'Especiall vertues': abstract qualities and women's names in England, 1540–1850[1]

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There is a long tradition of prescribing those qualities which were desirable in women. Susan Udry cites the popularity of conduct books from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: they emerged in France to teach women 'to become more compliant wives, more virtuous daughters and more efficient household managers' (Udry n.d.). Characteristics stressed were obedience, disciplined speech, and honour. Generally speaking, the ideal of human behaviour during the medieval period was strongly based on Biblical tenets, for example, the three theological virtues Faith, Hope, Charity and the nine Christian 'fruits of the Spirit'— 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance'.[2] The personifications of these, and of the cardinal virtues, Justice, Fortitude, Prudence and Temperance were also familiar from medieval morality plays.[3] Thus there were ideals of conduct for both

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[2] 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:22–23.

[3] E.g. King (1994, 240–64); also mentioned in Biblical apocrypha, Wisdom of Solomon 8:7.

sexes: but most conduct books were written by men to regulate the behaviour of women.

In late medieval England, Judith Bennett (1987, 103–04) argues, submission of the wife to her husband was paramount, both in public and in private. According to Felicity Riddy (1996, 116), peaceableness was a feminine attribute in which women were to be trained: 'a fair worde and a meeke / dooth wraþþe slake' (quoting a fifteenth-century courtesy text, *The Good Wife Taught her Daughter*).

A shorthand phrase frequently used to sum up the qualities promulgated by the conduct books is 'silent, modest, chaste'. So although conduct books, like any prescriptive literature, cannot be taken as firm evidence of people's actual behaviour, they are a good guide to how women were supposed to behave. They were of course aimed at a literate class at the top of society—though Bennett (1987, 42–47) and Barbara Hanawalt (1986, 213–15) both cite examples from church and manor courts which suggest that these ideals permeated lower levels of society too.

Similarly, Alison Wall (1990, 23–38) argues that male expectations in Elizabethan England were that women would be 'obedient to their husbands; [they were] to display due submission; to be chaste before and after marriage and faithful during it'. She too finds these precepts informing the judgements of Justices of the Peace and ecclesiastical courts.

Suzanne Hull's bibliography of conduct books for the period 1475 to 1640, *Chaste, Silent & Obedient*, confirms the strength of this traditional view. She cites a variety of authors promoting similar injunctions. For example, Thomas Pritchard in *The School of honest and virtuous lyfe* (1579) stresses these same virtues: 'a Wife ought to be discret, chaste, huswifely, shamefast, good, meeke, pacient, and sober' (Hull 1982, 195). Robert Greene in *Penelope's Web* (1587) writes of the 'three especiall vertues, necessary to be incident in every vertuous woman … namely obedience, chastitie and sylence' (Hull 1982, 173). In *The Excellency of good women* (by Barnabe Rich, 1613), we read that 'The Infallible

markes of a vertuous woman … are these, she must have modesty, bashfulnes, silence, abstinence, sobrietie' (Hull 1982, 196).

Thus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, prescriptive literature set out a consistent code of behaviour for women, and there is evidence that men and women, at all levels of society, acknowledged its content—even if, as Bernard Capp (2003, 19–21) argues, some women were keen to subvert it.

By the eighteenth century, while there may have been less overtly prescriptive writing about women's behaviour, there were now literary role models to reinforce ideals. And the religious revival towards the end of the century led to a renewed emphasis on women's proper role as domestic beings and moral guardians of the family—the 'angel in the house'.[4] Mrs West's 1806 *Letters to a Young Lady* epitomize this view: 'If we wish our girls to be happy, we must try to make them docile, contented, prudent and domestic … The passive virtues and the Christian graces, are her natural dowry' (cited in Blodgett 1989, 100). The 'passive virtues' remain as desirable as ever: but there is a slightly different gloss now, as they are alleged to offer not just benefit to others, but happiness to the women themselves.

Thus we can chart the continuing role of ideology in the social construction of femininity: throughout the entire period, a consistent set of ideals can be identified. Women were to be helpful but unobtrusive—submissive, quiet, and passive.

The same set of ideals was reinforced by the use of suitable abstract qualities as given names for women: the name *Virtue* itself becoming a short-hand for all these, perhaps. The practice was already known in medieval England: Withycombe (1977, 247) records *Prudence* in the thirteenth century (*Prudencia* 1210); George Redmonds (2004, 152–53)

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[4] A narrative poem, *The Angel in the House*, by Coventry Patmore, was published in 1863. Following its publication, the term came to be used to symbolize the selfless, submissive Victorian feminine ideal.

notes that Reaney and Wilson (1997, 201–02) find the name *Grecia*, *Gracia*, and *Gratia* in early thirteenth-century England, and that this was popularly associated with Old French *grace*.[5] Scott Smith-Bannister confirms that the majority of virtue names were given to girls. Although he and Redmonds both note in passing the very occasional use for boys' names of virtues more usually associated with girls, it would appear that the general practice of reinforcing prescribed ideals by naming rarely extended to boys (except on the wilder shores of Puritan nomenclature) (Smith-Bannister 1997, 181; Redmonds 2004, 154–55).[6] Not only were boys not named after the same virtues as girls were: they were very rarely named after virtues at all, however manly.

