



ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
CAMDEN FIFTH SERIES

*The Remembrances of  
Elizabeth Freke, 1671–1714*

In writing and then rewriting autobiographical remembrances recalling three decades of marriage and ensuing years of widowhood, Elizabeth Freke strikingly redefines the relationships among self, family and patriarchy characteristic of early modern women's autobiography. Suffering and sacrifice dominate an extensive ledger of disappointment and bitterness that reveals over time the complex emotions of a Norfolk gentry woman seeking significance and even vindication in her hardships and frustrations. The infirm woman who eventually found herself utterly alone remained to the end a contentious, melodramatic, yet formidable figure – a strong-willed, even sympathetic person intent upon asserting herself against what she perceived as familial neglect and legal abuse. By making available both versions of the remembrances in their entirety, this new, multiple-text edition clarifies the refashioning inherent in each stage of writing and rewriting, recovering with unusual immediacy Freke's late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century domestic world.

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