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THE MANUSCRIPT IN BRITAIN, 1500–1800

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An exhibition at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University
January 18–April 19, 2020

Paper-businesses: Manuscript and Power in Early Modern England

Kathryn James

"Pastime with Good Company": Writing and Leisure in Early Modern England

Eve Houghton

The Critics' Gallery: The Manuscript as Critical Object

Raymond Clemens, Johanna Drucker, Diane Ducharme, Anastasia Eccles, Marta Figlerowicz, Susan Howe, Kathryn James, David Scott Kastan, Nancy Kuhl, Lawrence Manley, Lucy Mulroney, Catherine Nicholson, John Durham Peters, Sara Powell, Joseph Roach, Peter Stallybrass, Emily Thornbury, Michael Warner

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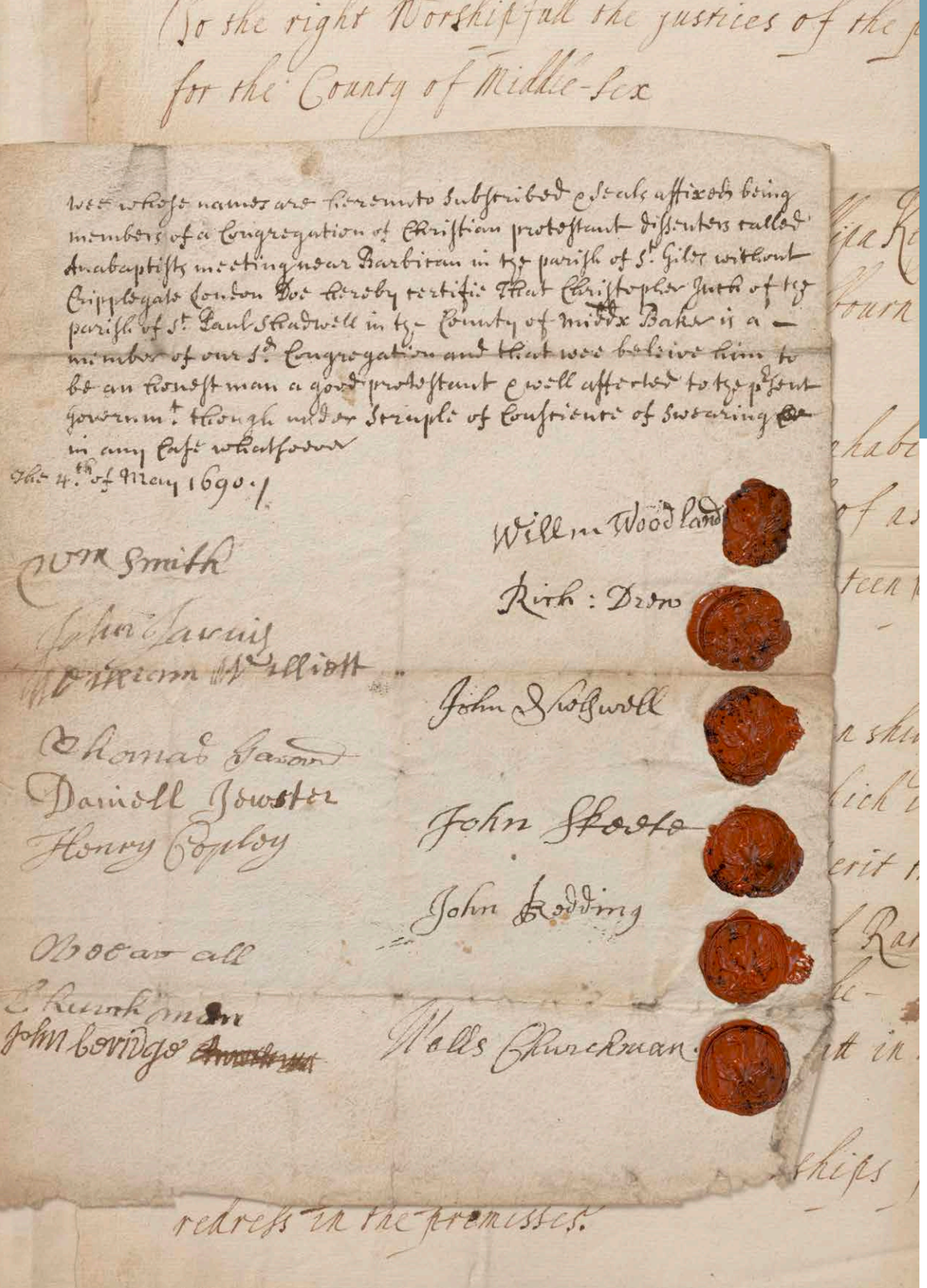


INTRODUCTION

KATHRYN JAMES

To put one's signature or other identifying mark upon (a document), esp. at the end or foot, typically to signify consent or agreement, or to declare that one is a witness; to signify assent to or compliance with (something), by signing one's name; to attest (a particular viewpoint or position) by one's signature.

"Subscribe," *Oxford English Dictionary*

Subscribed explores the agencies of the pen in three simultaneous exhibitions on manuscript culture and power in early modern Britain. The exhibitions together reflect a critical tradition of engagement with the manuscript in early modern British culture, in which writers and readers understood precisely the inflections of power inherent in the usages of pen, paper, and ink. This understanding extends to the present: the curators of *Subscribed* write with an understanding of the manuscript's centrality to our framing of the British past or an English literary canon.

Papers of the Court of Quarter Sessions (detail). Middlesex, ca. 1690. Osborn fb30. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection

Paper-businesses: Manuscript and Power in Early Modern Britain traces the intersections of handwriting and a canonical understanding of an English history and literature. In the sixteenth century, England imported its handwriting as it did its costume and court culture; by the late seventeenth century through the nineteenth, the British empire exported a particular bureaucratic hand, as it did a particular version of English literature.

In *Pastime with Good Company: Writing and Leisure in Early Modern England,* Eve Houghton turns to literary fun in the early modern period: the amateur players gathering to perform a drama; the student writers laughing at a joke shared in verse. In tracing the lines of literary sociability, the exhibition also follows its boundaries, asking whose privilege it was to write and share the private joke, and whose role in turn it was to be the object of the joke.

In *The Critics' Gallery: The Manuscript as Critical Object,* eighteen scholars were invited to curate a vitrine, each examining a manuscript in order to ask a question of manuscript culture. Follow these critics from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* to the imagined

manuscripts by Shakespeare's sister, or to the typographically rendered letters of Samuel Richardson's fictional heroine, Clarissa, or to the notes that Jonathan Edwards could hold discreetly in the palm of his hand while delivering an extemporaneous-seeming sermon. In its focus on the particular, *The Critics' Gallery* allows us to examine and question the nature of the manuscript as critical object.

This exhibition draws together the early modern English manuscript collections of Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and the Elizabethan Club. In doing so, it marks the vision and generosity of those collectors and curators who have shaped Yale's British collections, from its founding through the present. The exhibition is made possible by the efforts of many people, including and especially Megan Czekaj, David Driscoll, Rebecca Hirsch, Marie-France Lemay, Kerri Sancomb, and Paula Zyats. I am very grateful to the Elizabethan Club for its generous loan to the exhibition, and to Anders Winroth for his gracious assistance with this. Lesley Baier and Rebecca Martz have brought their precise and brilliant vision to the editing and design of the exhibition and this catalog. Last, I must thank Lucy Mulroney and my colleagues in the Collections, Research, and Education Department of the Beinecke Library, whose thoughtful responses to the early proposal of this exhibition transformed and enriched its final shape.

PAPER-BUSINESSES: MANUSCRIPT AND POWER IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

KATHRYN JAMES

…a kinde of Officer (as I may so tearme him) betwixt a Clerke and a Scriuener that is conuersant in Paper-businesses; a fellow wonderfull ill belou'd, a notorious lyer, and aboue all, extremely couetous.

Mateo Alemán, *The rogue: or The life of Guzman de Alfarache* (1623), p. 6

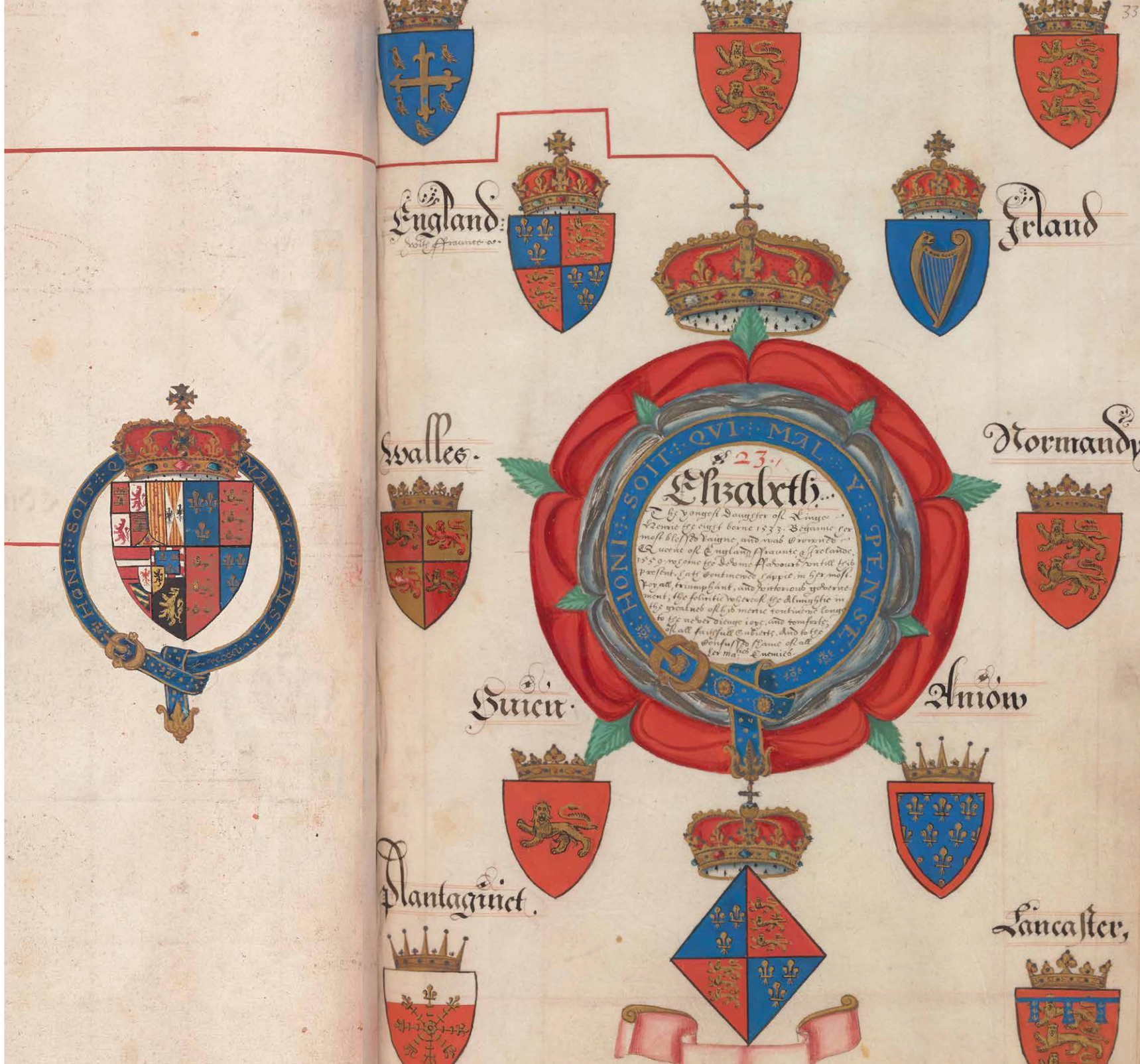
In 1592 Morgan Colman dedicated this manuscript genealogy of the monarchs of England (see pp. 8–9) to a prospective patron, Francis Bacon. The work is a visually resplendent statement of political orthodoxy. Consummately professional, Colman rendered the complicated political history of the Tudor dynasty as a linear visual narrative. All the uncertainties, all the turbulence of the Tudor reign, are seen to culminate in the reign of Elizabeth, twenty-third in the English succession.

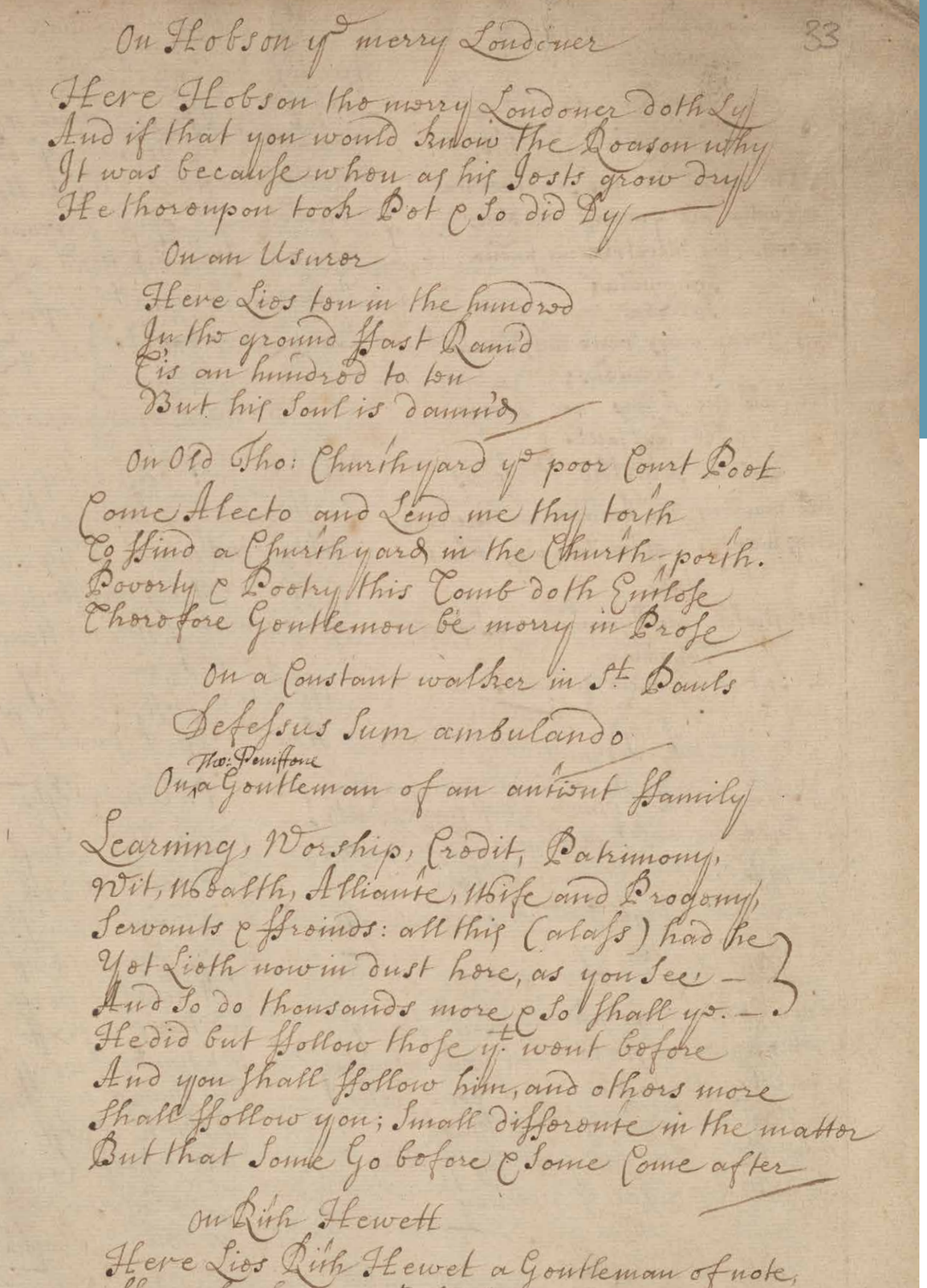
The document reflected the very anxieties it sought to allay: in 1592 the English monarch was neither married nor possessed of an heir. No extension of the Tudor lineage could be drawn from Elizabeth's Tudor rose. To any contemporary reader, Colman's genealogy would serve as an unnecessary reminder of the terrible price of dynastic uncertainty over the course of English history, from its origins in the genealogy's first entry: the accession of Egbert of Wessex to an Anglo-Saxon throne. Colman's manuscript, like the manuscript genre of heraldry, documented the political uncertainties of his present.

From birth to death, English lives were written in manuscript. Manuscript informed the structures of daily life for literate men and women. Doodles in the margins of copybooks, sums, letters, sermon notes, poems, family trees, excerpts from their reading, and other forms of evidence show us writers at work. Early modern English writers were authors and recipients of many kinds of text, including those for publication or circulation in manuscript or print. Writing was the means by which the state controlled its resources, including the records of its citizens. Parish records record the births and deaths of their inhabitants; wills and probate inventories mark the passing of individuals. These and other records document the accounts, in lives or sums, of the spheres of local, parish, church, and state governance in early modern England.

Paper-businesses asks how penmanship framed the personal and political in early modern Britain. It introduces the main "hands" or styles of handwriting in Britain from 1500 to 1800, arguing that the contexts in which these were used informed an understanding of the self and the state in Britain in the early modern period—and, by extension, Britain's political colonies in America and through the early stages of its empire. In introducing the main hands of British documentary and administrative culture, this exhibition highlights the political contingencies of manuscript culture, and the intersections of the individual—and individual's hand—with the machineries of state from the time of the Tudor dynasty through the emergence of a global British empire.

Morgan Colman, Genealogies of the kings of England, pp. 32–33 (detail). England, 1592. Osborn fa56. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection




On Hobson ye merry Londoner 33

Here Hobson the merry Londoner doth Ly
And if that you would know the Reason why
It was because whon as his Josts grow dry
He thorompon took Pot & so did Dy

On an Usuror

Here Lios ton in the hundred
In the ground fast Bound
Tis an hundred to ton
But his Soul is damnd

On Old Tho: Churchyard ye poor Court Poet

Come Alecto and Lend me thy forth
To find a Churchyard in the Church-porth.
Poorly & Lowly this Tomb doth Enclose
Therefore Gentlemen be merry in Prose

On a Constant walker in St Pauls

Defessus Sum ambulando

Mo: Pemffone
On a Gentleman of an antient family

Learning, Worship, Credit, Patrimony,
Wit, Wealth, Alliance, Wife and Progeny,
Servants & ffriends: all this (alass) had he
Yet Lieth now in dust here, as you See —
And so do thousands more & so shall ye. —
He did but follow those ye went before
And you shall follow him, and others more
Shall follow you; Small differonce in the matter
But that Some Go before & Some Come after

On Rich Hewett

Here Lios Rich Hewet a Gentleman of note,

"PASTIME WITH GOOD COMPANY": WRITING AND LEISURE IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

EVE HOUGHTON

Youth must have some dalliance,
Of good or ill some pastance;
Company methinks then best
All thoughts and fancies to digest.