Smith-Bannister (1997, 13) draws attention to the belief prevalent (in the seventeenth century at least) that: 'Children were named and then supposed to act accordingly'. He notes that William Camden (1623) thought names should be of 'good and gracious significations', names which might inspire the bearer to good duties (Smith-Bannister 1997, 11). Occasionally, the conduct books themselves made this explicit, as in William Gouge's *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622), which prescribes 'some sorts of names as be fit and beseeming Christians' (cited in Smith-Bannister 1997, 16). The intention was, then, that the child would take on the qualities of her name, and grow under its influence.

Thus if we look at those qualities used as given names, we can construct a kind of composite picture of the ideal woman, for clearly only desirable attributes would be used. We are best able to do this for the period from the mid-sixteenth century when parish registers began to be kept. Although conduct books, aimed at the literate minority, were reinforced by sermons, ballads and chapbooks, some doubt has

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[5] Peter McClure (pers. comm.) confirms that more than one name is involved in the history of 'Grace'.

[6] In passing, we note that Smith-Bannister's definition of Puritan nomenclature is wide—it includes all those generally 'virtuous' names we are dealing with here.

necessarily surrounded the extent to which their ideals were adopted lower down the social scale. So it is useful to see in naming practices the reflection of the same values at all levels of society.

This study arose from a wider project investigating women's names in their social context, based largely on English parish registers. We used some original registers, but mainly drew on transcriptions published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, supplemented by limited use of online resources, drawing on other parish register transcripts, the International Genealogical Index, and the 1851 Census. We tried to cover all areas—though not necessarily every county—of England. In total, some one hundred registers were studied. From these, we have chosen examples merely to illustrate the general chronological and geographical spread of the names.

Thus our period begins in 1538 with the first parish registers, when already we find the use of abstract qualities as given names. Their use was not, as has sometimes been assumed, a solely 'Puritan' practice. A closer study of the record might confirm (or otherwise) the influence of literacy, class, and upward mobility in the adoption of these names. We can at this stage merely point out that we do have instances of these names being given to the children of labourers and artisans as well as to those of local clergy and gentry.

We cannot always assume that throughout this period one or both parents of the child had a totally free hand in choosing their child's name. Redmonds (2004, 52–57), for instance, has drawn attention to the influence of godparents in naming choice. Customs of naming after parents and grandparents, too, provided a degree of prescription. However, the registers covered here have not yielded many records of godparents, neither have we systematically traced individual families in order to discover any other naming influences.

Will Coster (2002, 189–90) says of new and changing names: 'The significance of the change to naming after parents was not in the passing on of parental names to future generations, but in what it indicates about the ability of parents to dictate the names of their children … (and to

take) … on the characteristics of name-givers with which today they are almost always associated'. Parental influence, then, was growing, but, according to Coster (2002, 188), before the mid-sixteenth century, neither parent should have been present, and, even after that date, with baptism closely following birth, the mother was likely still to be lying-in, or not yet churched, and so unlikely to be present. Of course, we cannot say that the mother did not therefore have any influence on the name chosen, and this raises interesting questions about women's complicity in what might be seen as patriarchal naming choices.

Historians such as Anthony Fletcher (1995, 12) argue that 'men's control of women's speech … was at the heart of the early modern gender system'. The use of the quality of silence as a name is obviously strongly reinforcing of the subordination of women's speech to that of men, a constant reminder that female silence was valued more highly than speech. Ultimately the injunction to silence is from St Paul: 'Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection'.[7] Women were to speak little, particularly in public, and when they did speak, to do so quietly.[8] Hull (1982, 142, n. 12) quotes from Thomas Becon's *Workes* (1560–64): 'there is nothinge that doth so much commend, avaunce, set forthe, adourne, decke, trim, and garnish a maid, as silence'.

Thus we find the names *Silence* or *Silent* throughout the period studied (there were thirty-nine examples of Silence in 1851), and clearly the vocabulary meaning of this name remained plain over the centuries. We also find in the naming stock the Latinate command *Tacet* or *Tace*, of which name Camden (1614, 103) says: 'Tace: be silent, a fit name to admonish that sex of silence'. This name is found over a wide geographical area, and continued long in use—though it was never

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[7]   1 Timothy 2:11.

[8]   See, for example, Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Act v, Sc. 3: 'Her voice was ever soft, gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman'.

common. It is not clear whether the use of Latinate form, here or in other names, reflects any social or class distinction. To what extent did anyone (beyond the educated) know what the name *Tacet* meant? Had the admonitory connotations already been lost? Certainly the forms *Tacy*(*e*), *Tasie* and so on, might encourage this view. *Tacet* seems to have died out before *Tacey*: there were eleven instances of the latter in the 1851 census of England, but none of the former.

