Errata in "Poems from A Seventeenth-Century Manuscript"

Errata in "Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript with the Hand of Robert Herrick. Edited, with Introduction and Facing Transcriptions, by Norman K. Farmer, Jr." (Published as a Supplement to The Texas Quarterly, vol. XVI, no. 4: Winter 1973).*

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The above-cited Supplement constitutes the most extensive publication hitherto attempted of one of the most remarkable English literary manuscripts surviving from the early seventeenth century, a manuscript miscellany (or "Commonplace Book") of verse and prose containing contributions and corrections in the hand of Robert Herrick. Facsimiles are there given of every page containing verse, and these are faced with printed transcripts which the editor provided, so he informs us in his Introduction, "on the premise that the specialist as well as the non-specialist will appreciate some guide to the handwriting in the text."

The editor's laudable intention is, however, woefully betrayed in the performance, for the transcripts are so riddled with error that they can only serve gravely to mislead any reader who trusts to them. As the person who identified Herrick's hand in the volume, and as the author of the Sotheby catalogue description to which Norman K. Farmer refers in his Introduction, I cannot but feel some personal responsibility towards this manuscript, and a natural desire to attempt to set the record straight: I am most grateful, therefore, for the opportunity to do so now kindly offered by the editor of The Texas Quarterly.

I must begin by briefly explaining the scope and purpose of the subjoined list of errata.

A list of this formidable size would be unintelligible if it were confined to isolated words. I have therefore given a minimum amount of context, both to enable the reader to locate the passage concerned on the page and at the same time to indicate how sense and meter have been variously obscured or destroyed.

In the corrections, the spelling and punctuation of the manuscript have been reproduced with the following exceptions: (1) abbreviations have been silently expanded; (2) i/j and u/v have been standardized in accordance with modern practice.

* Because of limitations of space, Mr. Croft's and Professor Farmer's present comments concerning our supplement of Winter 1973 will be the last to appear in The Texas Quarterly.—Eds.
My list makes no attempt to record all the numerous departures in the transcripts from the spellings of the manuscript, nor do I record all the countless cases in which the punctuation has been altered, often without regard to the sense (though a few cases are listed where changes in the punctuation have particularly damaged the sense). In his Introduction (page 6) the editor states that his transcription “does not purport to reproduce every abbreviation, every instance of idiosyncratic spelling, and every punctuation mark of the original. Rather, it modernizes the texts in the interest of making the handwritten copy more accessible than it might otherwise be. No alterations, though, have been made in the diction or syntax of the original.” Despite this statement, the editorial procedure is in practice entirely haphazard: something like half the original spellings are retained, others are “modernized,” and others again are transmogrified into forms that exist neither in the manuscript nor in modern usage.

Page references are to the pagination of The Texas Quarterly, this being the only pagination accessible to the reader. The page references in Norman K. Farmer’s Introduction are to the pagination of the manuscript itself, although he unfortunately does not make this clear. Since in the manuscript only the recto pages are actually numbered (in modern pencil), since these numbers are sometimes shaved or almost invisible on the facsimiles which in any case do not reveal which pages are rectos and which versos, and since no indication is given of where the substantial omissions (of prose sections) occur, the page references in the Introduction are of little use to any reader who does not have direct access to the manuscript itself.

I have appended brief comments to a few of the individual passages in the list below, but in the great majority of cases I have judged that comment would be superfluous.

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Errata in “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript . . .”
List of errata

page 21  For 'Tis pitty then in hangman and in steele;  
read Is pitty then in hangman and in steele.

page 25  For Lord Deleware  
read Lord Delaware

page 25  For All those that reade old Histories  
read All those that reade old histories  
Go now, prognosticate:  
That our Virginia colonie  
Shall beard the Roman state.

page 27  For Ad Caxnem.  
read Ad Carmem.  
(This Latin title provides the clue to the riddling epigram  
Thou art my enemie I beare about me  
With thee I live not well, nor well without thee.  
_viz. the couplet is addressed to the poet's own flesh, not to  
some close-clinging acquaintance called Caxnis as the  
printed text implies.)

page 27  For Ch: Cox: is popishly preceise  
read Ch: Car: is popishly preceise

page 29  For So Cs over houses, he goes á walter-rauling.  
read So Cis over houses, he goes á walter-rauling.

page 29  For He lov'd harum horum and now griefes full forum  
read He lov'd harum horum and now greives full sorum

page 29  For Sir Hon: Palanicino.  
read Sir Hor: Palavicino.

page 31  For Rampant lion as black as a jet-stone,  
read A rampant lion as black as a Jet-stone,

page 33  For Maysters look tooit, Here lies Jhon Foo't.  
read Maysters look too't, Here lies Jhon Foo't.  
(The scribe originally wrote tooit but deliberately deleted the i  
and inserted the apostrophe.)

page 41  For Himselfe gave a little and offred up us.  
read himselfe gave a trifle & offred up us.

page 43  For He plaíd the Juster twixt France, England, and Spaine.  
He fain'd religion and zealous affection,
Read he plaid the jugler twixt France England & Spaine he fained religion & zealous affection

(The metre shows that the ed of fained is syllabic.)