"Pastime with Good Company," anonymous [attributed to Henry VIII], ca. early 16th century

In 1625 students at the University of Cambridge were advised to stay indoors. Reports of a deadly plague in London had reached the vice-chancellor, who suspended lectures and sealed off the university from contact with London—advising against even the sending and receipt of letters. As one university official wrote to a friend in the city, "It grows very dangerous on both sides to continue an intercourse of letters, not knowing what hands they pass through… Our Hobson and the rest should have been forbidden this week [to go to London], but that the message came too late."[1] "Our Hobson" was Thomas Hobson (1544–1631), the "carrier" or mailman for the university. He delivered letters and packages to London and rented a rotating stable of horses to Cambridge students and tutors. At eighty-one, he was gregarious, colorful, and avuncular, a fixture of university life and a figure of satirical fun for students like the poet John Milton, then an undergraduate at Christ's College. By 1630, however, there were few sources of amusement at Cambridge: more than two hundred people had died of the plague, and most public gatherings, sermons, and festivals had been canceled.[2]

Hobson was undoubtedly a significant figure at the university and in the civic life of the town. Still, the outpouring of epitaphs, jokes, songs, anecdotes, and sentimental poems that attended his death in 1631 seems disproportionate. For a while, it seemed, everyone at Cambridge was writing and copying poems about Hobson: five manuscripts in the Beinecke's Osborn collection of English literary manuscripts contain poems memorializing the university carrier.[3] Some poems, like the versions in Osborn b200 and Osborn fb143 (fig. 1), were brief satirical epigraphs; in Osborn b356, probably from the 1630s, the recently deceased Hobson is memorialized in a poem called

Fig. 1. "On Hobson *the* merry Londoner," in Epitaphs Collected 1694, p. 33 (detail). England, 1694. Osborn fb143

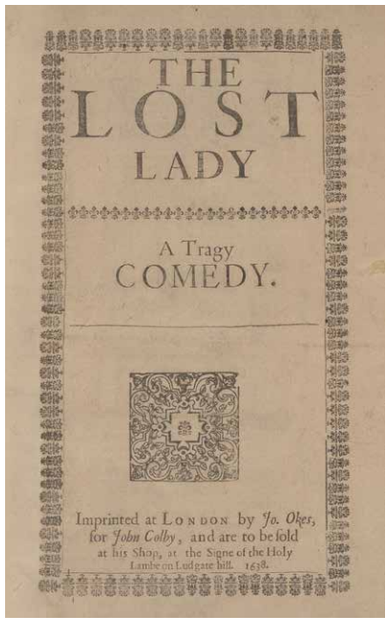

THE
LOST
LADY
A Tragy
COMEDY.
Imprinted at LONDON by Jo. Oker,
for John Colby, and are to be sold
at his Shop, at the Signe of the Holy
Lambe on Ludgate hill. 1638.

Fig. 2. William Berkeley, *The Lost Lady* (London, 1638), title page. Ih B455 +638

"Charon and Hobson's Ghost," a fanciful dialogue between the Cambridge mailman and the mythical ferryman, who addresses Hobson as "my brother carryer" (p. 35). The young Milton wrote not one but *two* Hobson poems honoring the carrier's energy and efficiency. The flurry of creative production might indicate that, in a time of plague, students welcomed the opportunity for distraction and recreation presented by the fad for poems honoring the late and much-lamented Hobson.[4] Posed somewhere between facetiousness and sincerity, Hobson poems became an outlet for creative expression, a form of social bonding, and perhaps a way to while away the winter nights in a Cambridge stricken with cold and disease.

More than two decades later, during the Interregnum of English republican government, twenty-seven-year-old Dorothy Osborne wrote to her secret fiancé describing the entertainments devised by her genteel family and their friends. Their country house in Kent, she wrote, was "strangely crowded with company" and "the most filled of any since the Ark." Although she tried to find a corner in which to write her letters, she had been conscripted into an amateur staging of an old play, William Berkeley's *The Lost Lady* (1638; fig. 2), in which she was to play the lead. "They will have me act my part in a play," she complained, "'The Lost Lady' it is, and I am she. Pray God it be not an ill omen!"[5] This was in 1654, after a civil war that had impoverished Osborne's royalist family for their loyalty to King Charles I. Amateur dramatic performance, like the composition of Hobson poems, offered one form of recreation and social bonding during this troubled period in English history.

This exhibition takes such pastimes seriously. It starts with a simple question: how do literary manuscripts show us what early modern people did for fun? To read the poetry and drama in the Beinecke's manuscript collections as leisure is not necessarily to imply that the works are trivial or lack artistic merit. Rather, it draws attention to the fundamentally collaborative nature of much early modern literary production and its situation in a social field. To that end, the exhibition reconstructs forms of literary friendship and community in seventeenth-century England—like the ones that sprang up in Cambridge in the 1630s around the passing of Hobson the beloved mailman, or in a country house populated by amateur dramatic performers in the 1650s—through the surviving manuscript evidence.

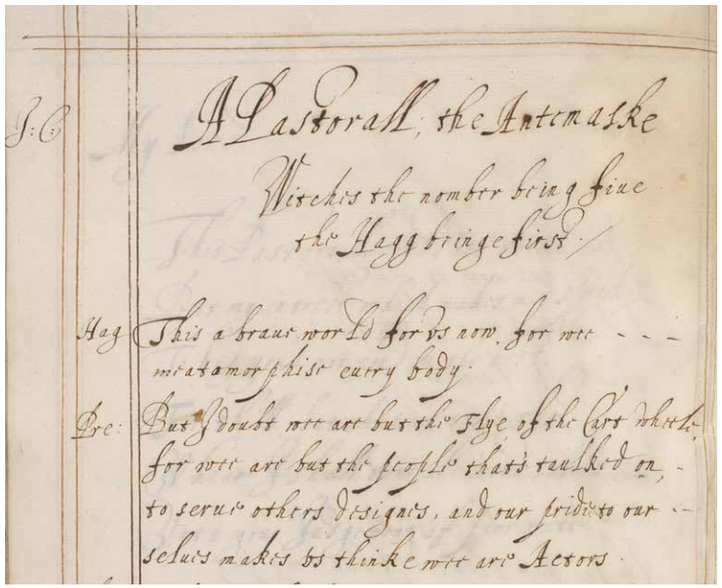
In the past few decades, scholars like Arthur Marotti, Harold Love, and Mary Hobbs criticized the field of manuscript studies for its tendency to focus on individual authors rather than attending to the wider social context of English literary manuscripts. This exhibition builds on their interventions by highlighting the collaborative and social dimensions of manuscripts more frequently identified with a single, well-known author like John Donne. Those manuscripts almost all contain poems by other authors as well, and this exhibition focuses on that subterranean literary world—jokes, epigrams, and occasional verse that scarcely seem to count as literary at all, but that spread through early modern communities with remarkable virality.

Similarly, the amateur manuscript plays in the exhibition might be considered as part of what Margaret Cohen dubbed the "great unread" of the literary archive.[6] These manuscript plays are often almost entirely unknown today. With a few exceptions, this so-called closet drama is rarely considered in conversation with the all-male literary and professional communities associated with the coterie poetry tradition. But as this exhibition will make clear, amateur drama written and performed for private recreation forms an important and underappreciated body of evidence in the study of early modern English literary sociability. Moreover, there is evidence that these manuscript plays, like the ones shown in this exhibition, may in fact have been circulated and performed, suggesting that the division between an outward-facing "coterie poetry" and a cloistered "closet drama" might be a false binary. By bringing together a group of dramatic and nondramatic manuscripts, this exhibition asks what it would mean to consider closet drama in a coterie context that valued wit, sociability, and finding ever more inventive ways to pass the time.

Leisure, Class, Sociability

As a concept, leisure is closely linked to time. The *OED* defines it as "the state of having time at one's own disposal," and more specifically, the "opportunity afforded by freedom from occupations."[7] It is thus strongly identified with class; to have leisure, broadly construed, means to have at least temporary freedom from the obligation to work for sustenance. Pastime, of course, literally denotes "passing the time," and the poets and playwrights who authored these manuscripts seem to have done so, at least in part, precisely for this reason. Early modern literary manuscripts are the records of a "pastime," then, in the sense that they can testify to the desire to control and reshape time, to break up the monotony of routines that could seem to stretch on interminably.

To imagine literature as pastime also foregrounds its social qualities. Poems labeled "Dialogue" or "Song" were sometimes performed and set to music. The poet and translator Lucy Hutchinson (1620–1681) offers one illustration of the overlap between manuscript culture and performance in her description of an evening's entertainments at a fashionable household in Richmond. "A certeine song was sung which had been lately sett, and gave occasion to some of the company to mention an answer to it which was in the house…a gentleman saying 'twas believed a woman in the neighbourhood had made it."[8] Hutchinson's description of this song as "lately sett" suggests that it is a poem that has been recently set to music and performed. The "answer to it…in the house" is a manuscript lyric written in response to the song (her own lyric, as she later reveals). Her account thus emphasizes the social and performative valences of the answer poetry

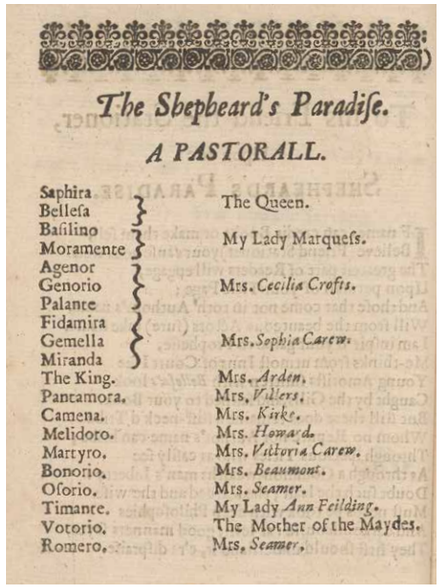

A Pastorall, the Antemaske

Witches the nomber being fiue
the Hagg beinge first /

Hag This a braue world for vs now, for wee - - -
meatamorphise euery body:

Pre: But I doubt wee are but the Flye of the Cart which
for wee are but the people thats talked on,
to serue others designes, and our pride to our
selues makes vs thinke wee are Actors

Fig. 3. "A Pastorall, the Antemaske," in Jane Cavendish, Notebook, p. 46 (detail). England, ca. mid-17th century. Osborn b233


The Shepheard's Paradise.

A PASTORALL.

Saphira Belleſa Baſilino Moramente	The Queen.
Agenor Genorio Palante	My Lady Marqueſs.
Fidamira Gemella Miranda	Mrs. *Cecilia Crofts.*
The King.	Mrs. *Arden.*
Pantamora.	Mrs. *Villers.*
Camena.	Mrs. *Kirke.*
Melidoro.	Mrs. *Howard.*
Martyro.	Mrs. *Victoria Carew.*
Bonorio.	Mrs. *Beaumont.*
Oſorio.	Mrs. *Seamer.*
Timante.	Mrs. *Sophia Carew.*
Votorio.	My Lady *Ann Feilding.*
Romero.	The Mother of the Maydes.
	Mrs. *Seamer.*

Fig. 4. Walter Montagu, *The Shepheard's Paradise* (London, 1659), A4v, a list of the characters played by the royal court. Ih M76 659b

genre: the manuscript response might be "in the house," circulating in those same social spaces as the songs, dinner party anecdotes, and witty repartees.

Lucy Hutchinson was the wife of John Hutchinson, who fought for the Parliamentary cause during the English Civil War and signed the king's death warrant. She was thus on the opposite side of the conflict from two other women who, like her, used their literary talent to entertain and show off their facility with language in the coterie context of the household. Lady Jane Cavendish (1621–1669) and her younger sister Lady Elizabeth Brackley (1626–1663) were daughters of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, who fought for the king. Like Lucy Hutchinson, they experienced the vicissitudes of the war years; their father and brothers went into exile, and in 1644–45, Jane was present when their country house, Welbeck Abbey, was besieged and captured by Parliamentary forces. But although conflict continued outside, within the walls of houses like Welbeck Abbey life went on. It largely fell to aristocratic women like the Duke of Newcastle's daughters to maintain the courtly habits and ways of life that now seemed increasingly unmoored from the realities of civil war.

It was in this context that they wrote "A Pastorall" (ca. 1640s), a manuscript play featuring a cast of witches, goodwives, and shepherds, which they dedicated to their father. One of two copies of the play is preserved in a manuscript in the Beinecke's collection, Osborn b233 (fig. 3). The play is a loosely connected series of pastoral scenes and songs with stage directions and character descriptions like "[enter] Witches the nomber being fiue / the Hagg beinge first" (p. 46) and "The third Sheppard & Sheppardes which / is a shee Priest whose name is Chast[ity]" (p. 65). The inchoate quality of their plotting, among other perceived aesthetic failings, led an early critic, Nathan Starr, to allege in 1931 in *PMLA* that the sisters produced work of little literary value, its chief interest being the "artless revelation of the activities of seventeenth century ladies of fashion, living in the country."[9] In 1988 Margaret Ezell published a powerful refutation of Starr's assessment in *Huntingon Library Quarterly,* arguing that, far from writing "artless" poetry and drama, Jane and Elizabeth wrote works with a public, outward-facing tone. These were "not for private, 'closet' confession or personal revelations but for the confirmation of social values and standards of a conventionally Cavalier nature."[10] In Ezell's reading, the manuscript play "A Pastorall" was written, not for private self-expression, but for an audience of people who had strong political and social affiliations with the cause of King Charles I.

To assert the literary merit and interest of closet dramas like these does not necessarily diminish their primary purpose as social pastime, recreation, and diversion. "[T]hen if but giue / Your smile I sweare I liue / In happines" (p. 43), Jane wrote in the dedicatory preface to her father. That the play was intended for the Duke is attested by the fact that the manuscript is an attractive presentation copy in a single hand. By commissioning a professional scribe, Jane and Elizabeth clearly intended the play to be read, at least by him, and to please; and there is at least one other extant scribal copy in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, suggesting that they might have had other publics in mind as well.

Might the play also have been performed? There are moments when the explicitness of the stage directions suggests so: "The Sheppardesses, and one of them from the / rest, comes from among'st them, speakes this / Speech as the Prologue" (p. 57). Indeed, the disjointed plotting decried by an early critic might provide evidence of performance in a household context, since the play's songs, dances, and stock pastoral characters were the familiar materials of the court and country house masque. Amateur acting among the aristocratic and gentry classes was widely accepted and emulated after Queen Henrietta Maria's performance in Walter Montagu's *The Shepheard's Paradise* (fig. 4), another pastoral drama, first performed in the 1630s. Whether or not it was performed, "A Pastorall" can be

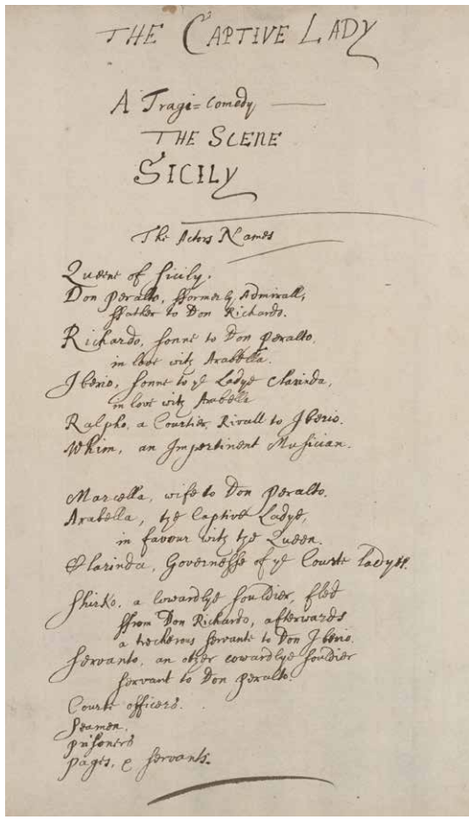


Fig. 5. "The Captive Lady," title page. England, ca. mid-17th century. Osborn fb79

placed in a longer courtly tradition that valued pastoral entertainment as a form of shared communal recreation and affirmation of group class identity.

Two other amateur manuscript plays from the seventeenth century in the Beinecke's collections, "The Captive Lady" (fig. 5) and "The Faithfull Genius" (fig. 6), share some of the characteristics of aristocratic pastoral drama. Here the themes of the country house masque—concealment, disguise, and disclosure—take on a wider range of topical political resonances. The former play describes the trials of Arabella, a Maltese princess captured as a prisoner of war who becomes the subject of romantic intrigue at the Spanish royal court. The other is a convoluted love quadrangle involving pirates, shepherdesses, and Athenians. The generic description of both plays as "tragicomedies" foregrounds their shared investment in themes of loss, suffering, exile, and the necessary assumption of false identities—which nonetheless resolve in scenes of marriage and reunion. In the swashbuckling "Captive Lady," Arabella is finally united with her lover, Don Richardo, and her parents. In the even more byzantine plot of "The Faithfull Genius," the Athenian lady Pandora returns to her family from the dead, after having secretly sworn herself to a life of chastity as a priestess to Diana.

The two plays share a common interest in a benevolent providence that reunites lovers; overcomes feuds, bad blood, and parental objections; and even brings back the dead. This was an appealing fantasy for mid- and late-seventeenth-century English playwrights. As Ezell and others have pointed out, the bloody and divisive conflicts of the English Civil War could be attributed, in the tragicomedy genre, not to human agency but to the malign influence of wicked spirits like the hags in "A Pastorall," who make "Brother hate brother / Sister hate Sister / Wife hate husband, and all other kindred, hath / their divisions of hatred" (p. 46).

Wickedness is defeated, obstacles are overcome, order is restored, and families are reunited—as in "The Faithfull Genius," which culminates in a triple wedding, in a miraculous reunion that reverses the seemingly irrevocable passage from life to death. Lois Potter has argued that the "compensatory fantasies" of mid- and late-seventeenth-century tragicomedy might be regarded as inherently royalist, not just in the sense of their social conservativism but in their *telos* of order restored and families reconciled.[11] What, after all, was the restoration in 1660 of King Charles II to the English throne—after exile and the Protectorate government—but a tragedy resolved into comedy?

"My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?"

In Act 3 of *Hamlet,* Polonius is asked mockingly about his days as a student performer. Missing the irony, as usual, Polonius responds that he "was accounted a good actor" (3.3.102–104) in a university performance of (perhaps Shakespeare's own) *Julius Caesar*: "I did enact Julius Caesar; I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me" (3.3.108–109). The joke relies on the long history of dramatic performance and theatrical entertainment as a fixture of student life at Oxford, Cambridge, the grammar schools, and the Inns of Court.

Many of these amateur student performances were masques or lavish holiday revels. Other plays, however, dealt explicitly

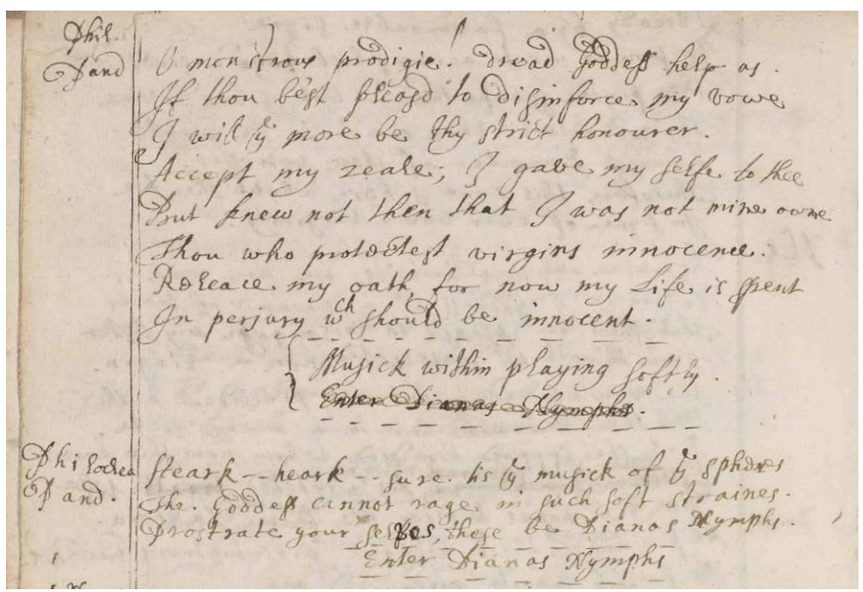


Fig. 6. "The Faithfull Genius," f. 36v (detail). England, ca. late 17th century. Osborn b3

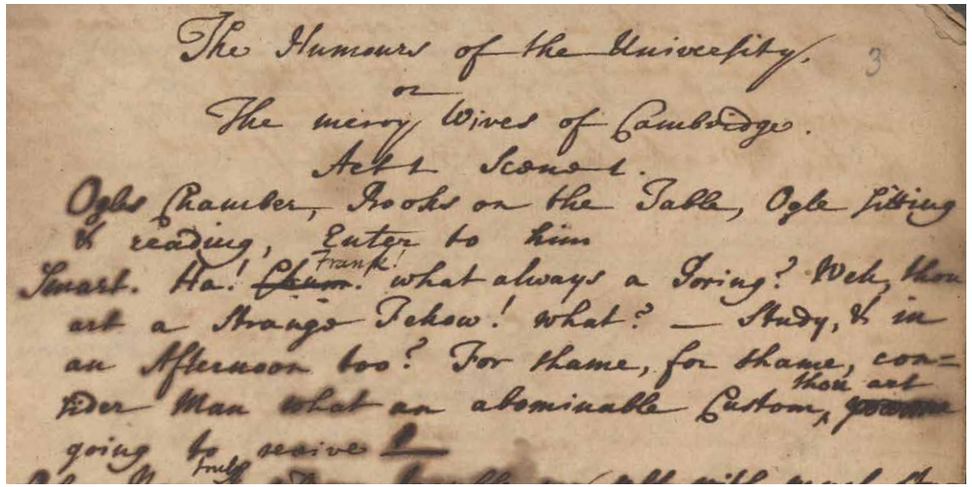
with themes of university life. A Restoration example, Robert Neville's *The Poor Scholar, A Comedy,* first published in 1662, would have been performed or read aloud in a "closet" context. The play depicts the undergraduate Eugenes Junior's attempts to extract money from his miserly father, to marry a beautiful young woman with no dowry. In this as in other examples, the intellectual activity of the university foregrounds the erotic drama, attesting to the fraught relationship between an all-male, transient student population and the women who ran local businesses, worked as servants, or lived in the colleges as relations of the academic and administrative staff.