Peace, one of the Christian 'fruits of the spirit', shares with *Amity*, *Comfort* and *Unity* the idea that the bearers of such names would provide compliant support to their husbands; but the name might sometimes also carry the meaning of quietness and silence (as in 'Hold your peace', 'Peace and quiet', etc.). Perhaps later the specific associated meaning of 'end of war' came to replace it. This may have influenced the naming of Peace in 1815,[9] seen as marking the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

Men's control of women extended beyond the control of speech, requiring submission in all things. Hull (1982, 115) quotes a text from 1617, which enjoins that a wife must be 'flexible, obedient and subject to do anything, according to the will and pleasure of her husband'.[10] This is reflected in the promise to 'obey' in the marriage service of the post-reformation Church of England as set out in the Book of Common Prayer; and in the names *Obedience* and *Submission*. Isaac Archer, a minister, rejoiced on his wedding that 'I found my wife perfectly devoted to please me; and I bless God for giving me one with a meek and quiet spirit' (cited in Capp 2003, 72).

According to Thomas Bentley, in *The Monument of Matrones* (1582): 'There is nothing that becommeth a maid better than soberness, silence, shamefastness, and chastitie' (Hull 1982, 142, n. 13). Sober (and soberness), in earlier centuries, referred to a lack of ostentation, a serious

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[9] See Appendix for this and names taken from the Parish Registers.

[10] Esther Sowernam [pseud.], *Ester hath hang'd Haman* (1617).

and calm restraint, a subdued manner. Temperance was also used in the sense of 'moderation', again denoting abstention from excess of all kinds. By the later part of the period, the meaning may have begun to narrow down to abjuring alcohol, as the influence of the Temperance Movement grew from about 1830. The name *Chastity* had fallen out of favour by the nineteenth century—there are none in the 1851 census; we encountered none after the late eighteenth century. *Purity* seems not to have been a common name, also dying out in the nineteenth century.

Later, John Gregory, in *A Father's legacy to his daughters* (1774; in Jones 1990, 46) states: 'One of the chief beauties in a female character is that modest reserve, that retiring delicacy which avoids the public eye … This modesty … will naturally dispose you to be rather silent in company'. Thus silence is not only desirable in its own right, it is an indicator of that other essential virtue, modesty, linked with chastity and purity. Modesty does not put itself forward: it is retiring and submissive.

Thus the ideal passive virtues are reflected in names such as *Modesty*, *Obedience*, *Patience*, *Silence*, *Sober*, *Submission* and *Temperance*. Chastity and Purity are desired as much after as before marriage. Religious constancy is traced back to I Peter 5:9 with the command to 'resist steadfast in the faith'. But the conduct books expect these qualities to be expressed in a woman's behaviour to her husband as much as to God: *Constance*, *Faith*, *Troth* or *Truth* can refer as much to a secular fidelity as a spiritual one. The forms *Constant*, *Faithful* and *True* may tend to reinforce this expectation. However, with the name *True*, we may, in the later period, possibly see a shift from the idea of steadfast, to that of 'real'—as exemplified by True Love Smith, 1782, perhaps influenced by the eighteenth century rise of romanticism and sentiment.

Constancy and honour, within marriage in particular, were to be expected and upheld. Elizabeth Foyster (1999, 6, 67) draws attention to men's ever-present concern about cuckoldry in the early modern period. A wife's faithlessness reflected some fault in her husband: thus her fidelity and (sexual) honesty were of paramount importance. The names *Constant* and *Hono(u)r* sometimes appear in the form *Constantia* or

Honor(*i*)*a*. It is sometimes possible to tell that they are merely the names Latinized because all at that period in that parish were so recorded. Sometimes, especially at a later date, they clearly represent a *bona fide* name. Certainly *Honora* and *Honoria* appear to stand as names in their own right.

Some virtues reflect the more active civilizing and softening influence woman could have over her husband, albeit within carefully circumscribed limits. We have already noted *Amity*, *Patience*, *Peace*, *Temperance*, *Unity*. Similarly, *Charity*, *Mercy* and *Clemency* are 'feminine' and 'softening' virtues, tempering the harshness of male judgements.

A good woman supported her husband by her carefulness—she was prudent and wise; she was a comfort to him; they lived amicably. Some husbands did acknowledge the support they received from their wives. A seventeenth-century farmer quoted by Mary Abbott (1993, 91) sums up: 'We lived comfortably together … She was a careful & industrious woman … a helpmeet and a good support to me'. We find *Comfort* and *Prudence*: and even wisdom was desirable—as evidenced by names such as *Sage* and *Sapience*—if applied to suitable activities, 'wise women' in the early modern period being those skilled in medical knowledge.

It is noticeable that *Modesty*, *Obedience*, *Patience*, *Silence*, *Submission* occur both as abstract nouns and—although perhaps less frequently—as adjectives; in the case of *Submit* (and *Tacet*) even in an imperative verb form. It is far from clear why this is the case. It cannot simply be that some grammatical forms are easier to say than others: although both are rare, *Submission* was used more than *Submit*: *Patience* became a relatively common name, while *Patient* never did.

