

## **Saint Anne Line**

**Born *circa* 1560: Dunmow, Essex.**

Anne (or Alice) Line was the daughter of William Heigham of Dunmow, Essex, a wealthy Calvinist gentleman, who disinherited Anne and her brother when they converted to the Catholic faith. Anne married another convert, Roger Line (also disinherited) and they maintained a house in Bishopsgate Street, London. The house was used as place of worship and Roger was arrested there when Father William Thomson (ordained Rheims, 1584) was found saying Mass. William



Thomson was executed and Roger line was briefly imprisoned before being exiled to Flanders, where he died in 1594.

Anne was left in poverty and had no help from her family. Father John Gerard created a house for priests in London and Anne was charged with the housekeeping, finances and general running of the establishment. Father Gerard described her as ‘full of kindness, very discreet and possessed her soul in great peace.’ Eventually, John Gerard was sent to the Tower of London, but escaped in 1597. Anne removed to another house when suspicion of her complicity in his concealment became apparent. On Candlemas Day in 1601, Father Francis Page was preparing to celebrate Mass at her house, when searchers entered. Father Page quickly unvested and mingled with the others, but Anne was taken. She was tried for harbouring a priest, found guilty and condemned. On the scaffold at Tyburn she said, ‘I am sentenced for harbouring a Catholic priest. So far am I from repenting for having done so, that I wish with all my soul that where I have entertained one I could have entertained a thousand’. She was hanged on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1601.