"The Humours of the University, or The Merry Wives of Cambridge" (fig. 7) is an early-eighteenth-century academic satire, possibly by the Stamford-born curate Thomas Peck (1692–1743), who was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge.[12] This play, like Neville's *Poor Scholar,* deals with the erotic and class relations between the undergraduates and the wives and daughters of local tradespeople. The central plot centers on the attempts of two libertine students to seduce the wife of their tailor, Mr. Crab, a jealous husband who has convinced her that all scholars are rogues and Jacobites. A subplot follows the alderman's niece, Patty, and her interest in the scholars despite the dire warnings of her uncle:

…had / you been with me last night…you might have / heard an hundred poor distressed Tradesmen complaining / of the Scholars Knaveries—Reckonings bill't, Debts / left unpaid, Servants ~~maids~~ & ~~dau~~ Children debaucht, Horses spoild; Nay, they must think / it a Favour too if they come home with one sound / Leg in four! There's your Rogues for you! [pp. 15, 17]

The undergraduate "knavery" toward the tailors, drapers, and stable-keepers of Cambridge is figured as economic abuse as well as sexual transgression: even as one of the students tries to seduce Mr. Crab's wife he also habitually defrauds him, neglecting to pay the bill despite his large allowance from a "brave, bountiful, good natur'd old Daddy" (p. 33). At the same time, the play emphasizes the economic codependency of town and gown. These plays thus provide a sometimes disturbing portrait of the deep entanglements at Oxford and Cambridge between the students and the people who lived in the communities around the university; they also demonstrate the centrality of class status and gender identity to the self-imagining of a "Scholar" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Like the "closet" plays, university coterie poetry frequently centered on erotic themes. Seventeenth-century literary manuscripts generally circulated in the universities, at the Inns of Court, at dining clubs, and at taverns—educational and social spaces closed to women. Nonetheless, many of the manuscripts in this exhibition are markedly, even obsessively, preoccupied with women (sometimes wittily spelled "woeman"), and themes of love, sex, marriage, and women's supposed fickleness and unfaithfulness. In Osborn b205, a mid-seventeenth-century miscellany probably from Oxford, poems are clustered on topics like "On a maiden head," "Choice of mistris," "how to chose a wife," and "A hater of women" (ff. 22v–23r). Ribald commonplaces on women's appearances, habits, predilections, and fidelity or faithlessness are an almost universal feature of miscellanies and notebooks from the period.


The Humours of the Universety. 3
or
The merry Wives of Cambridge.
Act 1 Scene 1.
Ogles Chamber, Books on the Table, Ogle sitting
& reading, Enter to him
Smart. Ha! Frank! what always a Poring? Well, thou
art a Strange Dickow! what? — Study, & in
an Afternoon too? For shame, for shame, con-
der Man what an abominable Custom, thou art
going to
Fig. 7. "The Humours of the University, or The Merry Wives of Cambridge," p. 3 (detail). England, ca. early 18th century. Osborn c128

Furthermore, university poems on women offer a vivid illustration of the scribal interplay between public and private, since some of the most conventional and frequently copied poems are also at the same time local and particular, composed in specific contexts and with reference to individual women known to the university community. "I Saw Fair Chloris Walk Alone," for instance, a poem about a beautiful young woman walking through the snow, is one of the most frequently anthologized and recognizable seventeenth-century manuscript lyrics.[13] It appears four times in the Beinecke's collections: in Osborn b200 (ca. 1652), in Osborn b209 (ca. 1688), and twice in Osborn b62 (ca. 1640). "Chloris," traditionally in Greek mythology the wife of Zephyrus, was a stock name for a nymph in pastoral and love poetry of the period. In Osborn b200, which correctly attributes the poem to the Oxford-based poet William Strode (1602–1645), the poem is titled "On A Gentlewoman walking in *th*e Snow":

I saw fayre Cloris walke alone,
When feathered rayne came softly downe,
And Joue descended from his towre
To courte her in a silver shewre.
The wanton snow flew to her breasts
Like pretty birds into their nests: [p. 12]

Perhaps the poem was so popular because it could be endlessly retranscribed, reprinted, imitated, and transplanted into new contexts. Strode's "fair Chloris," it seems, could be anyone. In a manuscript from the 1640s, Osborn b62, the poem is titled "Dr. Corbett to his Mistris" (p. 24). Mary Hobbs suggests that this title positions the poem as a tribute to Alice Hutten, the wife of Dr. Richard Corbett (1582–1635), dean of Christ Church College, Oxford. Curiously, however, the poem appears

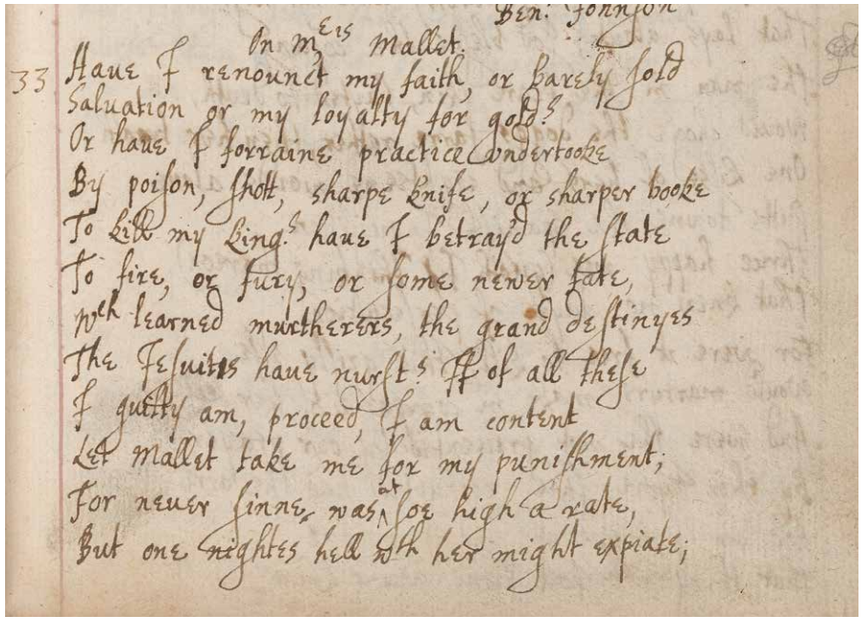


Fig. 8. "On Mrs Mallet," in commonplace book, p. 173 (detail). England, ca. 1652. Osborn b200

again later in this same manuscript volume, this time with no title or attribution. Even in the same manuscript, then, "I Saw Fair Chloris" could shift from the specific to the generic, positioned first as a missive from the college dean to his later wife ("Dr. Corbett to his M*istr*is") and then as a popular and generic love lyric with no title, reproducible precisely because of its lack of specificity.

Other women at Oxford were turned into tropes, and not all as complimentary as "I Saw Fair Chloris." Richard Corbett's poem on "Mrs. Mallet," traditionally identified with the widow of a servant of the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford at the time, was widely circulated and imitated in poetic miscellanies. It appears in two Beinecke manuscripts, Osborn b200 ("On Mrs Mallet," subscribed "Rich: Corbett"; fig. 8) and Osborn b356 ("Doctor Corbett on Mrs Mallett"). Beginning with the rhetorical question "Have I renounct my faith, or basely sold / Saluation or my loyalty for gold?," the speaker compares Mrs. Mallett's unwelcome sexual advances to a series of increasingly grotesque punishments, including the torture of conspirators implicated in the Gunpowder Plot:

I guilty am, proceed, I am content
Let Mallet take me for my punishment;
For neuer sinne was at soe high a rate,
But one nightes hell with her might expiate;
Although the law with Gardner and the *rest*
Dealt farre more mildely, hanging's but a iest
To this immortall torture; [pp. 173–74]

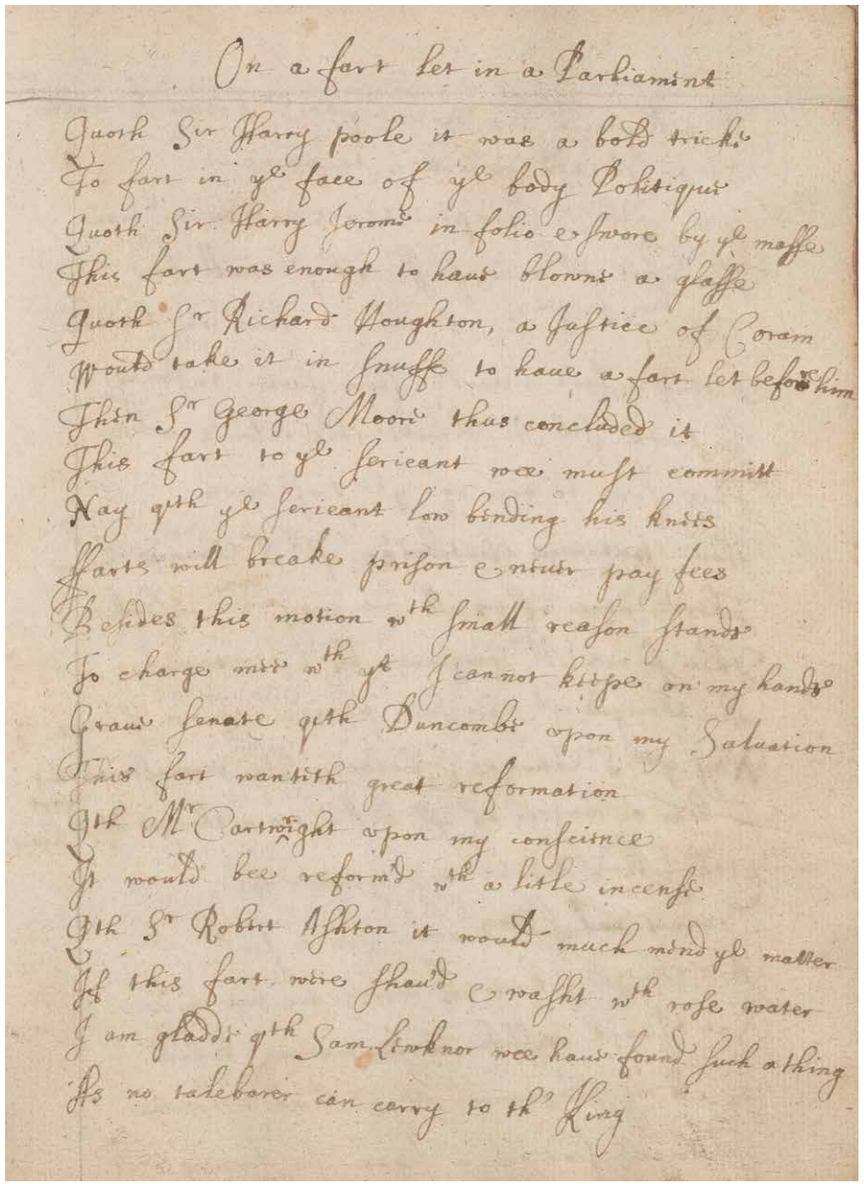
Compilers of seventeenth-century miscellanies seem to have found the poem enormously funny; Peter Beal's *Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts* lists no fewer than thirty-eight surviving contemporary manuscript copies. Ambitious young university poets started writing their own Mrs. Mallet poems, probably hoping that their imitations would attract the attention of the great Dr. Corbett. For example, one imitation, "Madam Mallet unmasked by I.S.," enjoyed a robust circulation in manuscript in its own right. As Timothy Raylor has shown, "I.S." was James Smith (1605–1667), who matriculated at Christ Church in 1622 and seems to have tried unsuccessfully to break into Corbett's illustrious literary circle.[14] What started as an inside joke soon metastasized into a literary game with high social stakes.

The "Mrs. Mallet" example offers just one case study of the dynamics of early modern coterie literary culture, documenting the spread of what this exhibition is calling "viral" poetry. When certain literary tropes circulated widely in manuscript, they turned into badges of belonging, ways of performing (or aspiring to) membership in particular social groups. That many of these tropes in the university context centered on women—figured as desirable or grotesque, reverential or comical—is no accident, but other viral literary forms also provided opportunities for formal innovation and performances of wit. Another enormously popular seventeenth-century poem, "The Parliament Fart," was endlessly rewritten, anthologized, and imitated. Usually attributed to the lawyer John Hoskyns or an anonymous group of Inns of Court wits, the poem refers to an infamous incident in which Henry Ludlow, MP for Ludgershall, Wiltshire, farted during a 1607 debate on the union of England and Scotland and the naturalization of Scots. In Osborn b356, it appears as "On a fart let in a Parliament," a loosely linked, ballad-like series of humorous procedural and topical debates on the fart ascribed to various speakers (fig. 9):

Quoth Sir Harry poole it was a bold tricke
To fart in the *face of* the *body Politique…*
May it not bee quoth Sir Henry Cope
That this was a roaring bull from the *Pope*
Nay quoth Sir George Wilford & swore by the *Masse*
Tis rather the *braying of a Puritan Asse*
Quoth Sir Thomas Kneuill, I feare much there lurkes
Vnder this vaulte some more powder workes
[pp. 295, 297]

The eagerness with which the fart is appropriated for anti-Catholic or anti-Puritan agendas attests wittily to the country's religious divisions, as well as the lingering trauma of the Gunpowder Plot (the sound of Ludlow's fart evokes, for a nervous MP, the fear of "some more powder workes" beneath the House of Commons floor). Subsequent couplets—as Michelle O'Callaghan has shown, the poem could be as long as 225 lines—took on a bewildering array of subjects over the next fifty years.[15]

That the subject for all this literary activity seems puerile is no coincidence. "The Parliament Fart" is a particularly enduring example of what happens when the popular recreations, humor, and performances of wit valued in early modern educational spaces moved into the public sphere; what might look like (and, in a sense, were) juvenile amusements became the matter of political debate.


On a fart let in a Parliament

Quoth Sir Harry poole it was a bold trick
To fart in yᵉ face of yᵉ body Politique
Quoth Sir Harry Jerom in folio e swore by yᵉ masse
This fart was enough to haue blowne a glasse
Quoth Sr Richard Houghton, a Justice of Coram
Would take it in snuffe to haue a fart let before him
Then Sr George Moore thus concluded it
This fart to yᵉ Sericant wee must committ
Nay qth yᵉ Sericant law binding his knits
Farts will breake prison e ntuer pay fees
Besides this motion wᵗʰ small reason stands
To charge mee wᵗʰ yᵉ I cannot kitpe on my hands
Draw Senate qth Duncomb upon my Salvation
This fart wantith great reformation
qth Mr Cartwright upon my conscience
It would bee reformd wᵗʰ a little incense
qth Sr Robert Ashton it would much mend yᵉ matter
If this fart were shaud e washt wᵗʰ rose water
I am glad qth Sam Linkner wee haue found such a thing
Its no taleborer can carry to th' King

Fig. 9. "On a fart let in a Parliament," in a notebook of poems, p. 295. England, ca. 1620–40. Osborn b356

"What?—Study, & in an Afternoon too?"

When one of the student characters in "The Humours of the University, or the Merry Wives of Cambridge" finds his friend studying, he protests this squandering of a perfectly good day that might otherwise be used for drinking and carousing: "What?—Study, & in an Afternoon too? For shame, for shame, consider Man what an abominable Custom thou art going to revive" (p. 3; see fig. 7). The extreme laziness of the libertine students and their aversion to any form of academic work are played for satirical effect. At the same time, however, this moment attests to the real investment in performing leisure visible in the poetic and dramatic manuscripts in this exhibition. "The Merry Wives of Cambridge" imagines days at the university spent in endless social interchange—sipping tea, dressing for dinner, bowling, and drinking at taverns:

And then how pretty is the day spent among them! in / the Morning they tumble out of Bed at Eight, / & sip their Tea 'till Eleven; then they dress & go / to dinner, In the Afternoon ~~they go~~ to the / Bowling Green, & to Chappel at five, that is, if / the Game be up, when the Bell rings. At Six / ~~they go~~ to Supper, at Seven to the Tavern, & / to Bed when they can sit up no longer [p. 7]

The play emphasizes the preponderance of student recreation largely as a point of contrast with the manual labor of the working-class characters who populate the play. In this sense, the play can be situated in a longer tradition of consolidating class-based identities at the early modern university. Seventeenth-century Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates were generally drawn from the ranks of the gentry and emerging professional classes; they were thus careful to emphasize the class distinctions that distinguished them from townspeople and tradesmen. The Hobson poems, for instance, tended to foreground the class difference between writer and subject:

Heere Hobson lies amongst his many Betters,
A man unlearned, yet a man of letters
[Osborn b200, p. 225]

At the same time, their identities were also non-aristocratic: hence the preoccupation with patronage that emerges in the circulation of literary manuscripts. In the case of the Hobson poems at Cambridge and the Mrs. Mallet poems at Oxford, the central jokes—the death of a mailman, the sexual advances of an "unhandsome" widow—remain the same; the point is to provide an opportunity for formal innovation and the display of the poet's wit and flair in producing "another" poem on a familiar theme, which might in turn attract the attention of powerful patrons.

Writing was a leisured activity for these authors and readers. It was also a form of play that did measurable work. In the most basic sense, writing performed social identity because the ability to write was linked with class. But writing in manuscript specifically could take on a range of political and social valences, expressed differently in the country house and university contexts. The leisure performed in amateur drama tended to indicate affiliation or allegiance with the aristocracy—later, during and after the Interregnum, it came to signify political sympathy to the old regime and certain sets of aristocratic values. Poems written in the university context also helped to shape the contours of an elite culture, but one

defined not so much by political declarations as by a complex code of jokes and allusions that served to identify communities of insiders and outsiders. If the country house masque was intended to please or divert an already rarefied audience, the university coterie poetry and drama was intended, above all, to amuse and compete in a patronage-driven contest of wits. Humorous banter could make or break a career, facilitating entrance into communities that might otherwise be inaccessible to the writer. As *Pastime with Good Company* argues, the early modern "pastime" and its forms of "viral" amusement do not simply reveal what audiences found funny and worthy of repetition, promotion, and circulation. They also mark the boundaries that the literate and leisured class drew around itself: who wrote and who didn't; who was included and who was excluded; who was given credit for wit, and who became the object of jokes.

Notes

1 Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, Christ's College, July 9, 1625, in *The Court and Times of Charles the First, Illustrated by Authentic and Confidential Letters* (London, 1848), ed. Thomas Birch and Robert Folkestone Williams, vol. 1, 40–41.