Whether noun or adjective, many were amenable to developing hypocoristic or pet forms. There are frequent examples from the eighteenth century of girls called *Patty*, and this does seem to have been a pet form for *Patience*. Patience Wilcocks, who was baptized in Exeter in 1732, married there in 1758 as Patty Wilcock. We also find *Chasty*, *Prue*, *Tempy*, *Trothy*, *Faithy* and so on, particularly from the mid-eighteenth

century onwards. Like other virtue names, *Mercy* and *Charity* could be abbreviated: Dickens has characters Cherry and Merry, properly Charity and Mercy Pecksniff, in *Martin Chuzzlewhit*, while this study finds *Charry* and *Merry*. It is possible that in some cases, *Merry* reflects a local pronunciation of *Mary*, but in this one instance at least we know that the girl was baptized 'Merry or Mercy'. Elsewhere *Mercy* was often spelt 'Marcy'—this is no doubt a reflection of pronunciation current at the time or in that locality.

Because the three theological virtues previously mentioned, *Faith*, *Hope* and *Charity* were often thought of together, sometimes two or even all three names were used in the same family—and were a 'natural' choice for naming girl twins or triplets: Faith and Hoop (twins) and their sister Charitie (Lumb 1837, under baptisms for 1679 and 1681).

In conclusion, we must point out that such abstract vocabulary or 'quality' names were never a large proportion of the female name stock. Some parish registers consulted have very few or even none. Some virtue names were always more widely used than others, and there was varying popularity over time. Nevertheless, such names are far from uncommon, and their use gives rise to a series of questions which we are still considering.

First of all the influence of naming practices: we have said we have little direct evidence of god-parental influence, but there is evidence of girls being named after their mothers. In the case of illegitimate children there was also a tendency for children to be given a suitably 'penitent' name, though we do not know how much this was due to the influence of the parish clerk or clergy as it certainly was in the case of foundlings and the children of vagrants. We find Prudence, daughter of Piety Allsope, baseborn, 1746 and Providence, also baseborn, 1761, both in Staffordshire. In 1757 in Bedfordshire, the name *Silence* was given to the daughter of travellers—though it was possibly a parental choice, it seems to betray clerical influence. Grace and Mercy were both 'bastard' daughters of Dorothy Ritch (or Riches) also in Bedfordshire, but in the early seventeenth century. *Fortune* might seem inappropriate for both the

illegitimate girl baptized in 1584 in Surrey, or the foundling child in Shropshire in 1677, but, like *Providence*, it does reflect the sense of chance or fate (or God's will) influencing the course of events for good or bad. There are indications that some families have, in any case, a tendency towards the use of virtue names, for example, Comfort daughter of Comfort Davies in 1735 in Gloucestershire, Constance in Middlesex in 1646 whose mother and godmother were also named Constance, Grace the daughter of John and Charity Richards in 1808 in Devon.

Sometimes parents simply followed local fashion: in Alton, Hampshire in 1734, three sets of parents baptized their daughters Pretty.[11] This last reference may serve as an example of a parallel fashion for selecting names with abstract qualities not perhaps so valued in the conduct books: *Beauty*, *Blythe*, *Felicity*, *Melody*, *Pleasant*, *Precious*, *Sweet*. Whereas *Grace*, *Love*, *Joy* could continue to imply spiritual states as well as the more general vocabulary senses, these other, secular names tend to suggest that parental choice was widening. The burgeoning middle classes, and an upwardly mobile society, encouraged the breeding of 'ladies' with social graces and accomplishments. It is tempting to link the rise of these names, which might be seen as 'softer' and more sentimental, with the change in attitude towards children and childhood often identified in the eighteenth century (Ariès 1962; Shorter 1977).

Secondly, when (if ever) does a personal name such as these lose its ordinary vocabulary sense? Do some names reflect changing senses over the centuries? In the case of the names *Grace*, *Charity*, *Mercy*, for how long do the specific Christian connotations remain uppermost in namers' minds? *Grace*, as we have noted, is likely to be a special case: the name certainly pre-dates any Puritan influence, and in any case, it may be that the Christian meaning of spiritual grace was not always uppermost in the choice of this name (Redmonds 2004, 152–53). Certainly in modern

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[11] International Genealogical Index, <http://www.familysearch.org>.

times it is not clear what caused *Grace*'s sudden rise in favour, from twenty-third in 2001 to top in 2006.[12] We have no evidence as to whether its popularity is in one particular section of society, or religious movement. It is a simple name to pronounce, and easy to comprehend as a pleasant quality to be wished on any daughter.

At what point, therefore, do names lose the connotations of the original quality and become merely pleasant sounding names? Did anybody know the origins of *Tacey* by the nineteenth century? Hypocoristic or pet forms such as this and others discussed earlier show what women and girls were actually called: they also serve to distance the name from the quality to some extent, and may have acted to dilute the association with the particular virtue. Some names die out presumably because the vocabulary meaning is still recognized and no longer acceptable (*Submission*, for example).