For Of him that ties thee to bedeck his heare:
read Of him that bies thee to bedeck his heare:

For Monster of men, that worst of any evill,
read Monster of men, the worst of any evill

For Spoyler of orphanes leased to his tuition,
read Spoyler of Orphanes leaff to his tuition.

For That yet is youngest in his race and seede.
read That yet is yongest of his race and seede

For Thy private treasons to entrap thy freinds,
read Thy private treasons to entrap thy freinds,
And malice, others, even with publick hate

(The editorial punctuation introduced into the second of these lines conceals the fact that malice is here a verb governing others.)

For The Syre deemed the child of reprobation,
read Your Syre deemed the child of reprobation

For The Arcane plots, and intricate deseignes
read Your Arcane plots, and intricate deseignes

For Now the nefarious, hellish undermines
read Now your nefarious, hellish undermines

For Thinking you worthie of the vilest skernes
read Thinking you worthie of the vilest skernes
That suffred basenesse blow in honours homrs.

For Thinking you worthie of the vilest skernes
read Thinking you worthie of the vilest skernes
That suffred basenesse blow in honours homrs.

For This man is free from servile bondes,
read This man is free from servile bandes,

For And they begot a Cardinall
read And begot a Cardinall,

(The word he [not they] has evidently been omitted by the scribe before begot.)

For Her ribbs were weake and shee did reele,
read Her ribbs were weake and shee did reele
To some are set to mend her keele,

For Her ribbs were weake and shee did reele
read Her ribbs were weake and shee did reele
To some are set to mend her keele

(The editorial comma at the end of the first of these lines obscures the sense.)

For Now as some saie, she is not yet.
read Nor as some saie, she is nott yet.

Errata in “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript . . .” 163
Although shee be a Carvell well-built,

Beleev't, whoe list; moste hold it but a Jigg.

There was an ould ladd rode in an ould padd

For a place that I dare not mention.

There was a Madam did study to frame a

Above twice in a night he could her woe right,

This dame was inspected butt, found interjected

A mayd of more perfection.

Holde the midwives door handle while the knight houlds the Kandle

This dame was inspected butt fraud interjected

Whome the Midwives doe handle while the Knight houlds the kandle

And talk of erection, and of ejection,

And say that theise plotts were faudes.

Sir Hadasperson, Knight of the Sonne.

Sir Judas person Knight of the sonne

And stole a marryage all a lone.

And was limbed, nated to the twist,

Putts down their hoers in a seller.

Why? you would none i (?) yett soe hee rights her

The Frith coyne in bagges runnes sweatinge

The Irish Coyne in bagges runnes sweatinge

All to this wench is ment.

Injoyes her now from hedd to knee.

And when thou are amidst her crany,
For From Katterin's dock there launcht a pinke,

read From Katterin's.docke there Launcht a prety Pinke

For And in exchange, give him some oreworne Lad.

read & in exchange give him some oreworne bad

For And moved just vengance al the seaes about.

read And vowed just vengance al the seaes About

For Nay, though her owners safely oft should winne her,

read Nay though her owners safely off should winne her

For Pulchra mea (nec enim non dulcis) flamma medulla

Heu nescis mens es quantum Amaryllis amor

read Pulchra meæ (nec enim non dulcis) flamma medullæ

Heu nescis meus es quantum Amaryllis amor

For Non ego mirarer Stygiae si forsitan aulæ

Romuleus possit clamiger esse Petrus.

Innumeris etenim ditamus manibus umbras
et referat stigias ingreditur que fores
Sed miror qui com sperati (?) quis sum distet utriusque
possit et aetherei clamiger esse poli.
Sed reque iam miror: caeli nam claudere forsan
tei ta solet: Stygias sed referare fores.

read non ego mirarer Stygiae si forsitan aulæ

Romuleus possit claviger esse Petrus.