2 Evelyn Lord, *The Great Plague: A People's History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 3.

3 See Osborn b356 (p. 35), Osborn b200 (p. 225), Osborn fb143 (p. 33), Osborn b197 (p. 61), Osborn c33 (p. 123).

4 Mary Hobbs discusses the possible connection between the plagues of the early 1630s and the Hobson phenomenon in her magisterial *Early Seventeenth-Century Verse Miscellany Manuscripts* (Aldershot, Hants: Scolar Press, 1992), 31.

5 Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple, July 10, 1654, in *The Love Letters of Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple,* ed. Israel Gollancz (London: De La More Press, 1903), 302.

6 Margaret Cohen, *The Sentimental Education of the Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 23.

7 *OED* 3a; 2a.

8 Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson,* vol. 1, ed. Julian Hutchinson (London, 1810), 87. Also quoted in Hobbs, 2.

9 *The Concealed Fansyes: A Play by Lady Jane Cavendish and Lady Elizabeth Brackley,* ed. Nathan Comfort Starr, *PMLA* 46, no. 3 (September 1931): 802–838.

10 Margaret J.M. Ezell, "'To Be Your Daughter in Your Pen': The Social Functions of Literature in the Writings of Lady Elizabeth Brackley and Lady Jane Cavendish," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (Autumn 1988): 288.

11 Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: Royalist Literature, 1641–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 101.

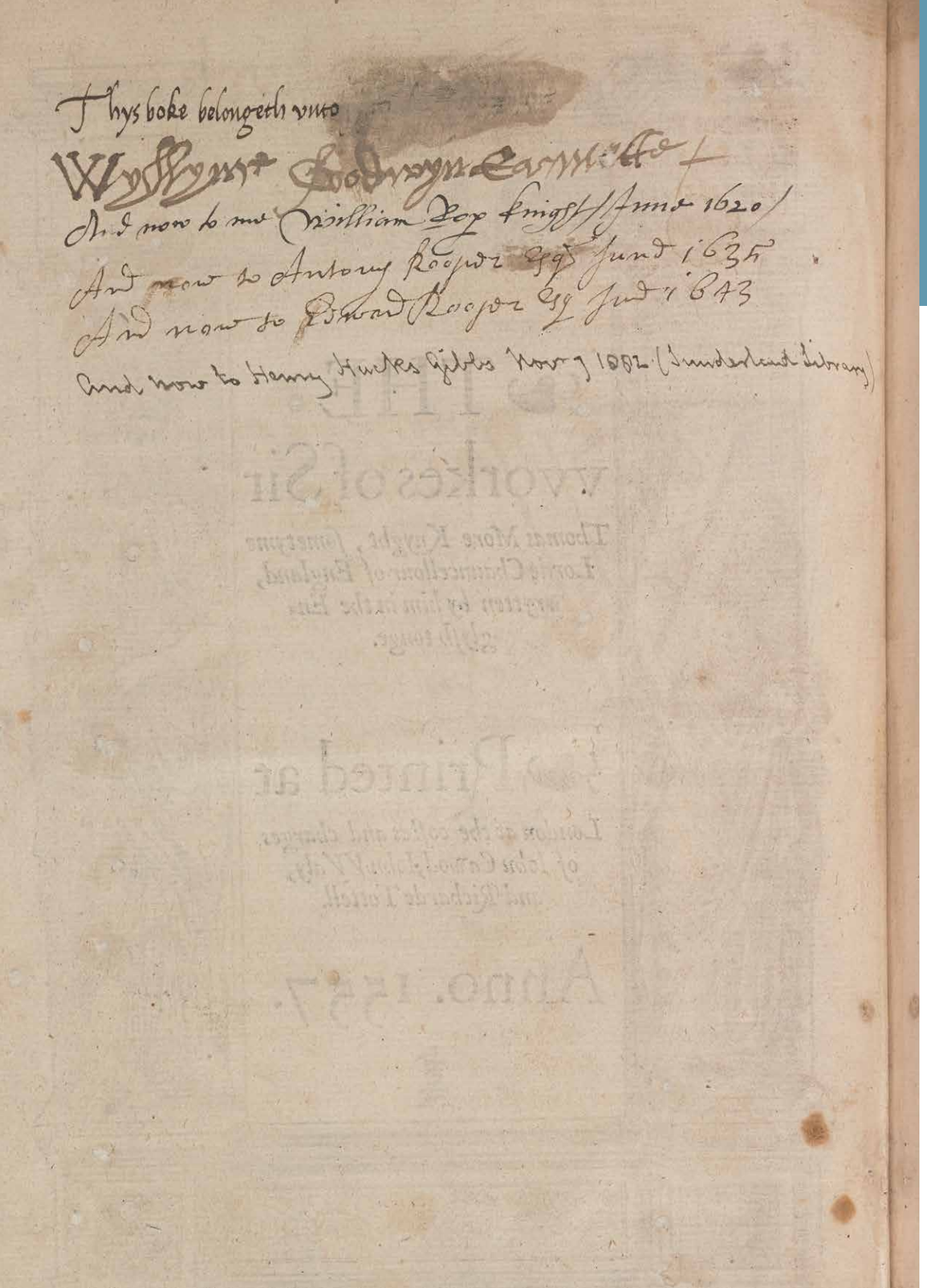
12 Hugh James Rose, *A New General Biographical Dictionary* 11 (London, 1857), 6.

13 Adam Smyth has described this poem as the second most popular lyric of the seventeenth century, after Robert Herrick's "Gather ye Rose-Buds." See Smyth, "'Art Reflexive': The Poetry, Sermons, and Drama of William Strode (1601?–1645)," *Studies in Philology* 103, no. 4 (Fall 2006): 436–64.

14 Timothy Raylor, *Cavaliers, Clubs, and Literary Culture: Sir John Mennes, James Smith, and the Order of the Fancy* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994), 51.

15 See Michelle O'Callaghan, "Performing Politics: The Circulation of the 'Parliament Fart,'" *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (March 2006): 121–38.

THE CRITICS' GALLERY: THE MANUSCRIPT AS CRITICAL OBJECT



"And now to me"

DAVID SCOTT KASTAN

Writing personalizes the printed book, reversing what was designed to be indistinguishably multiple, and at least sometimes, as in the example here, rendering it preciously singular.

In this copy of *The workes of Sir Thomas More,* various individuals have registered their ownership on the verso of the title page.

Thys boke belongeth vnto
Wyllyam Goodwyn earmette [i.e., hermit]
And now to me William Rop[er] knight / June 1620 /
And now to Antony Rooper esqre, June 1635
And now to Edward Rooper esq June 1643
And now to Henry Hucks Gibbs Nov[ember] 9 1882

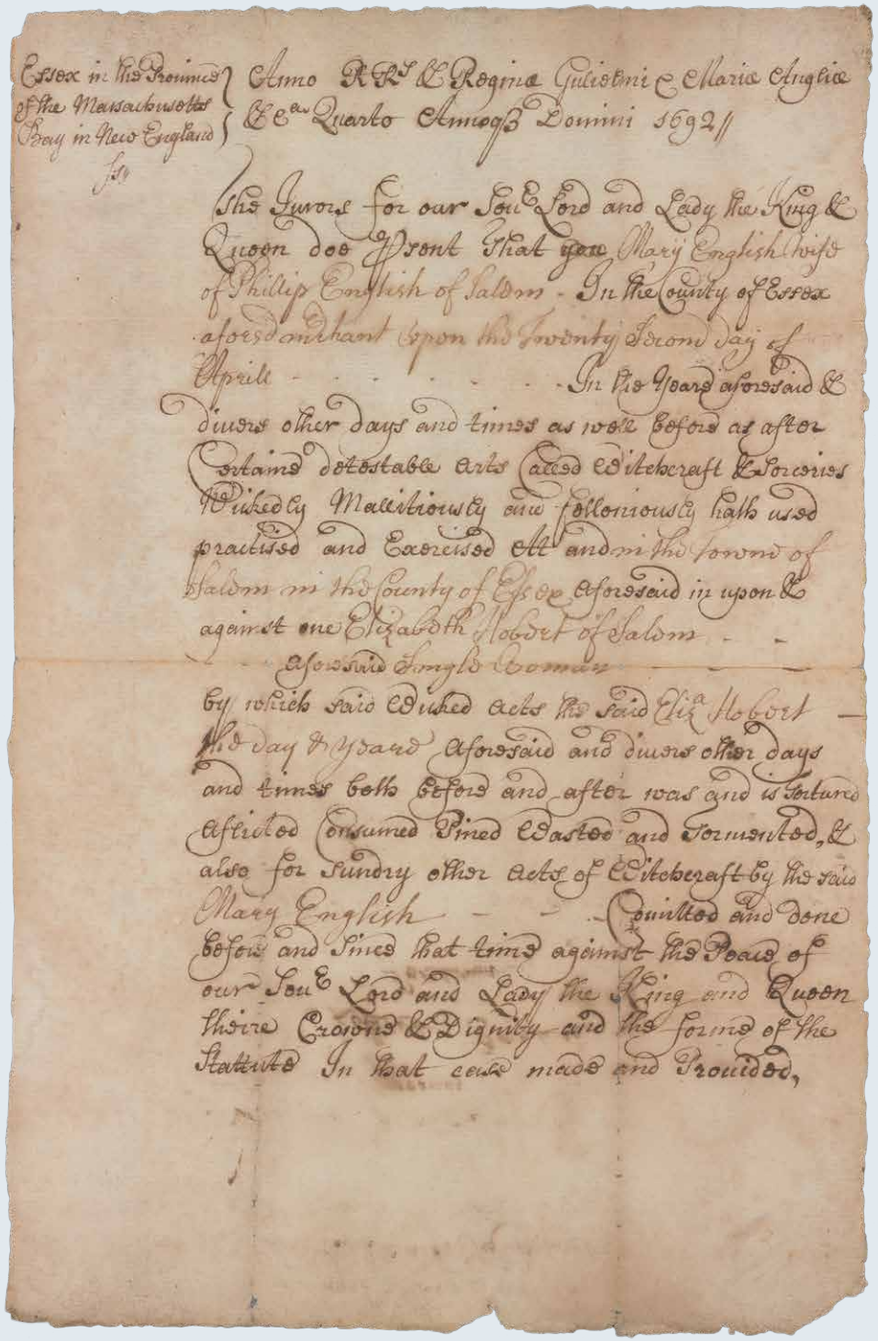
The first four names trace the book's return to the More family circle from which it originated. Goodwyn, who has substituted his name for the one blotted out above his signature, was a Catholic monk most likely supported by the Ropers, a wealthy Catholic family connected to More by the marriage of his daughter Margaret to William Roper in 1521. From Goodwyn, the volume passed to another William Roper, the grandson of More's son-in-law. From this William, the volume descended to his son Antony, who on his deathbed in 1643 bequeathed it to his two-year-old son Edward, who kept the book until his death in 1707.

Two hundred thirty-nine years later the book was signed by Henry Hucks Gibbs, a Director of the Bank of England and first Baron Aldenham. Gibbs purchased it at the sale of the Sunderland Library, which had acquired it from the Roper estate.

Gibbs in fact wrote his signature twice. First he signed the front flyleaf, as was his usual practice with his considerable collection, along with his place of residence (St Dunstan's, his London town house) and the date of purchase. He also notes that this book was "Sir William Roopers copy."

But then the sober banker and bibliophile did something fanciful—and bibliographically irresponsible. He added his own name to the list of owners, mimicking the phrasing of the various Ropers who had been in possession of the book written by their distinguished ancestor: "And now to Henry Hucks Gibbs Nov[ember] 9 1882," he writes, not content with merely asserting his ownership of the volume but inserting himself into the marvelous line of descent of this copy of *The workes of Sir Thomas More.*

Inscriptions in this copy of Thomas More, *The workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of England,* p. [ci]v (detail). London, 1557. If M81 +a557 Copy 2


Essex in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England } Anno R.R.^{is} & Reginæ Gulielmi & Mariæ Angliæ &c.^{ae} Quarto Annoq; Domini 1692

The Jurors for our Sou.^{r} Lord and Lady the King & Queen doe Present That one Mary English wife of Phillip English of Salem - In the County of Essex aforesd. Merchant upon the Twenty Seaven day of April - - - - - - - In the Yeare aforesaid & diuers other days and times as well before as after certaine detestable arts called Witchcraft & Sorceries Wickedly Maliciously and Felloniously hath used practised and Exercised at and in the Town of Salem in the County of Essex aforesaid in upon & against one Elizabeth Hobbet of Salem - - aforesaid Single woman

by which said Wicked acts the said Eliz.^{a} Hobbet - the day & Yeare aforesaid and diuers other days and times both before and after was and is Tortured Afflicted Consumed Pined Wasted and Tormented, & also for Sundry other acts of Witchcraft by the said Mary English - - - Done and Committed and done before and Since that time against the Peace of our Sou.^{r} Lord and Lady the King and Queen their Crowns & Dignity and the Forme of the Statute In that case made and Provided,

We Do Not Know

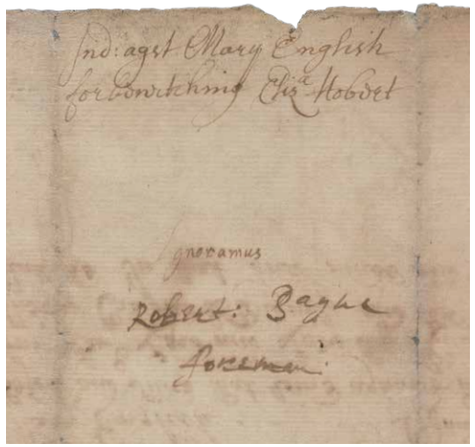
SARA POWELL

On April 21, 1692, magistrates John Hathorne and Jonathon Corwin issued a warrant for the arrest of nine Salem residents "for high Suspition of Sundry acts of Witchcraft donne or Committed by them." Mary English, wife of wealthy French merchant Phillip English, was among those arrested. Today, this manuscript—her indictment—is located in the Betsy Beinecke Shirley Collection of American Children's Literature. Though separated from its original archival context among other court records, the indictment offers important physical and textual information about its use. It is also a prime example of why transcription might fail to capture clues essential to interpreting a document.

When you encounter the manuscript, its busy if unassuming recto—with its abbreviations and loopy ascenders—immediately draws the eye. Yet indictments are necessarily formulaic. You might notice that the document is written in multiple hands, something of a fill-in-the-blank form. This boilerplate language was helpful to the attorney general, Anthony Checkley, during this hectic period: three other grand juries took place on the same day as Mary English's in January 1693.

The back of the document further elucidates its use. One Robert Payne has signed his name. Is it also his hand that wrote, in a different script, "*Ignoramus*" (Latin for "we do not know")? Payne was the foreman for the grand jury that determined that the evidence against Mary English was insufficient—that is, the jury did not know any reason why the case should go to trial.

Consider, too, the paper's folds. These give some indication as to how the indictment might have been stored or transferred from court to office to archive, in a small packet with a title at the top. This practice seems consistent from other legal records from the 1692 Salem trials.

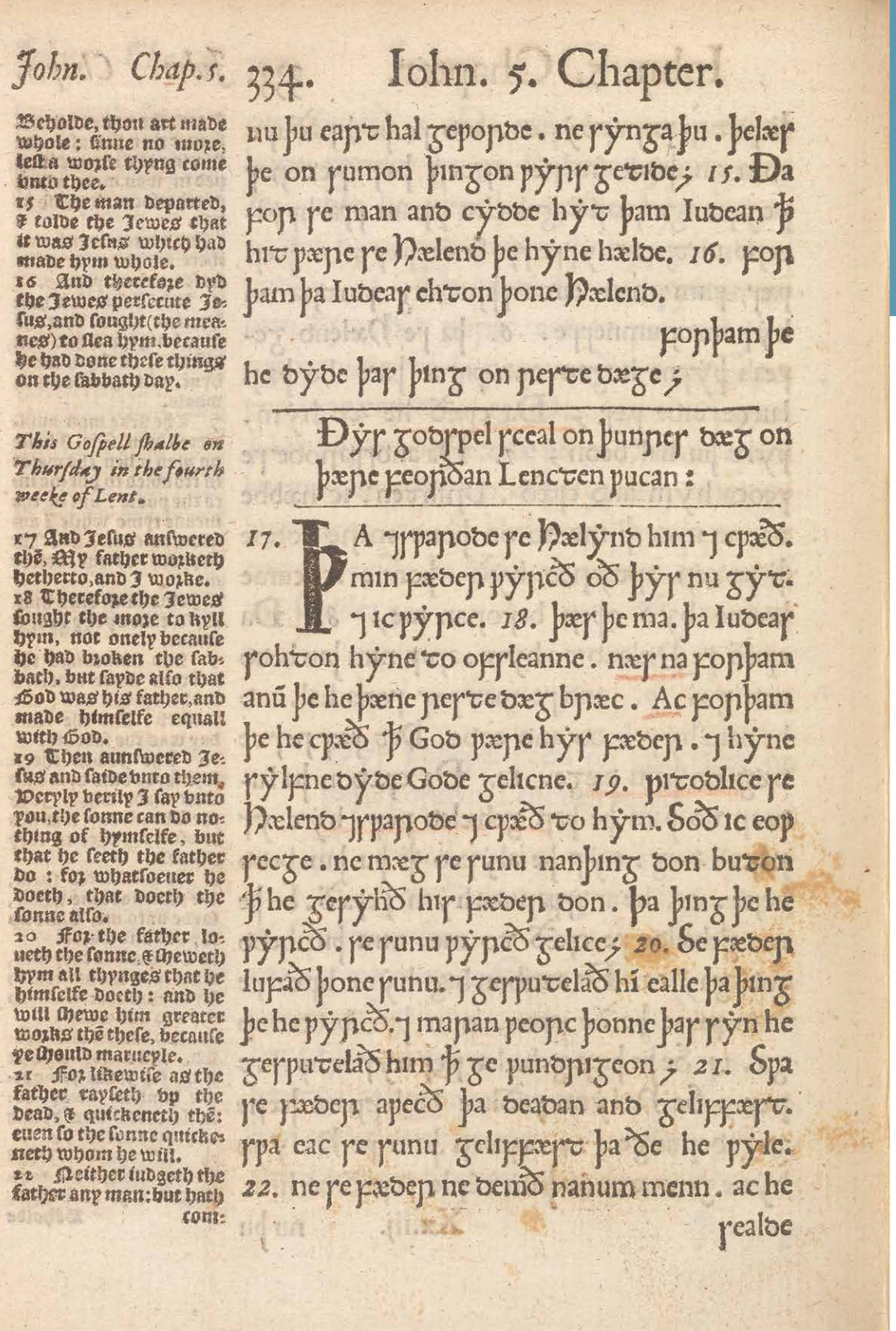

Ind: agst Mary English for bewitching Eliz.^{a} Hobbet

Ignoramus

Robert: Payne

Foreman

Indictment against Mary English for bewitching Elizabeth Hobert of Salem (recto and detail of verso). Salem, Massachusetts, 1692. Gen MSS 764, Box 23, Folder 411. Betsy Beinecke Shirley Collection of American Children's Literature, 1640–2001



John. Chap. 5. 334. Iohn. 5. Chapter.

Beholde, thou art made whole: ſinne no more, leſt a worſe thyng come vnto thee.
15 The man departed, & tolde the Iewes that it was Ieſus which had made hym whole.
16 And therefore dyd the Iewes perſecute Ieſus, and ſought (the meanes) to ſlea hym, becauſe he had done theſe things on the ſabbath day.

This Goſpell ſhalbe on Thurſday in the fourth weeke of Lent.