Thirdly, there may be scope for further investigation into regional preferences, although we have to say that nothing is readily evident from our material. As we have suggested, local fashions and influences within the parish (and within the 'family') are probably more important.

Having said that these names are not terribly common, neither are they that unusual. We have so far found very few indeed of famous often-quoted 'Puritan' names—even the more straightforward *Humility*, *Repentance* and so on, never mind others more exotic—*Tribulation*, *Discipline*, *Delivery*, *Reformation*.[13] And they generally form a viable part of the naming stock, and some ultimately seem hardly to be thought of as 'virtue' names at all.

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[12] <www.ons.gov.uk/ons/search/index.html?newquery=babies+names> (accessed 07/09/2013). By 2008, Grace had fallen to fourth place: Connie was back in the top 100.

[13] Noted by Camden (1614, 49). Thanks to Dr Patrick Hanks for drawing our attention to this.

None of our names appeared in the top one hundred of the 1998 Electoral Roll of Great Britain, according to Tucker (2004, 13–15), but we have already noted the sudden rise in popularity of *Grace*, which seems to be part of a general revival of 'old-fashioned' names—so we may yet see *Chastity* and *Modesty* staging a comeback.

APPENDIX: NAMES (AND SOME OED DEFINITIONS)

Names were selected from volumes published by the following county series: Bedfordshire Parish Register series; Birmingham and Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry; Cornish Parish Registers: Marriages; Lancashire Parish Register Society; Shropshire Parish Register Society; Staffordshire Parish Register Society; Surrey Parish Register Society; Sussex Record Society; Warwickshire Parish Register series; Worcestershire Parish Register Society; Thoresby Society (Yorkshire). All other forms were found online using the database provided by the International Genealogical Index via <FamilySearch.org>, some digital facsimiles of registers, and the 1851 Census returns via <Ancestry.co.uk>.

Other sources consulted: Gray and Gethyn-Jones 1960; Hervey 1890; Marshall 1896a and b; McCall 1901; Squibb 1979.

This selection of definitions from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) has been chosen either to explain words no longer in common use (e.g. sapience, tace, and troth) or to show the range of meanings current during the period covered (e.g. amity, peace, unity, chastity, clemency, honour, modesty, and temperance).

Amity	1612 Devon, 1622 Devon
Amitie	1604 Gloucs
	Friendship, friendliness; friendly relations; especially of a public character between states or individuals (OED, s.v. *amity*).
Beauty	1715 Kent
Blith	1617 Norf
Blythe	1577 Norf, 1581 Norf, 1629 Oxford
	1. a. Exhibiting kindly feeling to others; kind, friendly, clement, gentle. *Obs.* 2. a. Exhibiting gladness: jocund, merry, sprightly, gay, mirthful. In ballads frequently coupled with *gay*. Rare in modern English prose or speech. 3. Of men, their heart, spirit, etc.: Joyous, gladsome, cheerful; glad, happy, well pleased. Rare in English prose or colloquial use since 16th c. (OED, s.v. *blithe*, adj., n. and adv. These senses pertain to *blithe*, adj.)
Charity	1538 Yorks, 1552 Devon, 1565 Devon, 1673 Sussex, 1676 Devon, 1681 Yorks, 1682 Shrops (*adult*), 1698 Warws, 1732 Sussex, 1760 Staffs , 1815 Devon
Charitee	1567 Som, 1592 Devon
Chearratie	1606 Sussex
Charitas	1611 Som
Charry	1688 Sussex
	1c**.** *esp.* The Christian love of one's fellow human beings; Christian benignity of disposition expressing itself in Christ-like conduct: one of the 'three Christian graces', fully described by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. 2a. Without any specially Christian associations: Love, kindness, affection, natural affection: now esp. with some notion of generous or spontaneous goodness. (OED, s.v. *charity*, n.)

Chastity	1605 Lincs, 1722, 1751, 1793 Corn
Chasty	1793 (*adult*) Hants
	1a. Purity from unlawful sexual intercourse; continence. 2. Abstinence from all sexual intercourse; virginity, celibacy. 4. Exclusion of meretricious ornament; purity of style, modesty, chasteness. 5. Exclusion of excess or extravagance; moderation, restraint. (OED, s.v. *chastity*, n.)
Clemence	1524 Lancs, 1553 Gloucs, 1596 Surrey, 1600 Sussex, 1602 Notts, 1622 Essex
Clemens	1641 Sussex (*adult*)
Clementia	1697 Berks
Clemencie	1835 Cambs
	1 **a.** Mildness or gentleness of temper, as shown in the exercise of authority or power; mercy, leniency. (OED, s.v. *clemency*)
Comfort	1604 Herefs, 1694 Warws, 1727 Worcs, '*Comford* d of *Comfort* Davies 1735 Gloucs, 1760 Gloucs
	1a. Strengthening; encouragement, incitement; aid, succour, support, countenance. b. *concr.* One who or that which strengthens or supports; a support, a source of strength. 4. Relief or aid in want, pain, sickness, etc. 5. a. Relief or support in mental distress or affliction; consolation, solace, soothing. (In later use sometimes expressing little more than the production of mental satisfaction and restfulness.) c. *transf.* A person or thing that affords consolation; a source or means of comfort. (OED, s.v. *comfort*, n.)

