an activist in the Primrose League, South African Colonial Society and the Victoria League. As their guest, Laura Ridding undertook an extended tour of South Africa in 1908. Whilst there, she kept a notebook which included reflections on social and educational issues and 'the native problem'.¹⁴

Lucy Soulsby (1856-1927)

MU Council member, Lucy Soulsby, noted above for her opposition to girls taking degrees, had secured her reputation as the Headmistress of Oxford High School, a Girls' Public Day School Company establishment.¹⁵ She sat on the council of Lady Margaret Hall and opposed girls' access to the Oxford degree in 1895, the only Girls' Public Day School Company Head to do so. Soulsby also signed Mrs Humphrey Ward's anti-suffrage petition in 1889. Lucy Soulsby produced numerous pamphlets on educational and religious themes including *Stray Thoughts for Mothers and Teachers* (1897) and *Talks to Mothers* (1916).¹⁶ Her *Two Aspects of Education* (1899) *I Self Control* and *II Fortitude, Humility and Large Heartedness*, advocated notions of good womanly conduct in accord with those asserted in the writings of Mary Sumner and Charlotte Yonge and the publications of the MU and GFS.

¹⁴ Lady Laura Ridding. *South African Note Book*. Selborne Papers, Hampshire Record Office 9M68/61. December 1908; Serena Kelly, 'Ridding, Lady Laura Elizabeth (1849–1939)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁵ Kate Flint, 'Soulsby, Lucy Helen Muriel (1856-1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/48573>, 21 June 2013]. An obituary by Mrs Hubert Barclay appeared in *MIC*, July 1927, 160-2.

¹⁶ Lucy Soulsby, *Stray Thoughts for Mothers and Teachers* (London: Longmans, 1897). Lucy Helen Muriel Soulsby, *Talks to Mothers* (London: Longmans & Co., 1916).

Mary Townsend (1841-1918)

Mary Townsend the 'Foundress' of the GFS was the wife of a landed gentleman. Her friendship with Bishop Samuel Wilberforce was the catalyst for the initiation of the GFS, which aimed to protect the chastity of working women in the Winchester diocese in 1874. She recruited Mary Sumner, Charlotte Yonge and Ellen Joyce as Founding Associates.¹⁷

Elizabeth Wordsworth (1840-1932)

Elizabeth Wordsworth, the daughter of Christopher Wordsworth, the Headmaster of Harrow School and Bishop of Lincoln (1868), was the first principal of the Oxford women's college Lady Margaret Hall from 1878 to 1909. Her commitment to women's education was based on the assumption that educated women would be better wives, mothers and churchwomen. In 1870, she met Charlotte Yonge and they remained lifelong friends.¹⁸

Charlotte Yonge (1823-1901)

Charlotte Yonge was a prolific novelist, author of religious and historical text books and editor of *The Monthly Packet* (until 1890). She served the GFS as Winchester Diocesan Head of Literature until 1900 and contributed to GFS publications. Charlotte Yonge edited the MU's *Mothers in Council* from 1891-1901.¹⁹ Her novels, which she conceived of 'as a sort of instrument for popularising Church Views' reflect her religious motivation and can be interpreted as evangelical in intent. Her spiritual mentor was John Keble, a founder of the 1833 Tractarian Movement.²⁰ Charlotte Yonge's enthusiasm for foreign missions was exemplified by her financial support for the missionary ship 'Southern Cross' in 1854 and her 1875 biography of her relative, the martyred Missionary Bishop,

¹⁷ G. M Harris, 'Townsend, Mary Elizabeth (1841-1918).' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Brian Harrison, 'For Church Queen and Family; the Girls' Friendly Society 1874-1920', *Past and Present* 61(1973).

¹⁸ Frances Lannon, "'Wordsworth, Dame Elizabeth (1840-1932)'" , *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37024>, accessed 3 Jan. 2014]; Ethel Romaines, *Charlotte Mary Yonge an Appreciation* (London: Mowbray, 1908).

¹⁹ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendships Highway*, 6.

²⁰ Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge the Story of an Uneventful Life*: 15. Charlotte Yonge quoted in Introduction by E.M Delafield; Elisabeth Jay, 'Yonge, Charlotte Mary (1823-1901).' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

John Coleridge Patteson of Melanesia.²¹ Charlotte Yonge also included missionary themes in her fiction, where she gives a role to women as helpmeets and teachers in the missionary enterprise. *New Ground* (1868) also made distinct the superiority of Christian (rather than White or English) treatment of the 'native Kaffirs'.²² Her 1856 novel, *The Daisy Chain*, affirmed the spiritual status of the character Norman May by awarding him a missionary vocation in which he is to be supported by his loyal bride Meta. Ethel May, the central character of the book, observes that together 'they will make a noble missionary!'²³ The book also exemplifies a higher life of service, one open to Ethel, who has relinquished aspirations for wider horizons due to the claims of home duty, yet gains fulfilment through teaching and fundraising for the establishment of a Church, in a 'missionary' venture in a local industrial area. Through *The Monthly Packet* and the more select privately circulated *Barnacle*, Charlotte Yonge acted as mentor to young women aspiring to write, including Christabel Coleridge and Anna and Mary Bramston. She was friends with Elizabeth Wordsworth and the Moberly family.

²¹ Battiscombe, *Charlotte Mary Yonge the Story of an Uneventful Life*: 90-91; Romaines, *Charlotte Mary Yonge an Appreciation*: 115-127. Romaines notes Charlotte Yonge's 1871 study of missionary lives 'Pioneers and Founders'; Charlotte Yonge, *Life of John Coleridge Patteson Missionary Bishop of the Melanesian Islands* (London: Macmillan, 1875).

²² *New Ground* (London: J. and C. Mozeley, 1868).

²³ Charlotte Mary Yonge, *The Daisy Chain; or, Aspirations. A Family Chronicle. By the Author of the Heir of Redclyffe, Etc.* (London: John W. Parker & Son, 1856). 566.