17 And Ieſus anſwered thē, My father worketh hetherto, and I worke.
18 Therefore the Iewes ſought the more to kyll hym, not onely becauſe he had broken the ſabbath, but ſayde alſo that God was his father, and made himſelfe equall with God.
19 Then aunſwered Ieſus and ſaide vnto them, Verily verily I ſay vnto you, the ſonne can do nothing of hymſelfe, but that he ſeeth the father do: for whatſoeuer he doeth, that doeth the ſonne alſo.
20 For the father loueth the ſonne, & ſheweth hym all thynges that he himſelfe doeth: and he will ſhewe him greater workes thē theſe, becauſe ye ſhould marueyle.
21 For likewiſe as the father rayſeth vp the dead, & quickeneth thē: euen ſo the ſonne quickeneth whom he will.
22 Neither iudgeth the father any man: but hath com-

nu þu eart hal ȝeworde. ne ſyngia þu. þelæſ þe on rumon þingon þyrſt ȝetiðe; 15. Ða for re man and cyðde hyt þam Iudean þ hit pæne re Hælend þe hyne hælde. 16. for þam þa Iudeaſ ehton done Hælend.

forþam þe he dyde þaſ þing on neſte dæȝe;

Ðyſ ȝodſpel rceal on þunſeſ dæȝ on þære ſeoſðan Lencten pucan:

17. Þa ſpaſode re Hælyſnd him ȝ cpæð. min fæder pyrcð oð þyſ nu ȝyt. ȝ ic pyrce. 18. þæſ þe ma. þa Iudeaſ rohton hyne to oſſleanne. næſ na forþam anū þe he þæne neſte dæȝ bræc. Ac forþam þe he cpæð þ God pære hyſ fæder. ȝ hyne ſylfne dyde Gode ȝelicne. 19. þitodlice re Hælend ſpaſode ȝ cpæð to hym. Sōð ic eop recȝe. ne mæȝ re runu nanþing don buton þ he ȝeſyhð hiſ fæder don. þa þing þe he pyrcð. re runu pyrcð ȝelice; 20. Se fæder luſað done runu. ȝ ȝeſputelað hí ealle þa þing þe he pyrcð. ȝ manan peorc þonne þaſ ſyn he ȝeſputelað him þ ȝe punðriȝeon; 21. Spa re fæder apecð þa deadan and ȝeliffæſt. ſpa eac re runu ȝeliffæſt þa ðe he pyle. 22. ne re fæder ne demð nanum menn. ac he realde

“imprinted thus in the Saxons letters”

EMILY THORNBURY

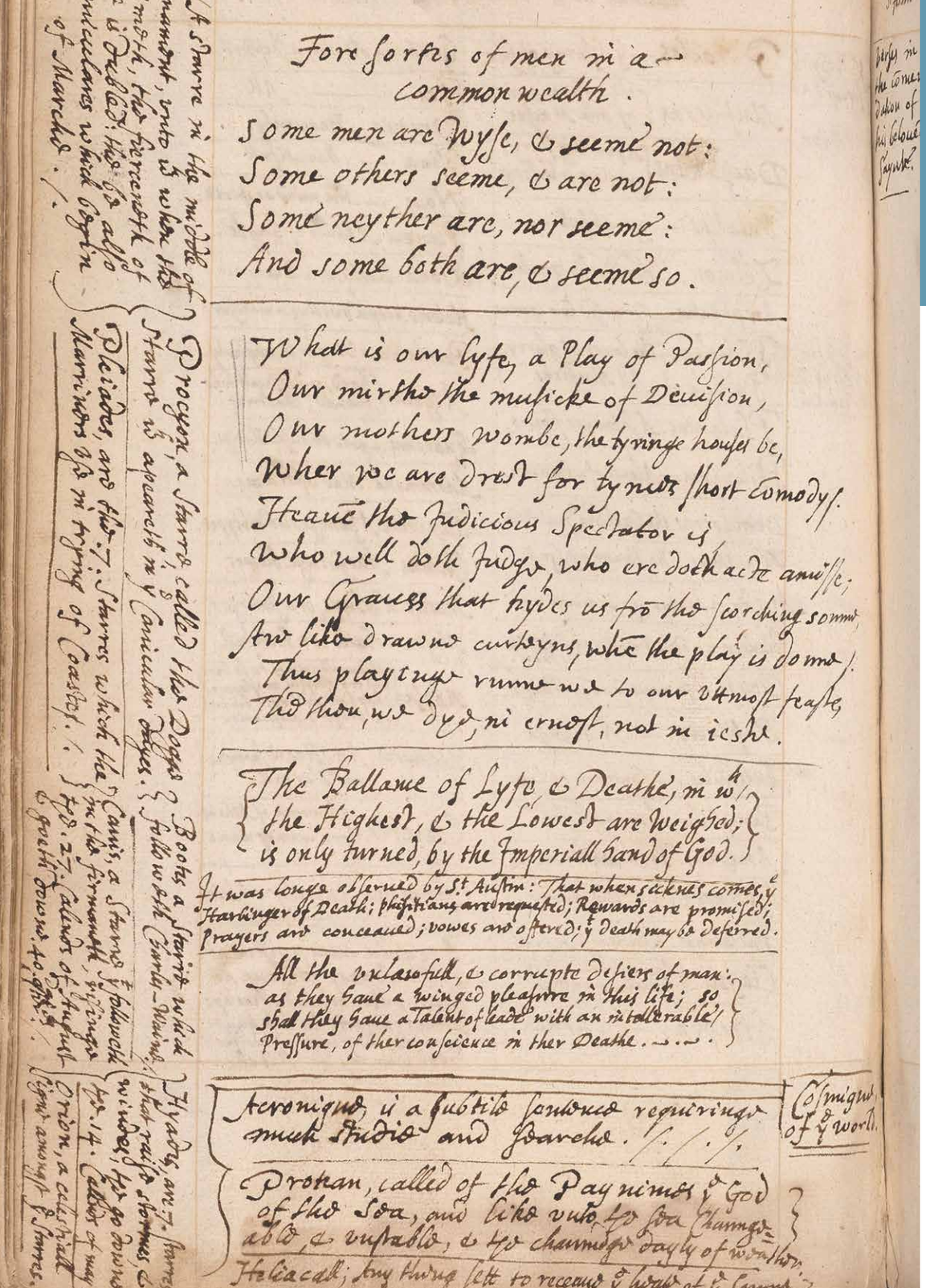
Imitative Anglo-Saxon typeface is among the quirkier offspring of the English Protestant Reformation. Following Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries, the scholar Matthew Parker—with the aid of others, including his secretary John Jocelyn—collected manuscripts from libraries across England. Convinced that the Protestant church represented a restoration of England’s original religious purity, they sought evidence in the most ancient books, especially those written in Anglo-Saxon: the English spoken before the Norman Conquest.

Little was known of Old English when Parker, Jocelyn, and their colleagues set about their work. Despite the language barrier, though, the Protestant reformers could tell that these ancient books held something remarkable: the text of the Bible, translated into English, and books of English sermons. Parker’s library (now mainly in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge) bears evidence of his study in the form of distinctive red crayon annotations.

Once promoted to Archbishop of Canterbury by Elizabeth I, Parker set about publicizing the discoveries that vindicated the newly established Protestant church’s antiquity. The printer John Day, himself a devoted reformer, commissioned a typeface that closely imitated eleventh-century English vernacular minuscule—shown in the exhibition in two fragments from a Palm Sunday homily by Ælfric of Eynsham. The first printed text in Old English, *A testimonie of antiqvitie* (London, ca. 1566), excerpted another of Ælfric’s sermons to prove that the Anglo-Saxons held proto-Protestant views about the Eucharist. Its small format, as well as its contents, made it resemble an odd hybrid of prayerbook and polemical pamphlet.

The more ambitious book shown here, *The Gospels of the fower Euangelistes,* was printed in 1571. The Old English text of the Gospels is flanked by contemporary English translations and broken up into lections. In the preface, the reformer John Foxe recommends that “the said boke imprinted thus in the Saxons letters, may remaine in the Church as a profitable example, & president of olde antiquitie.”

The Gospels of the fower Euangelistes translated in the olde Saxons tyme out of Latin into the vulgare toung of the Saxons, p. 334. London, 1571. Ic B48 d571



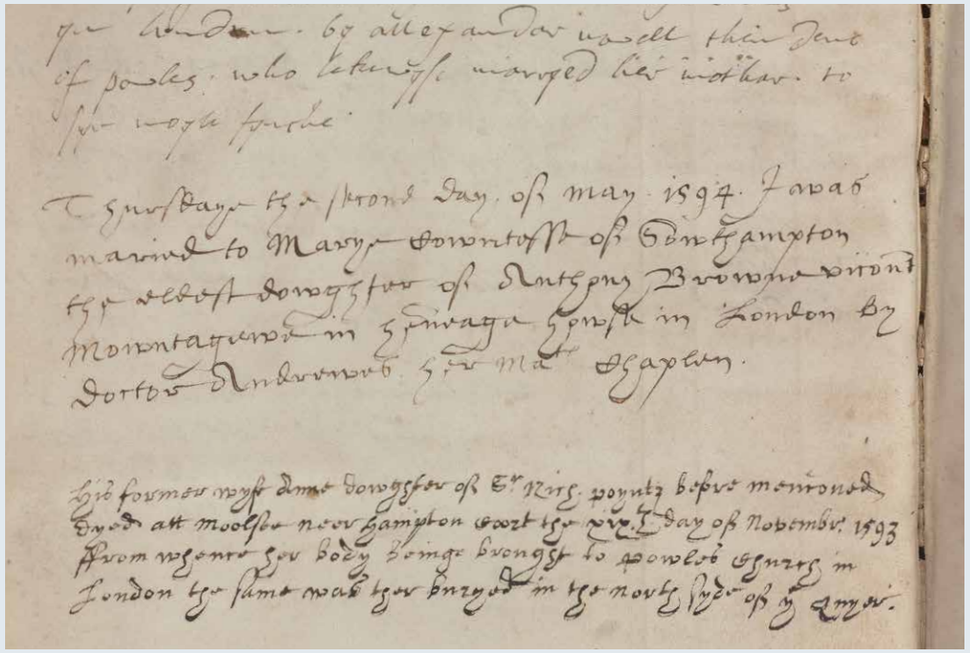
Strikingly Miscellaneous

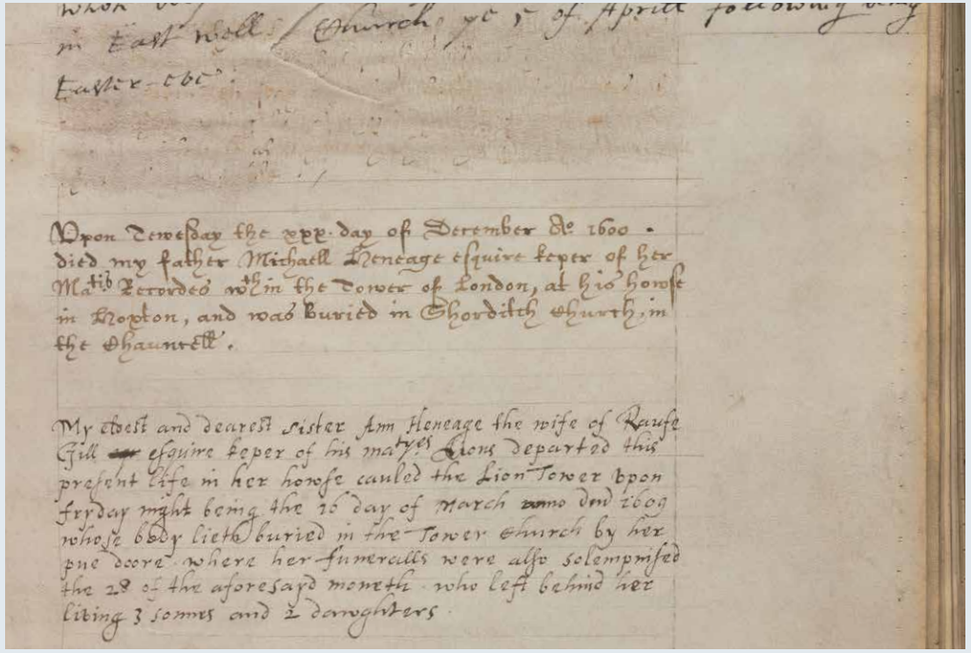
PETER STALLYBRASS

Sir Francis Castillion (1561–1638), who compiled Osborn Manuscript fb69, was the son of Giovanni Battista Castiglione, an Italian who was rewarded for services to Elizabeth I in 1565. The Beinecke catalog describes the manuscript as a "Letter Book," but only some 80 pages are copies of letters. The remaining 160 or so pages are strikingly miscellaneous: "Deuine & morall sentences taken out of Sir Philip Sidneys Arcadia"; extensive quotations from Erasmus's *Enchiridion;* rhymed paraphrases of all the books of the Bible; the names of every member of the Commons and Lords in 1620; mottos, sententiae, and emblems (some illustrated with drawings); personal poems and passages on the death of his wife, Elizabeth ("Dead are my Ioyes, and all with thee are deade"; "you were The Sunne…, the Hesperus that chased away all melancholy cloudes out of my thoughts.")

Like many of his contemporaries, Castillion had a particular taste for short poems (above all, epitaphs), including the anonymous "What is our lyfe, a Play of Passion" (now wrongly attributed to Sir Walter Ralegh) and "Even such is tyme" (correctly attributed to Ralegh, although dubiously "nox ante obitum" [the night before his execution in 1618]). Only a small part of the miscellany is concerned with English literature. But there is one striking example of his familiarity with *I Henry IV,* Shakespeare's most famous play in the first half of the seventeenth century. In a letter to his brother, Sir Francis writes: "One of our men was killed [in Ireland], a nother strooke from his horsse,… & being strippt of his clothes, he lay as though he had ben dead: but perceauing the foote to hasten vp to the seconding of our horsse, he rose vp like Sir Iohn Fastolfe, & rann vnto them," referring to the notorious scene of Falstaff playing dead at the Battle of Shrewsbury, before claiming to have killed Hotspur.

Francis Castillion, Letter book, p. 204 (detail). England, ca. 1590–1638. Osborn fb69. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection





The Glory of God, the Glory of Family

DIANE DUCHARME

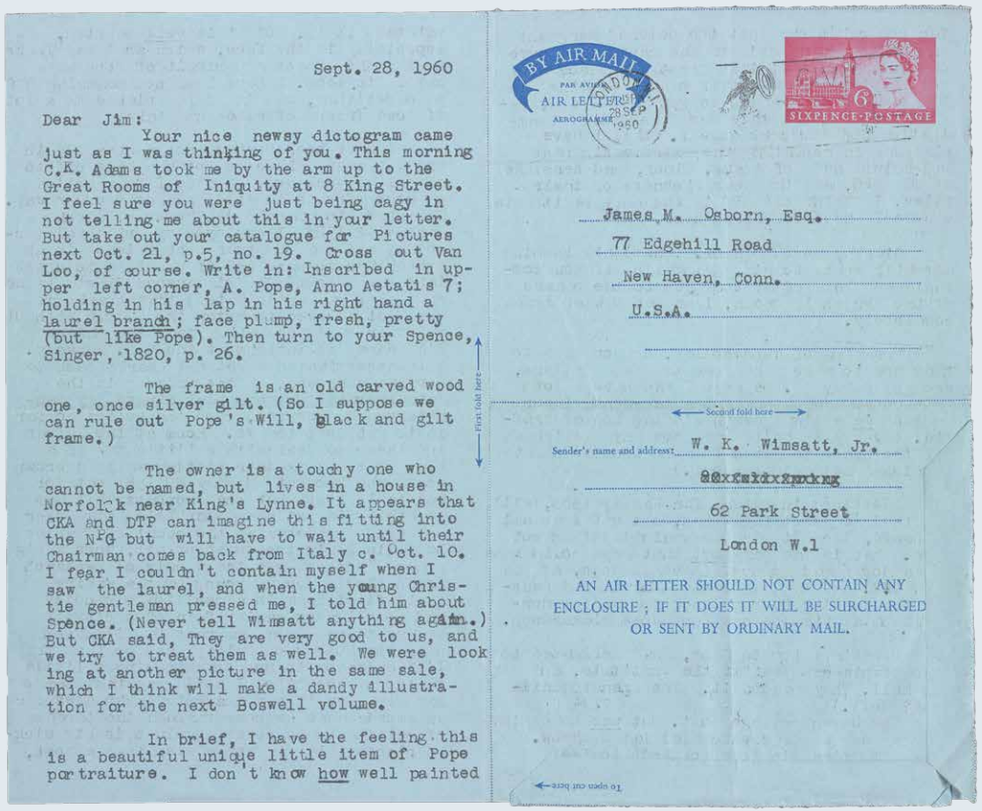
Archives are filled with repurposed manuscripts: a sermon notebook becomes a household account book; a collection of recipes acquires silhouettes and limericks. In this case, a fifteenth-century collection of Catholic works in Latin on the contemplative life and contempt for worldly ambitions finds itself surrounded by three centuries of notes that chronicle the all-too-worldly rise and progress of the Heneage family of Copt Hall, Essex.

The volume of spiritual guidance, written in a professional Anglicana book script and decorated with floral borders and gilt initials, was acquired sometime during the turbulent 1530s by George Heneage, Deacon of Lincoln. While the original texts seem to have been little read, the blank vellum leaves enclosing them proved irresistible to generations of Heneages. They filled all of them, in secretary script and in italic, in cursive and in block letters, with records of their family history, stressing the details that would attest to their social status and courtly connections.

On the left page of one opening, shown here in the top image, Sir Thomas Heneage (1532–1595), courtier to Queen Elizabeth I, records his marriage to "Mary Cowntesse of Sowthampton" and adds that the officiant was none other than "Doctor Andrewes her Majesties chaplain." Below, in a sharper secretary script, is the information that Thomas's first wife was buried in a place of honor in St. Paul's, "in the north syde of the quyer."

On the facing page, shown here in the bottom image, an entry in secretary script records the death of Michael Heneage, "keper of her Majesties records within the Tower of London," on December 30, 1600. The entry in italic below documents the 1609 death of Anne Heneage, who was married to "Raufe Gill esquire keper of his Majestyes Lions." Keepers of royal records and royal lions, the Heneages kept this medieval volume, and their own varied history, in varied scripts, safe as well.

Richard Rolle, De emendatione vitae and other works, f. [iii]v and f. [iv]r (details). England, 1450s? With extensive annotations by members of the Heneage family and others, ca. 1540–1820. Osborn fa54. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection



Sept. 28, 1960

Dear Jim:

Your nice newsy dictogram came just as I was thinking of you. This morning C.K. Adams took me by the arm up to the Great Rooms of Iniquity at 8 King Street. I feel sure you were just being cagy in not telling me about this in your letter. But take out your catalogue for Pictures next Oct. 21, p.5, no. 19. Cross out Van Loo, of course. Write in: Inscribed in upper left corner, A. Pope, Anno Aetatis 7; holding in his lap in his right hand a laurel branch; face plump, fresh, pretty (but like Pope). Then turn to your Spence, Singer, 1820, p. 26.

The frame is an old carved wood one, once silver gilt. (So I suppose we can rule out Pope's Will, black and gilt frame.)

The owner is a touchy one who cannot be named, but lives in a house in Norfolk near King's Lynne. It appears that CKA and DTP can imagine this fitting into the NPG but will have to wait until their Chairman comes back from Italy c. Oct. 10. I fear I couldn't contain myself when I saw the laurel, and when the young Christie gentleman pressed me, I told him about Spence. (Never tell Wimsatt anything again.) But CKA said, They are very good to us, and we try to treat them as well. We were looking at another picture in the same sale, which I think will make a dandy illustration for the next Boswell volume.

In brief, I have the feeling this is a beautiful unique little item of Pope portraiture. I don't know how well painted

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION
AIR LETTER
AEROGRAMME
28 SEP 1960

6d
SIXPENCE-POSTAGE

James M. Osborn, Esq.
77 Edgehill Road
New Haven, Conn.
U.S.A.

First fold here

Second fold here

Sender's name and address: W. K. Wimsatt, Jr.
62 Park Street
London W.1

AN AIR LETTER SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY ENCLOSURE; IF IT DOES IT WILL BE SURCHARGED OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

"Houtos Eikeinos" / The One Is Like the Other

JOSEPH ROACH

Best known as a formalist innovator of New Criticism, William Kurz Wimsatt (1907–1975) also contributed field-defining research to eighteenth-century literary history, including a complete catalog of the extant portraits of the poet Alexander Pope.