Constance	1563 Beds, 1563 Warws, 1567 Devon, 1597 Sussex, 1622 Surrey, 1628 Devon, 1643 Shrops, '*Constance daughter of C and goddaughter of* C' 1646 Middx, 1657 Yorks, '*Constance bastard of that imprudent whore C Michels*' 1694 Sussex, 1781 Worcs
Constant	1634 Sussex (*d of Restored Weeks*), 1757 Surrey, 1781, 1785 Staffs
Constantia	1786 Berks
Custance	1563 Beds, 1592 Yorks (*adult*), 1643 Staffs
	1. a. Steadfastness, firmness, resolution, faithfulness, fidelity; b. Stability. *adj.* 1. a. Standing firm in mind or purpose; steadfast, unmoved, resolute. (OED, s.v. †*constance*, n.)
Faith (and variants)	1558 Devon, 1574 Som, 1577 Norf, 1579 Warws, 1584 Devon, 1601 Notts, 1613 Som, 1647 Norf, 1651 London (adult), 1653 Worcs, 1698 Surrey (adult), 1722 Devon, 1733 Yorks, 1802 Sussex
Faithfull	1589 Sussex, 1625 Devon
Faithy	1628, 1641 Devon
	I. Belief, trust, confidence. 1. a. Confidence, reliance, trust (in the ability, goodness, etc., of a person; in the efficacy or worth of a thing; or in the truth of a statement or doctrine). 3. *Theol.* in various specific applications. a. Belief in the truths of religion; belief in the authenticity of divine revelation (whether viewed as contained in Holy Scripture or in the teaching of the Church), and acceptance of the revealed doctrines. 9. a. The duty of fulfilling one's trust; allegiance owed to a superior, fealty; the obligation of a promise or engagement. 10. The quality of fulfilling one's trust; faithfulness, fidelity, loyalty. (OED, s.v. *faith*, n.)

Felicity	1646 Norf, 1588 Sussex, 1604 London, 1768 London
	1. a. The state of being happy; happiness (in mod. use with stronger sense, intense happiness, bliss); a particular instance or kind of this. 2. That which causes or promotes happiness; a source of happiness, a blessing. 3. a. Prosperity; good fortune, success. Now *rare*. 4. a. A happy faculty in art or speech; admirable appropriateness or grace of invention or expression. (OED, s.v. *felicity*, n.)
Fortune	1584 Surrey, 1677 Shrops, 1773 Surrey
	1. a. Chance, hap, or luck, regarded as a cause of events and changes in men's affairs. Often (after Latin) personified as a goddess, 'the power supposed to distribute the lots of life according to her own humour' (Johnson); her emblem is a wheel, betokening vicissitude. 3. a. The chance or luck (good or bad) which falls to any one as his lot in life or in a particular affair. (OED, s.v. *fortune*, n.)
Grace	1559 Yorks, 1560 Devon, 1563 Sussex, Yorks, 1567 Lancs, 1573 Norf, 1602 Gloucs (*d. of John Horsey gent.*), 1608 Beds (*d. of Dorothy Ritch, 'baseborn'*), 1611 Norf, 1614 Beds (*adult*), 1630 Sussex, 1646 Yorks, 1652 Surrey, 1679 Shrops, 1704 Sussex
	1. a. The quality of producing favourable impressions; attractiveness, charm … 2. a. An attractive or pleasing quality or feature. 4. *Mythol.* One of the sister-goddesses (= Latin *Grātiæ*, Greek *Χάριτες*) regarded as the bestowers of beauty and charm, and portrayed as women of exquisite beauty. Usually spoken of (after Hesiod) as three in number, Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne. b. The divine influence which operates in men to regenerate and sanctify, to inspire virtuous impulses, and to impart strength to endure trial and resist temptation. e. An individual virtue or excellence, divine in its origin. (OED, s.v. *grace*, n.)

Honor	1569, 1583 Devon, 1600 Corn, 1636 Dorset, 1656 Som, 1692 London, 1700 Surrey, 1716 Worcs, 1735 Corn
Honora	1746 Gloucs, 1772 Yorks, 1795 Devon
Honoria	1797 Berks, 1815 Kent
Honour	1718, 1790 Som
	3. a. (Of a woman) Chastity, purity, as a virtue of the highest consideration; reputation for this virtue, good name. (OED, s.v. *honour*, n.)