Innumeris etenim ditavit manibus umbras
et reserat Stygias ingrediturque fores
sed miror quod cum spatiis sic distet utrimque
possit et ætherei claviger esse poli.

sed neque iam miror: caeli nam claudere forsan
tecta solet: stygias sed reserare fores.

(This poem was so grievously mangled in the transcription that it has been necessary to give it here in its entirety.)

For flumen apud superos nullam est:

read flumen apud superos nullum est:

For ast apud internos cum tot sint flumina

read ast apud infernos cum tot sint flumina

For Traxerat ambiguos religionis aper.

read Traxerat ambiguus religionis apex.

For Ille reformatae fidei pro partibus instat,
Luete reformandam denegat esse fide

read Ille reformatae fidei pro partibus instat,
Luete reformandam denegat esse fidem

For Propositis causae rationis alter—utrimque

read Propositis causeæ rationibus alter—utrimque

Errata in "Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript . . ."
For Quod fuit in tantis fratrem caput alter utrumque
Quod fuit in votis perdit uterq fide.
read Quod fuit in fatis fratrem caput alter utrumque
Quod fuit in votis perdit uterque fidem.

For Captivi gemeni
read Captivi gemini

For Et tamen alteruter se suposse dobet
read Et tamen alteruter se superasse dolet?

For The reasons oft the cause apart propounded;
read The reasons of the cause apart propounded,

For nunc dominatur aquis.
read nunc dominatur aquis.

For et moderatus equos
read et moderatur equos

For Et nunc displicat a-iquam
read Et nunc displiciat cuiquam

For superis com plauisse videt?
read superis cum plauisse videt?

For Farewell thou thing time-past so knowne, so deare
To me, as blood to life,
read Farwell the thinge time past so knowne, so deare
to mee, as blood to the life,

For Sweet speech, smooth touch,
read sweet speech, sweet touch.

For Throwing about his wild, and pearcing fires.
read throwing abroad his wild and pearcing fires.

For and thou Thespian springe
read of whose, sweete Swans must drinke
and the Thespian springe
of whose sweet, Swans must drinke

For Thy glowing fires,
read thy glaring fires,

For which thus much shewe thee,
read which thus must shewe thee

For And love thee, but not tast thee,
read and love thee, yet not tast thee,

For AEternall lamp of love, whose radiant fame,
read eternall lampe of love, whose radiant flame

For Where has thou been
read Where hast thou bene

For Purge hence the guilt, and kill this quarrelling.
read purge hence the guilt, and kill the quarrelling.
Too temperate in imbracing?
too temperate in imbracings?
that brave Tyrinthian swayne
that vast Tyrinthian swayne
heate and lust commends
Thee and thy beauties; kisse we'le be friends
heate of lust commends
thee and thy beauties; kisse and weele be freinds
As Queenes, meet Queenes;
as Queenes see Queenes,
does not remove
Thy fiers from me,
do not remove
thy fiers from mee,
Whenas we dye in earnest,
WHERAS wee dye in earnest,
Bid understanding blinde you?
Did understanding blinde you?
T'imagine ours, all dimme as yours,
T'imagine ours, as dimme as yours,
for his person.
for hir person
Shee in myne armes as fruitful fields,
Rich plenties doe encrease.
Unto my late vext spirit yields,
Unutterd ioye and peace.
Shee in myne armes, as fruitfull feilds
Rich plenties doe encrease,
Unto my late vext spirit yeilds
Unuttered ioye and peace.
(A prime example of how editorial tampering with the punctuation has obscured both sense and rhythm.)
As Phoebus fervent beames doe search
As Phoebus fervent beames doe scorcht
Like one that meant to have a better guift;
Like one that meant to save a better guift
Of horses, hanging,
Of horses, hangings,
your Commons Protestation,
the Commons Protestation
Cause an aunuck get an heire,
cause an eunuch get an heire

Errata in "Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript . . ."
For Just like John D'Ore in the Songe,
read Just like John D'ory in the Songe,

For What shee did weare
read Which shee did weare

For And for old cloaths, the frippery;
read And for old cloaths and frippery,

(The substitution of the for and in the manuscript is in a later hand and was evidently made on the mistaken assumption that this line parallels the preceding one in its construction.)

For As great and Wise as Luwis and hee
read As great and wise as Luin's and hee,

For Great Henry's right heire:
read Great Henery's right heire:

(The pronunciation indicated by the manuscript spelling Henery's is obviously required by the metre here.)

For And makes both lock and keyes.
read And makes both locks and keyes.