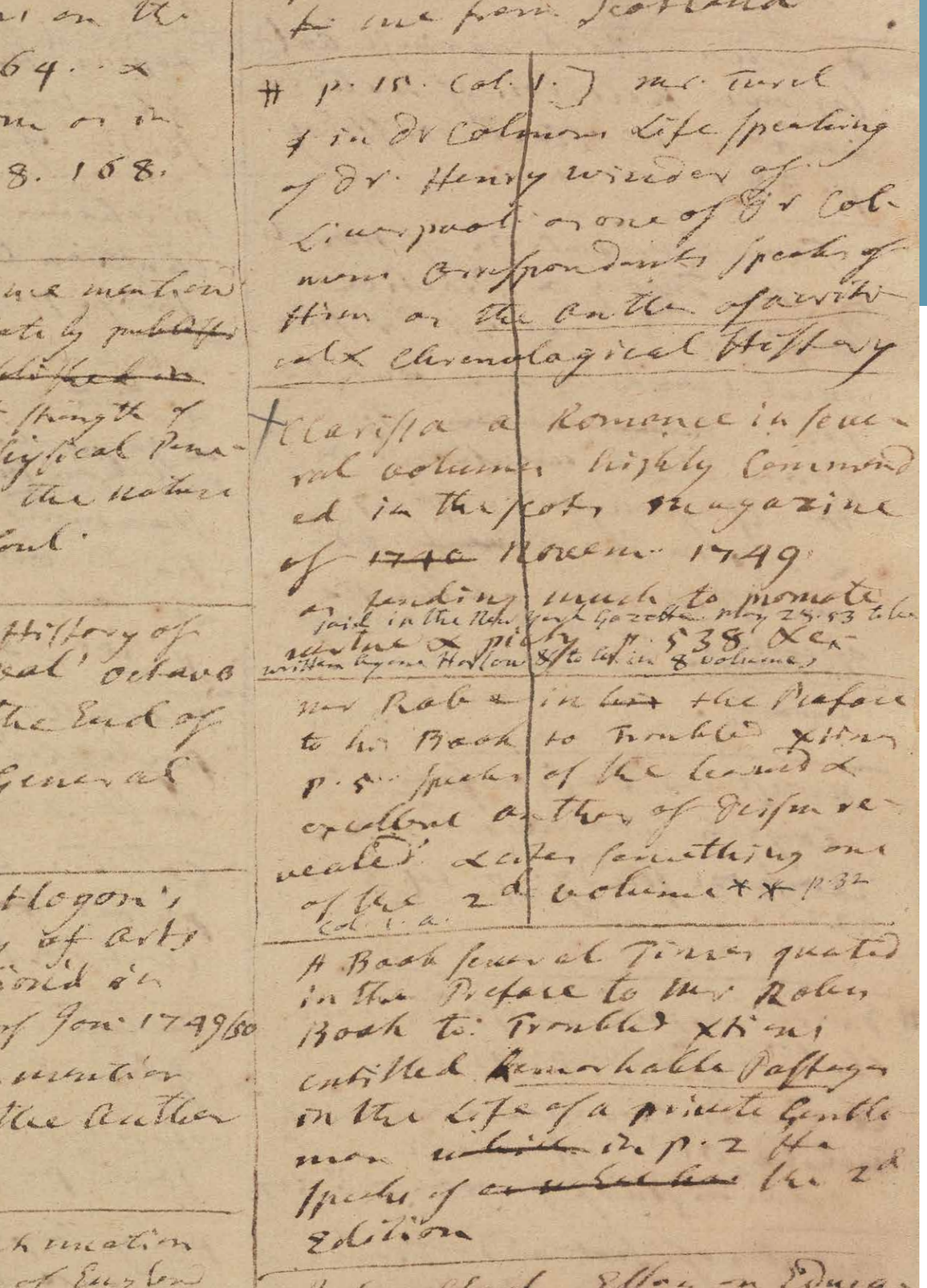
Beginning with a note from Silliman College dated 1/10/1952, Wimsatt's interlocutor on this project was his colleague in the Yale English department, scholar-collector James Marshall Osborn (1906–1976). The two friends corresponded on diverse topics during the year of Wimsatt's research leave in Britain, 1960–61, including the idiosyncrasies of colleagues and the longevity of "Bounce," Pope's dog.

Wimsatt's most urgent letters, however, resourcefully typed on flimsy aerograms, concern his role in Osborn's acquisition (by auction at Christie's) of a portrait of the poet as a boy of seven, which became the frontispiece to the magisterial catalog. Inauspiciously, Wimsatt writes on 9/28/60 to confess that he let slip at the auction house the provenance-enhancing fact that the portrait is mentioned by Joseph Spence in his *Anecdotes*. Then on 9/30/60 he laments his failure to locate a manuscript for Osborn in the British Museum, even as he hopes that further news about the portrait will redeem him.

With growing confidence, he writes on 10/11/60 to describe the resemblance of the diminutive sitter as "*Houtos Eikeinos*" (Greek for "the one is like the other"), while Margaret Wimsatt adds an enthusiastic postscript: "Little Alexander is really darling—I want to hug him."

Finally, on 11/1/60, recounting the auction, he can rejoice that despite tense counterbidding by a mysterious "posh blonde," Osborn prevailed.

Letter from William Wimsatt to James Marshall Osborn. Aerogram of September 28, 1960. OSB MSS 7, Box 7, Folder 1666. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection



"My dearest Miss Howe! / O what dreadful things I have to tell you!"

SUSAN HOWE

In early-eighteenth-century upper-western Massachusetts, paper was precious, and American philosopher and theologian Jonathan Edwards, an omnivorous writer, reader, note-taker, and marginalia jotter par excellence, needed every surface he could use including the margins of books, old newspapers, and the edges of cut patterns that his ten sisters or eight daughters used for making fans.

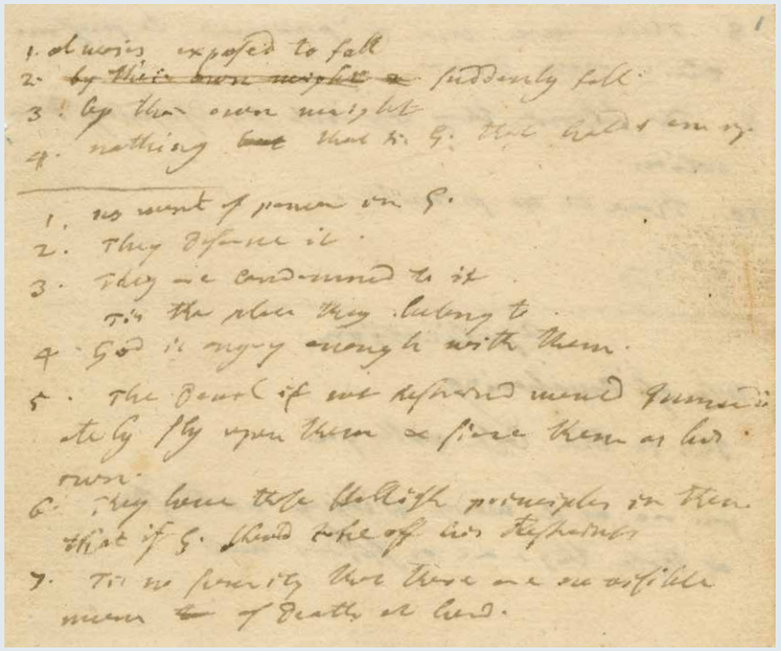
One day, I opened a folder containing the journal of Edwards's younger sister Hannah. The journal consisted of a variety of observations and pious homilies, including an account of her delirium during a serious illness, and as subtext her emotional turmoil over rejecting the suitor her Puritan parents had selected. The journal begins with the glorious passage from Psalm 5:6. "Oh! that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at Rest." I experienced the kind of telepathic echoing that, if and when you are lucky, can radiate from a particular text opened in the guarded hush of a research library. My book-length collage poem, *Frolic Architecture,* channels Hannah's thoughts and doubts throughout various sections of her journal.

Recently, I read Samuel Richardson's sprawling five-volume epistolary novel, *Clarissa.* I returned to Beinecke in search of first and second printings, in order to witness the powerful acoustic effect typography can exert on the space of a page over time. This is most apparent in Clarissa's torn up "mad" letters to a variety of recipients after her rape and subsequent flight from home.

Research showed me that Richardson's novels were read avidly by members of the Edwards family and not only in the abridged versions then available in America. I was delighted to find my hero, the author of "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" as well as "Images or Shadows of Divine Things," had placed an order for the complete five-volume edition of *Clarissa, or, The history of a young lady* in his order of books from London.

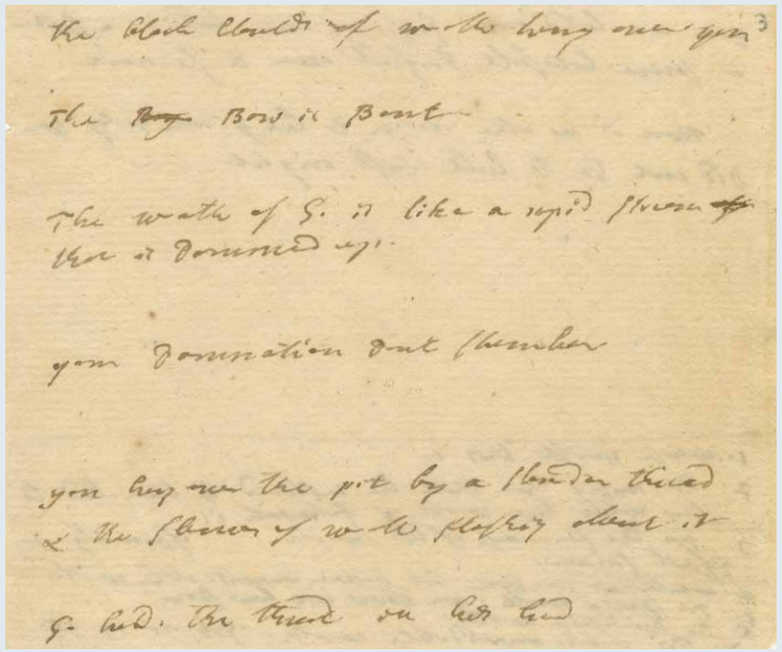
I like to imagine the Edwards family circle, almost entirely female, gathering to read aloud this multiple-correspondent epistolary text—keeping in mind that Clarissa's original sin of disobedience was in leaving home without permission.

Jonathan Edwards, reading list (detail). n.d. Gen MSS 151, Box 15, Folder 1202, p. 19. Jonathan Edwards Collection



1. always exposed to fall
2. ~~by their own weight~~ & suddenly fall
3. by their own weight
4. nothing ~~but~~ that is G. Hold on of

1. no want of power in G.
2. They deserve it.
3. They are condemned to it
   It's the place they belong to
4. God is angry enough with them.
5. The Devil if not restrained would immediately fly upon them & seize them as his own.
6. They have the devilish principles in them that if G. should take off his restraints
7. 'Tis no security that there are no visible means of death at hand.



the black clouds of wrath hang over you

The ~~Bow~~ Bow is Bent

The wrath of G. is like a rapid stream ~~that~~ that is Dammed up.

your Damnation don't slumber

you hang over the pit by a slender thread & the flames of wrath flashing about it

G. hold. the thread on his hand

As Though Extemporaneously

MICHAEL WARNER

Preachers in the Puritan tradition walked a fine line between the ideals of a learned ministry, requiring a thoughtfully composed sermon, and a "lively" delivery that would be more than simply reading a manuscript.

This outline of Jonathan Edwards's most famous sermon represents one solution to the dilemma, as it allowed him to recreate his text with an appearance of spontaneity. First preached in Northampton in June of 1741, the sermon was repreached in July at Enfield, where the congregation erupted in anguish, leading Edwards to break off before the end. The Enfield version was printed in Boston later that year as a pamphlet, and it was republished several times over the course of the eighteenth century.

This outline version follows the revisions in the pamphlet but was probably drawn up much later, as Edwards continued to preach the sermon. The editors of the Yale edition suggest on the basis of the ink that it dates from Edwards's late years in Stockbridge, around 1756. Neither original manuscript nor full text, and based on the printed text rather than the earlier manuscripts, it allowed Edwards to recreate the logical movement of the sermon as though extemporaneously.

Jonathan Edwards, manuscript notes for a sermon on Deuteronomy 32:35: "There is nothing that keeps wicked men at each moment out of hell but the meer pleasure of God." Enfield sermon, published as *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (June, 1741). Stockbridge, ca. 1756. Gen MSS 151, Box 39, pp. 1, 3. Jonathan Edwards Collection

“Here you see mee, and I am you”

LUCY MULRONEY

Or if too hard and deepe
This learning be, for a scratch’d name to teach,
It, as a given deaths head keepe

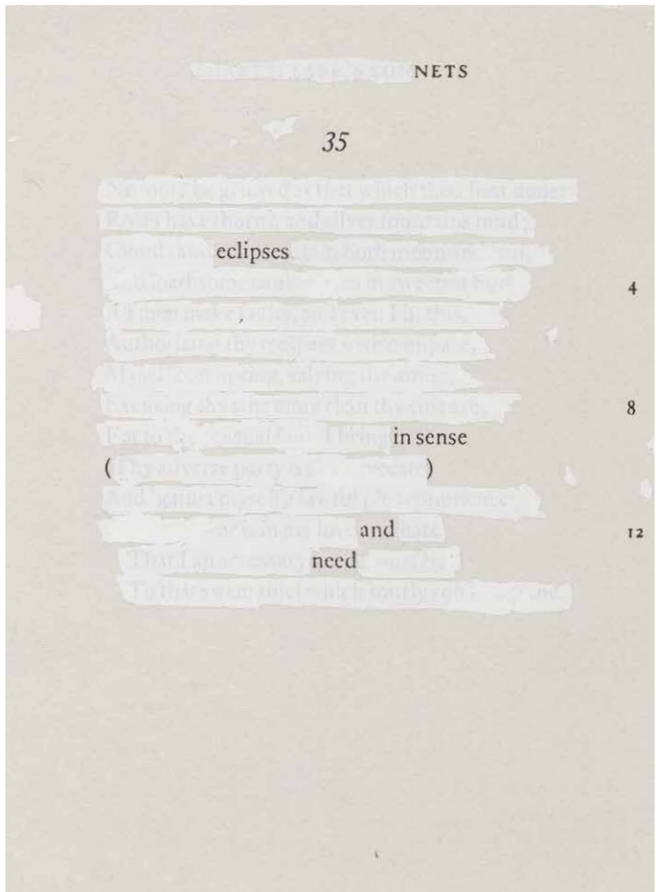
In his poem “A Valediction: of My Name in the Window,” John Donne writes to his lover as he ruminates about the possibility of her finding someone else after his death. The thought of her “treason” troubles him so much that he cuts his name into the glass pane of a window so that whenever she looks out she will see his name and be reminded of him. Far from a sweet token of remembrance, here writing becomes a violent act.

The window upon which Donne has engraved his name is at once transparent and “all confessing” as he claims his love to be, while it is also a mirror that exposes and confines his lover. When she looks at herself in the glass, he writes, “Here you see mee, and I am you.” Thus, Donne does not write his name onto any mere piece of furniture. He marks his lover. The window becomes a metaphor for his inescapable love and the portal of her erotic transgression. “When thy inconsiderate hand / Flings out this casement, with my trembling name,” Donne warns, “Then thinke this name alive, and that thou thus / In it offendst my Genius.”

Three hundred years later, the photograph shown here amplifies the drama of window and mirror, treason and infidelity, marking and shaming articulated in Donne’s poem.

Following the liberation of France in 1944, women accused of collaborating with Nazi soldiers were publicly and brutally humiliated. Their heads were shaved and sometimes they were marked with tar or lipstick; often they were beaten and paraded through the streets. Such a fate befell this unidentified woman. Upon the camera’s lens, like the window in Donne’s poem, the wrath of men is traced.

Photograph by Francis Lee. n.d. Charles Henri Ford Papers. YCAL MSS 32, Box 4, Folder 228



Catch and Hold

NANCY KUHL

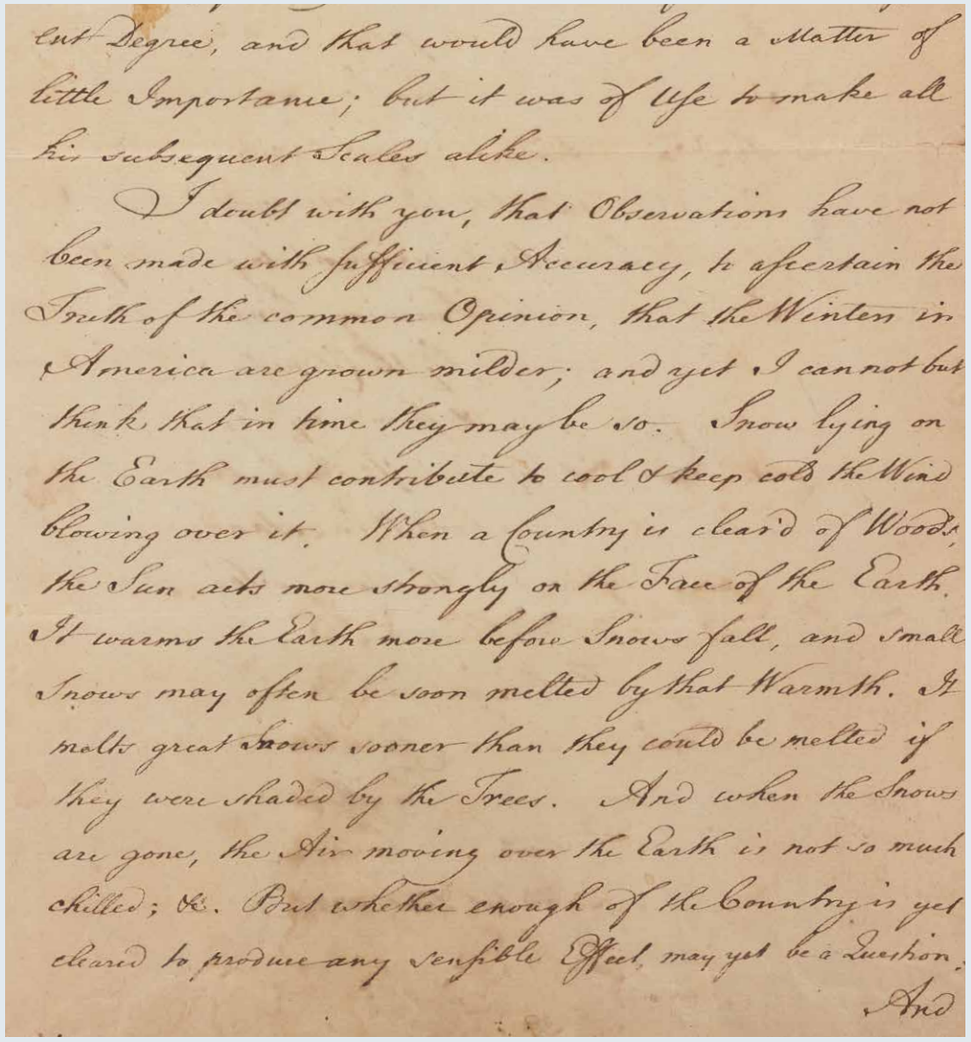
Poet and visual artist Jen Bervin's engagement with William Shakespeare's *Sonnets* has been described as a poetic conversation, a post-modern remix, a feminist interpretation, an innovative lyric reading. The work calls to mind questions of literary tradition, poetic voice, and the evolution of the sonnet form. It invites readers to consider the role of apprenticeship in a poet's development and to question the very nature of tradition, influence, and inspiration. The manuscript and printed text explore relationships and tensions between palimpsest and erasure.