Joy	1570 Lincs, 1539 Corn, 1624 Gloucs, 1642 Kent, 1736 Shrops
	1. a. A vivid emotion of pleasure arising from a sense of well-being or satisfaction; the feeling or state of being highly pleased or delighted; exultation of spirit; gladness, delight. 2. A pleasurable state or condition; a state of happiness or felicity; *esp.* the perfect bliss or beatitude of heaven; hence, the place of bliss, paradise, heaven; *Obs.* or *arch.* 3. a. A source or object of joy; that which causes joy, or in which delight is taken; a delight. b. Used (esp. *dial.*) as a term of endearment for a sweetheart, child, etc.; a darling. (OED, s.v. *joy*, n.)

Love	1622 Norf, 1629 Shrops, 1679, 1683 London, 1777 Derbs, 1784 Som, 1795 Yorks
	1. b. As an abstract quality or principle. (Sometimes personified.) 2. In religious use: the benevolence and affection of God towards an individual or towards creation; (also) the affectionate devotion due to God from an individual; regard and consideration of one human being towards another prompted by a sense of a common relationship to God. Cf. Charity. (OED, s.v. *love*, n.(1))

Meliday	1740 Berks
Melody	1749 Devon, 1780 Bucks
	3. c. A pleasing visual effect or combination of colours, suggestive in some way of music. Now *rare.* (OED, s.v. *melody*, n.)

Mercy	1612 Beds *d. of Dorothy Riches, bastard* (cf. Grace 1608), 1671 Shrops, 1678 Shrops
Mercie	1563 Beds (*adult*), 1565 Yorks
Marcye	1568 Sussex, 1600 Sussex
Mercee	1607 Sussex, 1622 Sussex
Marcye	1642 Lancs, 1630 Worcs, 1650 Lancs, 1667 Staffs, 1671 Shrops, 1730 Yorks, 1770 Derbs
Merry	1675 Som
	1. a. Clemency and compassion shown to a person who is in a position of powerlessness or subjection, or to a person with no right or claim to receive kindness; kind and compassionate treatment in a case where severity is merited or expected, esp. in giving legal judgment or passing sentence. b. A figure representing mercifulness; pity or compassion personified. (OED, s.v. *mercy*, n. and int.)

Modest	1627 Worcs, 1726 Norf
Modesty	1616, 1696 Devon, 1711 Staffs
	1. Moderation, temperateness, self-control; freedom from excess or exaggeration; clemency, mildness of rule or government. *Obs.* 2. Decorum, propriety; scrupulous sobriety of thought, speech, conduct, etc.; natural avoidance of coarseness or lewdness. In early use regarded as a virtue proper to women, and often discussed as such. 3. a. The quality of being unassuming or of having a moderate opinion of oneself; reserve or reticence arising from an unexaggerated estimate of one's qualities and abilities; freedom from presumption, ostentation, arrogance, or pride. (OED, s.v. *modesty*, n.)
Obedience	1663 Warws, 1665 Corn, 1707 Worcs, 1777 Staffs, 1838 London
Obedient	1824 Herts
Patience	1556 Kent, 1581 Warws, 1611 Devon
Patient	1599 Sussex, 1612 Devon, 1620 Corn, 1631 Surrey (*d. of the parson*), 1640 Worcs, 1666 Devon, 1687 Yorks, 1735 London, 1746 Derbs, 1765 Surrey (*adult*), 1775 Gloucs, 1793 Surrey (*adult*)
Peace	1556 Kent, 1667 Yorks, 1724 Gloucs, 1815 Gloucs
	2. Freedom from quarrels or dissension between individuals (or, esp. in early use, between an individual and God); a state of friendliness; amity, concord. 5. Absence of noise, movement, or activity; stillness, quiet. (OED, s.v. *peace*, n.)
Pleasant	1679 Leics, 1784 London
Plesa(u)nce	1578 Essex, 1593 Berks

Precious	1756 Lincs C. *n.* A dear one, darling. Freq. with possessive adjective and as a form of address. (OED, s.v. *precious*, adj., adv., and n.)
Providence	1761 Staffs 1. a. Foresight; anticipation of and preparation for the future; prudent management, government, or guidance. Also: an instance of this. Now *rare*. 2. In full *providence of God (*also *nature,* etc.*)*, *divine providence*. The foreknowing and protective care of God (or nature, etc.); divine direction, control, or guidance. 5. a. An act or instance of divine intervention; an event or circumstance which indicates divine dispensation. (OED, s.v. *providence*, n.)
Prudence *Prue*	1549 Devon, 1550 Suff, 1579 Norf, 1584 Norf, 1586 Norf, 1594 Yorks, 1619 Yorks, 1637 Devon, 1661 Norf, 1670 Lond, 1697 Sussex (*adult*), 1726 Lond, 1775 Gloucs, 1709, 1746 Staffs (*both 'base'*) 1730 Hunt, 1749 Staffs 1. a. The ability to recognize and follow the most suitable or sensible course of action; good sense in practical or financial affairs; discretion, circumspection, caution. In early use: the wisdom to see what is virtuous, seen as one of the four cardinal virtues. †2. Wisdom; wise words; knowledge of or skill in a matter. *Obs.* (*arch.* in later use)*.* †3. Foresight; providence. *Obs.* (OED, s.v. *prudence*, n.)
Purity	1687 Essex, 1831 Norf 1. The state or quality of being morally or spiritually pure; sinlessness; freedom from ritual pollution; ceremonial cleanness; innocence; chastity. (OED, s.v. *purity*, n.)