Bervin does not merely extract her title from Shakespeare's work but indeed discovers the possibilities of her own poetic form within Shakespeare's poems; her "nets" capture, claim, and raise up new possibilities within canonical texts. The name of this new form evokes a vocabulary that is useful to its reader: in Bervin's *Nets,* lines and fibers are woven and knotted; threads and strands of music and meaning are gathered, they catch and hold. The lace pattern pictured on the cover of the 2004 Ugly Duckling Presse edition of *Nets* further hints at Bervin's fascination with relationships between text and textiles and highlights the manuscript's innovative combination of verbal, visual, and tactical metaphor making.

Investigating and activating spaces between words and poetic lines, Bervin calls attention to various mark-making processes: concentrated attention, repetition, layering, experimentation, the deliberate and arbitrary creation of patterns. She explores, too, the overlapping work of the writer and the reader, locating interpretation and response somewhere between words and their given meanings, between a text and the aesthetic, spiritual, and emotional experience of encounter.

Bervin's interest in making, unmaking, and reimagining texts pushes her readers to reevaluate the ways poetry might function and encourages us to uncover new literary and visual forms, even in the most beloved literary works.

Jen Bervin, Manuscript of Sonnet 35 for *Nets* (2004). YCAL MSS 1220



cut Degree, and that would have been a Matter of little Importance; but it was of Use to make all his subsequent Scales alike.

I doubt with you, that Observations have not been made with sufficient Accuracy, to ascertain the Truth of the common Opinion, that the Winters in America are grown milder; and yet I can not but think that in time they may be so. Snow lying on the Earth must contribute to cool & keep cold the Wind blowing over it. When a Country is clear'd of Woods, the Sun acts more strongly on the Face of the Earth. It warms the Earth more before Snows fall, and small Snows may often be soon melted by that Warmth. It melts great Snows sooner than they could be melted if they were shaded by the Trees. And when the Snows are gone, the Air moving over the Earth is not so much chilled; &c. But whether enough of the Country is yet cleared to produce any sensible Effect, may yet be a Question.

And

The Letter Archives Its Network

JOHN DURHAM PETERS

Some of us apologize for replying days late to an e-mail. Here Benjamin Franklin apologizes for a lapse of months! Speed was different then, but interest in climate change and global scholarly exchange was not.

Franklin sat at the heart of eighteenth-century transatlantic communication networks and was a master of the media of his day: press, post office, electricity. Ezra Stiles, the polymath divine and President of Yale, belonged to a New England intellectual dynasty, as grandson of poet Edward Taylor and grandfather of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

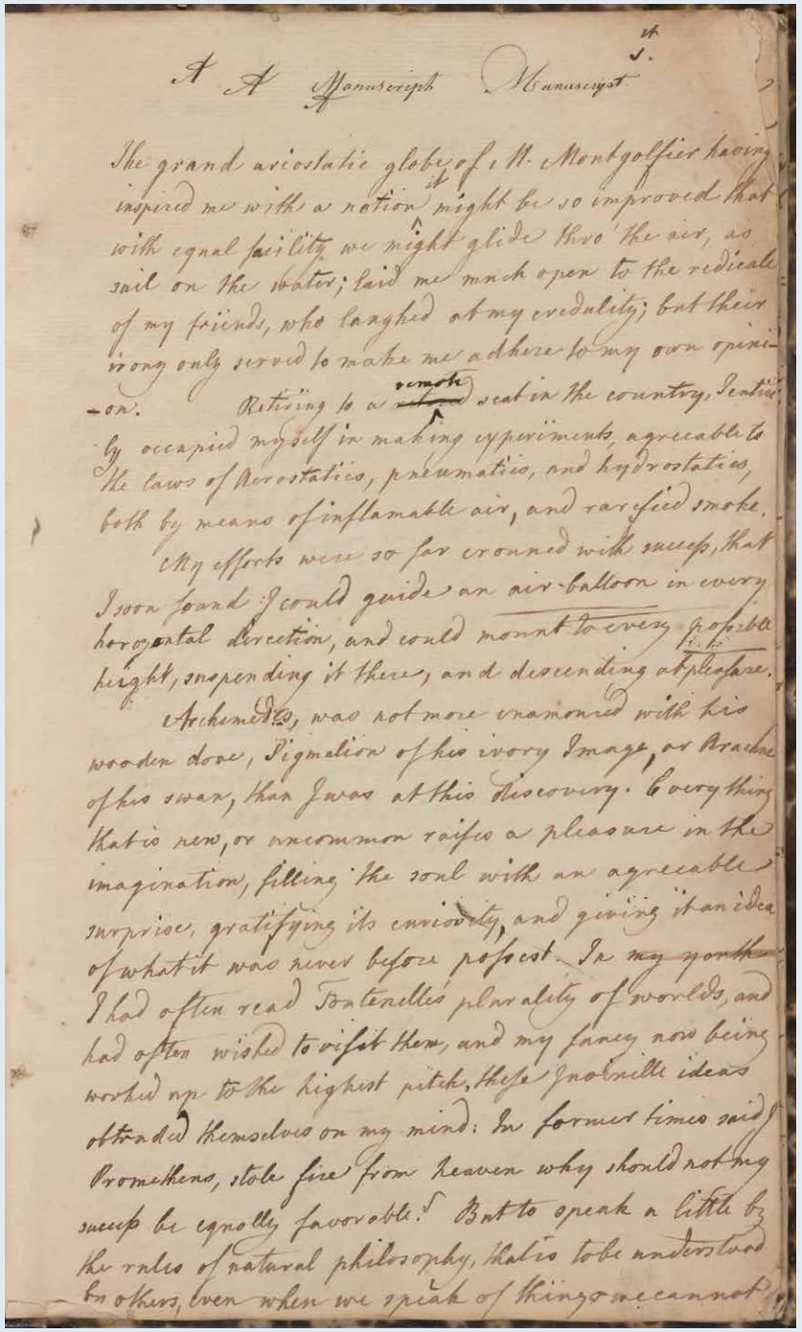
So what did brainy powerhouses talk about in 1763? The same as now, of course: the weather!

Franklin's climate change is not apocalyptic: it is one of anthropogenic improvement. He speculates that winters are growing milder in America. (Acknowledging the lack of hard evidence, he characteristically outlines a research plan to confirm his hunch.) He correctly intuits the link between deforestation and atmospheric warming, though misdescribing the mechanism. He also understands windchill and imagines the theoretical—and comic—possibility of a man in a strong wind freezing to death on a hot summer's day! In Franklin the jokes and the genius nestled side by side.

The letter brims with cutting-edge technologies of measurement like the thermometer and of reproduction like the picture-plate (or mezzotint). In this the letter is recursive. It is a maxim of postal history that each letter archives its network, and the correspondence here spans Philadelphia, Boston, Oxford, Cambridge, Turin, and St. Petersburg. The multitasking letter models and directs the circulation of documents among intellectual elites, concluding with Franklin's wish to dispatch a new "most excellent Discourse" by Stiles to colleagues.

Franklin doesn't exactly say that he read it; he had "a sight." Then, as now, busy people needed euphemisms for how thoroughly they had engaged with their friends' writings.

Letter from Benjamin Franklin to Ezra Stiles (detail). Philadelphia, May 29, 1763. Ezra Stiles Papers. Gen MSS 1475, Box 5, Folder 385



A A Manuscript Manuscript

The grand aricostatic globe of M. Montgolfier having inspired me with a notion it might be so improved that with equal facility we might glide thro' the air, as sail on the water; laid me much open to the ridicule of my friends, who laughed at my credulity; but their irony only served to make me adhere to my own opinion. Retiring to a remote seat in the country, I entirely occupied myself in making experiments, agreeable to the laws of Aerostatics, pneumatics, and hydrostatics, both by means of inflamable air, and rarefied smoke.

My efforts were so far crowned with success, that I soon found I could guide an air-balloon in every horizontal direction, and could mount to every possible height, suspending it there, and descending at pleasure.

Archimedes, was not more enamoured with his wooden dove, Pigmalion of his ivory Image, or Apelles of his swan, than I was at this discovery. Every thing that is new, or uncommon raises a pleasure in the imagination, filling the soul with an agreeable surprise, gratifying its curiosity, and giving it an idea of what it was never before possest. In my youth I had often read Fontenelles plurality of worlds, and had often wished to visit them, and my fancy now being worked up to the highest pitch, these Quixotic ideas obtruded themselves on my mind: In former times said Prometheus, stole fire from heaven why should not my success be equally favorable? But to speak a little by the rules of natural philosophy, that is to be understood by others, even when we speak of things we cannot

Conditions of Invisibility

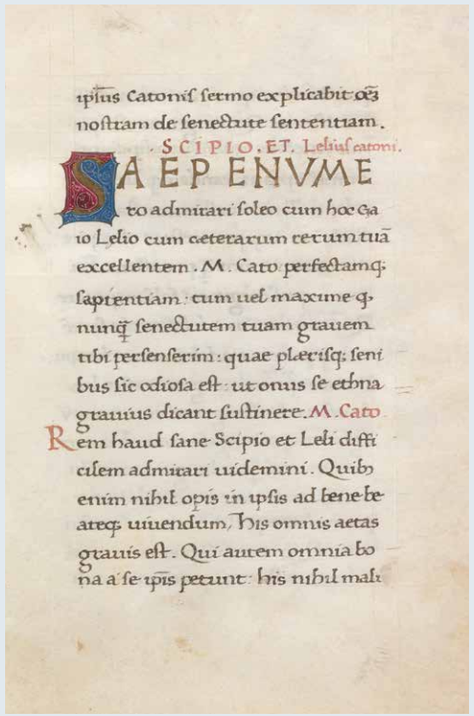
ANASTASIA ECCLES

The manuscript text confronts us with a visceral sense of inscrutability (the unfamiliar handwriting, the seeping of ink into paper, the blooms of mildew, the lack of an orienting title). The task of a statement like this, on the other hand, is to make the hidden or inscrutable object legible. But Mary Hamilton's unpublished 1784 novella—titled simply and paradigmatically "A Manuscript"—seems to resist visibility in ways both obvious and subtle. A tissue of interlinked dialogues and tales, it defies synopsis. The premise is easily stated—an amateur scientist strikes a deal with a demon to travel to a nearby planet by hot-air balloon—but what comes after he lands is not. A welter of genres—part imaginary voyage, part philosophical tale, part satire, part courtship plot—it seems alternately derivative and utterly sui generis.

"A Manuscript" also actively reflects upon conditions of invisibility and inscrutability in its pages. This is a story about invisible agency: the demon delivers a capsule history of the Enlightenment in which he claims responsibility for the discoveries of modern science, and an extended political satire describes the "secret influence" wielded by a cabal of government ministers. The most perceptually vivid experience of the balloon voyage is the moment when the traveler "lose[s] sight of terrestrial objects." The moment also epitomizes this disorienting text, which leaves us adrift between two worlds, neither of them quite recognizable as our own.

The ethos that Hamilton repeatedly celebrates is *humility,* her name for the awareness of what lies beyond our own limited faculties. The formal correlates of that inaccessibility are strewn throughout the text, in the ellipses and spaces that grow more frequent toward the end. The novella ends with a cryptic gesture of withdrawal. Our narrator, now a celebrated sage, offers his services to the planet's sovereign. The king, like "A Manuscript," "retire[s] in sullen silence."

Mary Hamilton, "A Manuscript," 1r. England, 1784. Osborn fc137. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection


ipius Catonis sermo explicabit oẽ
nostram de senectute sententiam.
SCIPIO. ET. Lelius catoni.
SAEPENVME
to admirari soleo cum hoc ea
io Lelio cum ceteratum tetum tuã
excellentem. M. Cato perfectamq;
sapientiam: cum uel maxime q.
nunq; senectutem tuam grauem
tibi persenserim: quae plerisq; seni
bus sic odiosa est: ut onus se ethna
grauius dicant sustinere. M. Cato
Rem haud sane Scipio et Leli diffi
cilem admirari uidemini. Quib
enim nihil opis in ipsis ad bene be
ateq; uiuendum. His omnis aetas
grauis est. Qui autem omnia bo
na a se ipis petunt: his nihil mali


xxvii.
CONVE
nit paup quidã
Idiota ditissim
Oratorẽ in foro
Romano: quem
facete subridens
sic alloquutus
est. Idiota.
Miror de fastu tuo qd tu licet conti
nua lectione defatigeris inumerabiles
libros lectitando: nondũ tamen ad hu
militatẽ ductus sis. Hoc certe ex eo:
quia scientia huius mundi in qua te
ceteris precellere putas stultitia queda
est apud deũ. & hec inflat. Ex qua in
flatione tumide orit superbia: que na
tione celestis semp in altũ nitit vt gra
uius cadat. Vera autẽ scientia humili
at que nulla inflatione grauefacta in
d.3.

What Happens When the English Encounter the Italian Renaissance?

RAYMOND CLEMENS

The evolution of English handwriting, most commonly exemplified through the constant exchange between England and France from the Norman Conquest (1066) through the Hundred Years War (1337–1453) and the War of the Roses (1455–87), was also influenced by more continental forces such as the Italian Renaissance.

In Italy, Petrarch sparked a revolution by mining classical sources to buttress Christian revelation. He also sought to imitate pagan handwriting, but his oldest manuscript sources were Carolingian rather than Roman. The script that came to symbolize the revival of Latin learning in a Christian context is called humanist book hand, a clear, easy-to-read script with few abbreviations, recognizable because of its adoption by early Italian printers. The Christian Humanists, most importantly Erasmus (1466–1536), embodied the ideals of the Italian Renaissance by making new accurate Latin translations of the Bible.

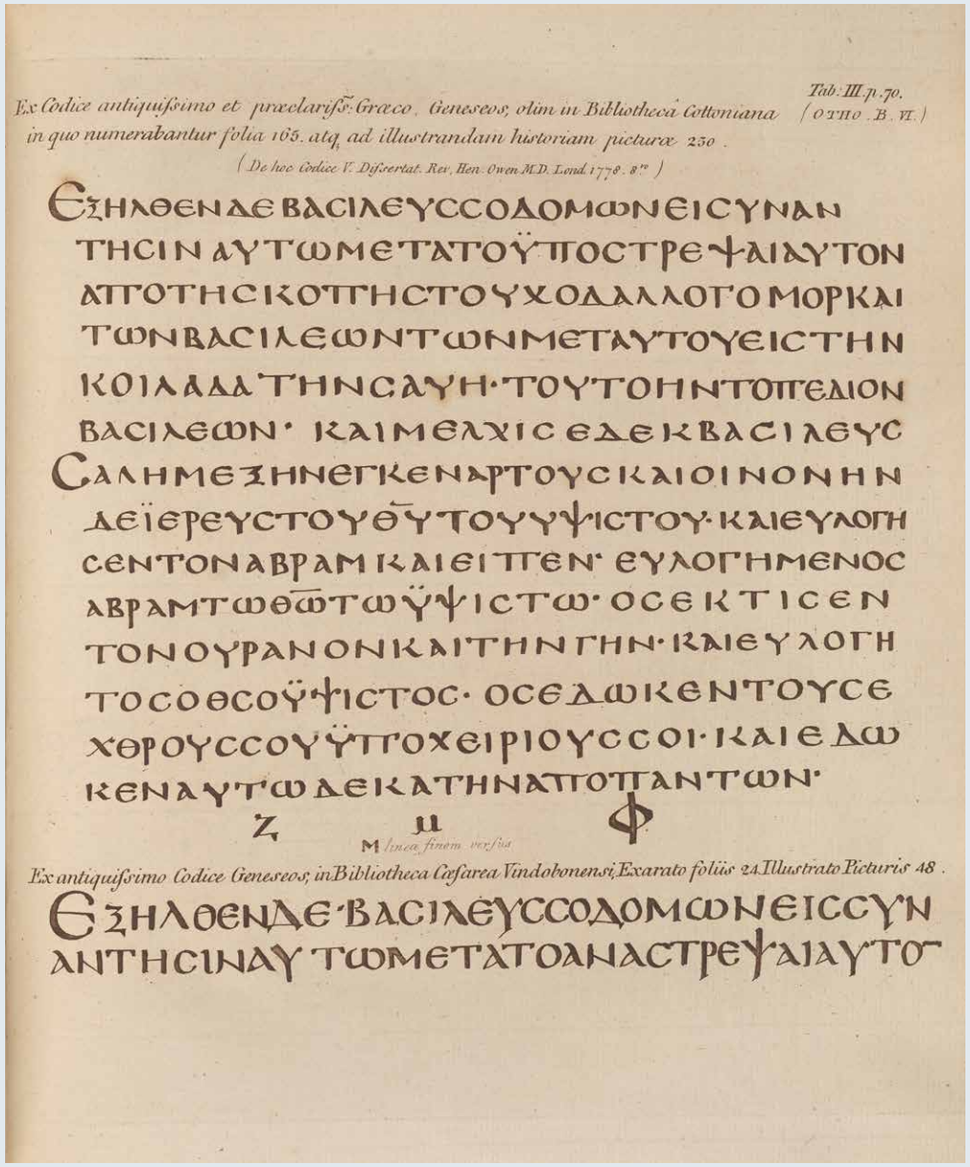
Humanist writing was transformed by the English, who did not have access to the wealth of materials that the Italians did. Italians wrote primarily on white goatskin peppered with hair follicles. English parchment, yellow and somewhat greasy, usually came from sheep.

The clear, even spacing of the Italian humanist text is replaced in the English by oversized letters and dramatic line spacing. With parchment at a premium, the English example conveys opulence with more ostentation than the understated Italian page with its contrast between dark and light and the white space primarily in the margins.

The subtle contrast between the dark blue, red, and silvery text and the white goatskin in the Italian manuscript is replaced by reds and gold leaf in the English humanist text. Both represent beauty and wealth for their separate audiences, but with differing materials and audience, we observe a profound shift in the books they produced.

Left: Cicero, *De senectute,* f. 2r. Copied by Giovanmarco Cinico from Parma. Naples, 1467. Beinecke MS 805

Right: Peter Meghen, scribe. Moral and theological treatises copied for Christopher Urswick, f. 27r. London, ca. 1502. Osborn a50. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection



Origins as Evidence

JOHANNA DRUCKER

Thomas Astle, Keeper of the Records of the Tower of London, was a prominent British antiquarian who promoted modern, empirical methods for studying documents and handwriting. Given his position and the challenges of legitimating antique documents, his interest in writing was practical as well as historical. Astle's methods were based on observation, comparison, and attention to details like official seals, paper, vellum, and marks as well as handwriting, which he studied assiduously. Raising the study of these formal and material properties to the level of a rigorous discipline, Astle set an example for archival and literary scholarship.

Astle drew on the principles outlined a century earlier by the French Benedictine Dom Jean Mabillon, who in his 1681 *De re diplomatica* (*Of diplomatic things*) had outlined a set of criteria for assessing the authenticity of charters and contracts. Astle, like Mabillon, reproduced carefully hand-copied facsimile engravings of original artifacts.

In selecting materials for his book, Astle often chose works like the example shown here in Table III. Astle highlights the original manuscript's documented provenance, thus indicating that the trail of custodianship was important for authentification. He describes it as follows:

Ex Codice antiquissimo et præclariss. Græco Geneseos, olim in Bibliotheca Cottoniana in quo numerabantur folia 165. atq; ad illustrandam historiam picturæ 230. (De hoc Codice V. Dissertat. Rev. Hen. Owen M.D. Lond. 1778. 8vo) Tab. III. p. 70. (OTHO. B. VI.)