Sage	1580 Gloucs, 1600 Gloucs, 1636 Shrops (*unlikely to be the herb name at this early date*)
Sapience	1580 Devon, 1602 Devon, 1641 Devon
	1. a. Wisdom, understanding. c. Spiritual wisdom, knowledge of divine things. d. sometimes contradistinguished from *prudence*. (OED, s.v. *sapience*, n.)
Silance	1685 Worcs, 1690 Bucks, 1698 Worcs, 1734 Corn, 1802 Derbs
Silence	1594 Sussex, 1680 London, 1757 Beds (*daughter of John & Margt Smith, travellers*)
Silent	1715 Surrey
Sobe	1773 Staffs
Sober	1703, 1818 Durham
	1. a. Moderate, temperate, avoiding excess, in respect of the use of food and drink; not given to the indulgence of appetite. The state or character of being sober; sobriety: b. Of diet, etc.: Moderate, temperate; characterized by the absence of excess or indulgence. c. Similarly of conduct, inclination, etc. 2. a. In respect of the appetites. b. In respect of demeanour, actions, etc. (OED, s.v. *sober*, adj.)
Submission	1694 London, 1721 Hants
Submit	1771 Essex, 1793 Westmoreland
	1. a. The state or condition of being submissive or obedient; deferential conduct, attitude, or bearing; humility. Also: †humiliation, abasement. Now *arch.* (OED, s.v. *submission*, n.)

Sweet	1671 Cambs
Clarissa Sweet Love [Callin]	1819 Ess

Tace	1572 Shrops
Tacia	1637 Worcs (*adult*), 1660 Som, 1669 Shrops
Tacie	1575 Gloucs
Tacy	1636 London, 1715, 1740 Devon, 1802 Derbs
Tacye	1550 Gloucs (*adult*), 1604 Shrops
Tasie	1605, 1675 Gloucs, 1792 Derbs
Tacet	1611 London, 1695 Gloucs
Taket	1611 Devon, 1626 Lincs
	The Latin for 'Be silent'. (OED, s.v. *tace*, v.)

Temperance	1565 Kent, 1570 Warws, 1576 Norf, 1608 Sussex (*adult*), 1615 Surrey, 1618 Som, 1625, 1634 Devon, 1679 London, 1689 Derbs, 1748 Yorks, 1752 Devon, 1778 Derbs, 1824 Staffs, 1834 Lancs, 1845 Som
Tempy	1680 Devon (*adult*), 1752 Hants, 1801 Staffs
	1. The practice or habit of restraining oneself in provocation, passion, desire, etc.; rational self-restraint. (One of the four cardinal virtues.) b. Self-restraint in the indulgence of any natural affection or appetency; moderation in the pursuit of a gratification, in the exercise of a feeling, or in the use of anything; in early use often = chastity. (OED, s.v. *temperance*, n.)

Troath	1620 Lincs
Troth	1613 Staffs, 1616 Lincs
Trothy	1701 Durham (*adult*), 1772 Norf (*adult*)
	1. a. Faithfulness, good faith, loyalty; honesty: *Obs.*

True	1583, 1744 Staffs
True Love [*Smith*]	1782 Worcs
Truth	1661 Yorks, 1672 Worcs, 1790 Staffs
	1. a. The character of being, or disposition to be, true to a person, principle, cause, etc.; faithfulness, fidelity, loyalty, constancy, steadfast allegiance. (See also Troth) now *rare* or *arch.* (OED, s.v. *truth*, n.).

Unity	1570 Devon (*adult*), 1667 Oxford, 1680 London, 1685 Sussex (*adult*), 1721 Devon (*adult*), 1778 Gloucs, 1799 Som, 1831 Essex
	3. a. The quality or condition of being one in mind, feeling, opinion, purpose, or action; harmonious combination together of the various parties or sections (*of* the Church, a state, etc.) into one body; concord or harmony amongst several persons or between two or more. (OED, s.v. *unity*, n.)

Veritie	1605 Gloucs, 1664 Lincs, 1721 Yorks
Verity	1605 Shrops
	1. a. Without article. Truth, either in general or with reference to a particular fact; conformity to fact or reality. Also *personif.* 4. Truthfulness, veracity, sincerity. ? *Obs.* (OED, s.v. *verity*, n.)

Vertue	1567 London, 1737 Gloucs (*adult*), 1767 Yorks
Virtew	1613 Lincs
Virtue	1690 London, 1835 Dorset

2. a. Conformity of life and conduct with the principles of morality; voluntary observance of the recognized moral laws or standards of right conduct; abstention on moral grounds from any form of wrong-doing or vice. (OED, s.v. v*irtue*, n.)

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