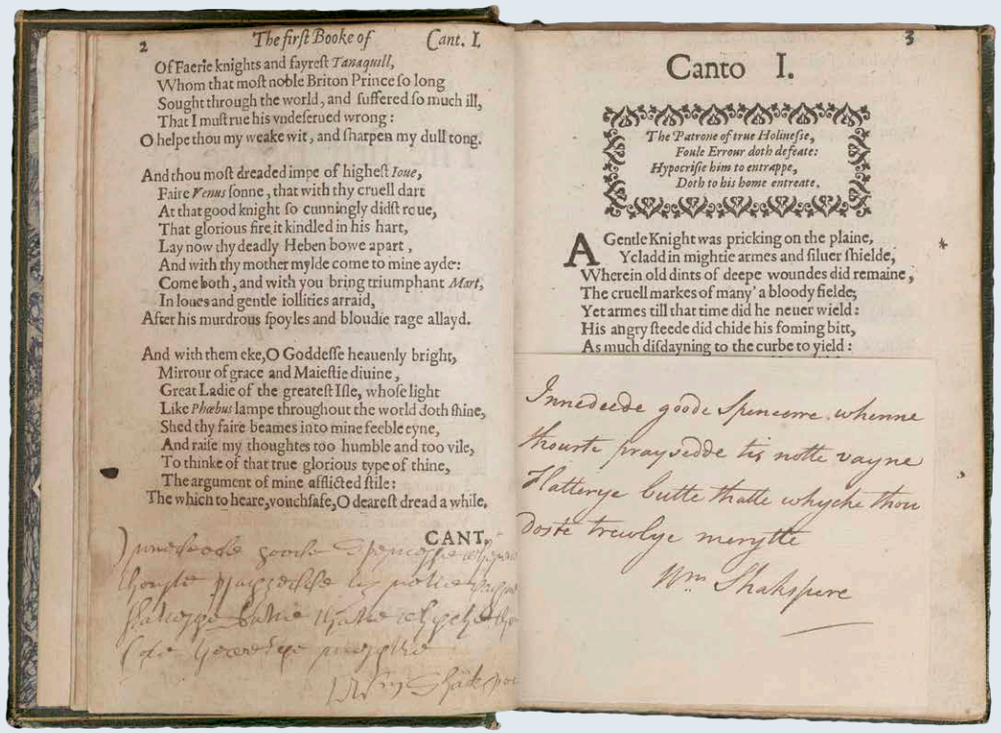
Ex antiquissimo Codice Geneseos, in Bibliotheca Cæsarea Vindobonensi, Exarato foliis 24. Illustrato Picturis 48.

Specimen of the Book of Genesis, which was brought from Philippi by two Greek bishops, who presented it to king Henry the Eighth, telling him at the same time, that tradition reported it to have been Origen's own book. Queen Elizabeth gave it to Sir John Fortescue, her preceptor in Greek, who placed it in the Cottonian Library.

While some of this provenance history would be difficult to prove, such as its ownership by the third-century scholar Origen, the specifics of transmission are treated with importance. This attention to the specific properties of a particular edition of a text became one of the central principles of critical editing and modern bibliography.

The size, scale, and lucid presentation of material in this volume show that Astle intended it for a broader public than most scholarly editions. Some of the plates have hand-coloring, and the book invites nonspecialized readers into a discussion of the history of lettering, alphabets, and handwritten scripts.

Thomas Astle, *The origin and progress of writing, as well hieroglyphic as elementary, illustrated by engravings taken from marbles, manuscripts and characters, ancient and modern: also, some account of the origin and progress of printing,* p. 70, Tab. 3. London, 1784. Osborn pc80. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection



“the spelling of no time”

CATHERINE NICHOLSON

“Shakespeare’s *Faerie Queene*” was the crown jewel of a collection advertised in 1795 as the long-lost contents of “Shakespeare’s Library,” part of an extraordinary trove of manuscripts and old books that nineteen-year-old William Henry Ireland, son of a London engraver, claimed to have found in the house of a country gentleman.

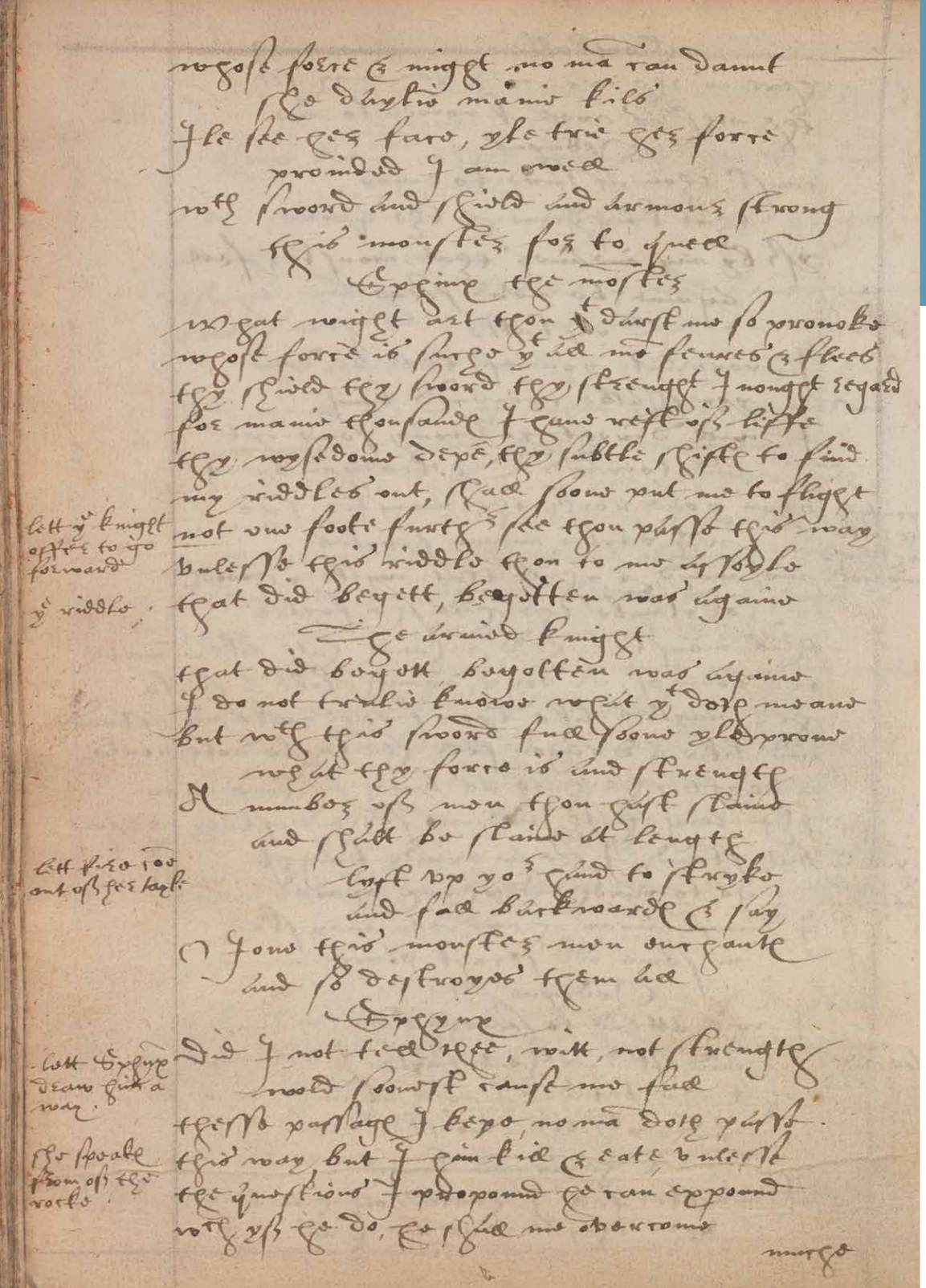
In reality Ireland himself fabricated every bit of the so-called Shakespeare Papers, in a desire to impress his bardolatrous father. As he later recalled, he took special care with *The faerie queene,* believing “that a writer of such celebrity as Spenser must have attracted the notice of Shakspeare”: “Upon the margins of this poem…I was most particular in my comments,…fully convinced that such notes would be regarded with the strictest scrutiny.”

Indeed they were—or, as Ireland’s Shakespeare might put it, *innedeede they werrre.* It was spelling that gave Ireland away: his own, and Edmund Spenser’s. For when the scholar Edmond Malone compared Ireland’s faux-antiquated orthography to that of *The faerie queene,* which Malone believed to reflect Spenser’s own, distinctively archaic usage, he pronounced it “an entire forgery”: “the spelling of no time.”

London papers played the affair for laughs: the *Telegraph* published an invitation from “*Williamme Shaekspere*” to “*MISSTEERREE BEENJAAMMIINNEE JOOHNNSSONN,*” to “*dinnee wythee meee onn Fridaye nextte, attt twoo off theee clockee, too eattee sommee muttonne choppes andd somme poottattoooeesse.*” But the case of Shakespeare’s spelling had serious consequences for the field of literary scholarship, at once securing the prestige of Malone’s brand of textual conservatism and cementing a belief in the special character of Spenser’s spelling. Even today, editors decline to modernize the orthography of *The faerie queene,* giving readers the impression that it is both peculiarly old and the poet’s own.

As it happens, neither is true: like other printed works of its time, *The faerie queene* reflects ordinary variations in orthographic usage and the habits of the compositors who set the text. Our insistence on preserving what we persist in calling Spenser’s spelling is typically justified by appeals to Malone-like conservatism, but it has more to do with an Ireland-like fantasy of communing with the dead.

William Henry Ireland, annotations to Edmund Spenser, *The faerie queene,* pp. 2–3. London, 1590. 2014 160



"lett *the* knight offer to go forward"

LAWRENCE MANLEY

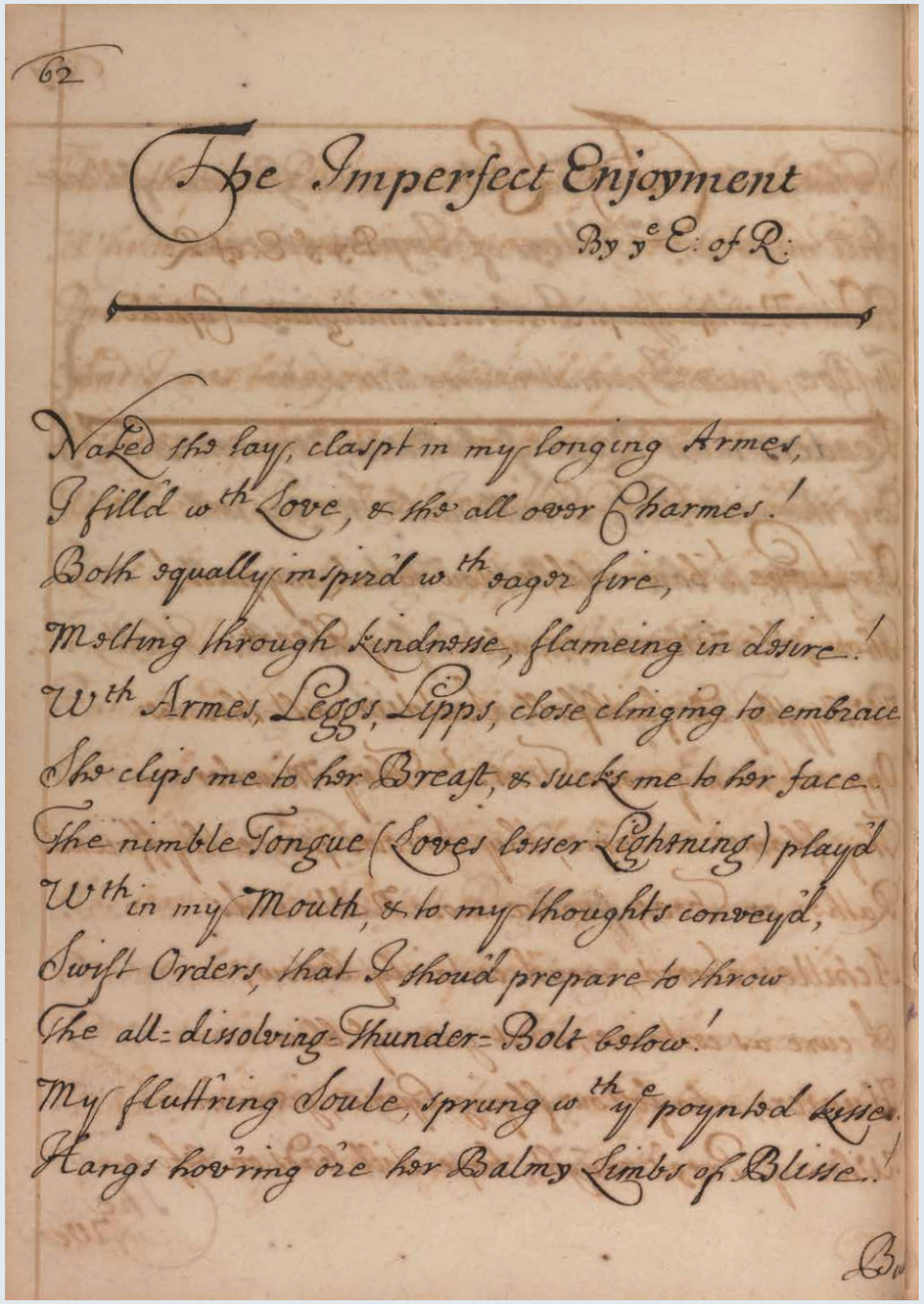
"A tragedie called Oedipus" is a little-known manuscript play dating from the reign of Elizabeth I. Written mainly in verse, extending over 80 folio pages, and containing roles for at least 33 actors, the play recounts the life of the Theban king Oedipus. It incorporates nearly verbatim Alexander Neville's verse translation of Seneca's *Oedipus,* first published in 1563 and reprinted in Thomas Newton's *Seneca his tenne tragedies* (1581). The concluding scenes, in which Antigone dissuades Oedipus from suicide, are extracted from a translation of Seneca's *Thebais,* published for the first time in the same 1581 collection.

Two leaves at the end of the manuscript contain, in the same hand as the play, "A speach deliverd before the founders at the entrance of the schole." This oration identifies "A tragedie called Oedipus" as a school play from the age of Elizabeth I. The play's epilogue, which contains a prayer for Queen Elizabeth I and "for all the counsell of this towne / Captaines and souldiors all," suggests that the play may derive from the garrison town and fortress of Berwick upon Tweed. The play's extensive elaboration of the plague afflicting Thebes in Seneca's play may reflect the severe outbreak visited upon Berwick in 1579–81, the years immediately preceding the appearance of Newton's Seneca translation. The schoolmaster at Berwick from 1577, Aristotle Knowsley, is possibly the author of the play.

Despite its heavy use of Seneca, a standard author in the Elizabethan schoolroom, the play contains much original material, including two songs (one with music), lively comic scenes involving the youth of Oedipus, and vivid stage directions calling for spectacular effects. In the margin of the opening on display, stage directions call for a knight confronting the monstrous sphinx to "go forward" to "*th*e riddle." While he raises his hand "to stryke," the sphinx is to "lett fire come out of her tayle" and then "draw him a way" to her rock. Expertise for the play's pyrotechnical sphinx would have been readily available from the "gunners of great ordnance" stationed at Berwick.

The manuscript was owned by John Perceval, first earl of Egmont (1683–1748), and the Bristol bookseller James Stevens-Cox before acquisition by the Elizabethan Club at Yale in 2010.

A tragedie called Oedipus, f. 19v. England, ca. 1596–1603. Eliz 294. Courtesy of the Elizabethan Club, Yale University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The Imperfect Enjoyment

By y^e E: of R:

Naked she lay, claspt in my longing Armes,
I filld w^th Love, & tho all over Charmes!
Both equally inspird w^th eager fire,
Melting through kindnesse, flameing in desire!
W^th Armes, Leggs, Lipps, close clinging to embrace
She clips me to her Breast, & sucks me to her face.
The nimble Tongue (Loves lesser Lightning) playd
W^thin my Mouth, & to my thoughts conveyd,
Swift Orders, that I shoud prepare to throw
The all-dissolving-Thunder-Bolt below!
My fluttring Soule, sprung w^th y^e poynted kisse,
Hangs hoverring o're her Balmy Limbs of Blisse!

Bu

"(for the easier and surer propagation of vice)"

KATHRYN JAMES

"Naked she lay, claspt in my longing Armes," begins "The Imperfect Enjoyment," a poem by John Wilmot, second earl of Rochester, written shortly before his death from syphilis in 1680 at age thirty-three. An astute and profane observer of the court of Charles II, Rochester anatomized the activities of his peers with Baconian explicitness. His satire circulated prolifically in manuscript, professionally copied in volumes like the one shown here, consumed by an audience of readers at the court and beyond.

"The Imperfect Enjoyment" is an imperfect copy: only the first page of the poem survives. At some point in this volume's life, an owner removed the remainder of the poem—and this is not surprising, given the obvious delicacy of controlling access to a seventy-two-line poem on the practical and psychological difficulties of premature ejaculation. It is not the only poem to have been expurgated: "A Ramble in St. James Park" and other sexually explicit poems have also been excised.

Rochester himself attempted to censor his writing. He is said (by Robert Parsons, the priest who officiated at his death) to have ordered that his manuscripts and letters be burned. Immediately after his death, however, (as his funeral sermon conveniently advertised), "all the lewd and profane poems and libels… (contrary to his dying request, and in defiance of religion, government, and common decency) [were] published to the world; and (for the easier and surer propagation of vice) printed in penny-books, and cried about the streets of this honourable city." In the edition of 1680, published under a false imprint, Rochester's "The Imperfect Enjoyment" was included, as was "A Ramble in St. James Park." It was this edition that Samuel Pepys is said to have kept in a separate drawer in his writing table.

Rochester remains difficult: explicit, persuasive, brilliant, bleak, transgressive. Hugely popular, his writing has been revised by editors since the very first printed edition of 1680; by 1685, several of the more sexually explicit poems had been cut, as they largely remained until the edition in 1962 by David Vieth. It is in this very incompleteness, and in the persistence of his circulation in manuscript and print, that Rochester's power as an author can be seen.

Songs and verses upon several occasions, p. 62. England, ca. 1680? Osborn b105. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection

come, to have the genius of Shakespeare. He wrote to the papers about it. He also told a lady who applied to him for information that cats do not as a matter of fact go to heaven, though they have, he added, souls of a sort. How much thinking those old gentlemen used to save one! How the borders of ignorance shrank back at their approach! Cats do not go to heaven. Women cannot write the plays of Shakespeare.

Be that as it may, I could not help thinking, as I looked at the works of Shakespeare on the shelf, that the bishop was right at least in this; it would have been impossible, completely and entirely, for any woman to have written the plays of Shakespeare in the age of Shakespeare. Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say. Shakespeare himself went, very probably,—his mother was an heiress—to the grammar school, where he may have learnt Latin —Ovid, Virgil and Horace—and the elements of grammar and logic. He was, it is well known, a wild boy who poached rabbits, perhaps shot a deer, and had, rather sooner than he should have done, to marry a woman in the neighbourhood, who bore him a child rather quicker than was right. That

Shakespeare's Sister

MARTA FIGLEROWICZ

William Shakespeare's plays famously feature many striking women: Cleopatra, Viola, Lady Macbeth. Their depth as characters makes female-bodied readers love Shakespeare—and it also makes us wonder. The Western literary canon is full of well-intentioned men who misrepresent their social others. What compels us about Shakespeare's female figures? Just last year, *The Atlantic* put forth a new theory: perhaps the person writing under his name was a certain Emilia Bassano, an Italian-Jewish merchant's daughter.

If a woman had been born with Shakespeare's genius, Virginia Woolf insists coldly, it would not have made a difference: she would have come and gone, and nobody would have noticed. To recognize female obsolescence is more important, for Woolf, than to span the limits of any man's sensitivity. In *A Room of One's Own,* Woolf shows that money can buy women creative freedom through privacy. Coming late in the volume, her anecdote about Shakespeare's sister suggests that a private room might not suffice, in itself, to make individual talent grow and last. Outward recognition and nurture are needed, too. "Oh, I can smile about it now / but at the time it was terrible," sings Steven Morrissey in "Shakespeare's Sister." His persona once wanted to leave home. Now, she does not want to anymore, although she cannot quite persuade herself that her seclusion has not cost her anything. So, she retreats, and the person telling us about her is a sensitive man.

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own,* p. 70. London: Leonard and Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press, 1929. 1975 2236

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