For With his de Luwis Mate
read With his de Luins Mate

For So to degenerate.
read So to degenerate.

For Was dead, was Borne, Begott, Baptized, nay more.
read Was Dead, was Borne, Begott, Baptiz'd, nay more

Was in hir Life not Honest, not a Whore.

page 129 For See how each pretty starre stands gazing.
read See how each petty starre stands gazing
And would faire provoke

& would faine provoke

page 131 For Love queen's so disaffected,
read Love's Queene's so disaffected

For Shall scourge the Arse,
read shall scourge the Arse
For Bacchus quaftes,  
read Bacchus quaffes

For And hurt them sore,  
read & hurt him sore

(him was originally miswritten them but immediately altered.)

For Saturne conioines with Jupiter.  
read Saturne conjoines with Jupiter.

For From sinkes that poyson can the braine.  
read From smels that poyson can the braine  
Heaven still preserve him  
Heaven still preserve him

(The editorial punctuation introduced after braine destroys an  
enjambment which is vital for the sense.)

For His excellencie which way it list,  
read His excellence which way it list

(The marginal note smelling was added in Herrick's hand  
against the line And then no doubt his roiall nose but has been  
omitted from the transcript.)

For Since Arthur on his table stooode,  
read Since Arthur or his table stooode

For Some say t'was love that drove him out,  
read Some say t'was Love that drewe him out

For (As they are Rockye knaves to prye)  
read (As they are Pockye knaves to prye)

For Without the French from there?  
read Without the French from thence?

For Two Issues more; his royall Father,  
Counsels hath kept in Store.  
For whose rich masters every day,  
read Two Issues more his royall Father  
Conceal'd hath kept in store  
for whose rich Matters every day

For The kynge, that ventures thus his State;  
read The Kynge that ventured thus his State

For And left the widdow'd king alone,  
With lacke and greife upp blowne.  
read And left the widdow'd Kynge alone  
With Sacke & Greife upp blowne

(The misreading lacke for Sacke sadly obscures the witty allusion  
to Falstaff, that mighty consumer of Sack, who ironically declared  
of his great bulk "a plague of sighing and grief, it blows a man  
up like a bladder" [i Henry IV, ii. 4].)

Errata in “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript . . .” 169
For His secrette
read His secretts

For lene theyne ears!
read Lend thyne Eare,

For When each distressed vassall might be bolde,
Into thyne open hande to put this griefe,
And thence receve lykely a fayre relief.
read When each distressed Vassall might bee bolde
Into Thyne open hands to put His Greife,
And thence receive tymely a fayre releife.

For Are heard as soone as Suitors of great Kings.
read are hard as soone, as Suitours of great Kinges;

To—them to the Judge of Judges thraone, oh helpe Them (Mighty Soveraigne) with thine owne;
read To mounte Them to the Judge of Judges thraone
oh helpe Them (Mighty Soveraigne) with thine owne;

For Can eyther change or Alter the opinion.
Of the great Chancellour: there O lay that downe,
read Can eyther change or Alter the Opinion
Of that great Chancellor: Ther oh lay them downe

For Heaven knows, wee doe not knowe any which is worse
read Heaven knowes, wee doe not knowe; nay which is worst,

For his ill-hued prose,
read his ill-tun’d Prose,

For Offer their gift
read Offer their gyfts

For Then give it to his Hand
read Then give it to his Hands

For Their summer suite,
read Their Summer suits,

For Egyptian plagues
read Aegypts Ten Plagues

For Thy messengers of wrath, thy wills (?) powre,
read Thy Messengers of wrath Thy violls powre

For or lett them bee tyed
read oh lett Them bee tyed

For Was not that done, that Lambe of innocence,
read Was not that Dove, that Lambe of Innocence,

For fell the darte
read fell the Darts

For "Who shall not bee divorc’d
read Wee shall not bee divorc’d

170

P. J. CROFT
For pale and thyn-faced Death.
read pale & thyn-fac'd Dearth.

For Synce Noah's flood, ne'er lapp't our Brittish-Shore:
read Synce Noah's flood, ne're topp't our Brittish-Shore.

For Whom clearest eyes
read When clearest Eyes

For Turned their eyes rivers with streames of blood:
read All that were Vertuous, all that were left good,
Turn'd their Eyes rivers into streames of blood:
(The first line of this couplet is entirely omitted from the transcription.)

For This touch'd the very soule that did not see.
read This touch'd the very soule that did not soe.

For To God remembered; that, of that alone
read & were noe more
To bee remembred; that, oh that alone

For That thou in mercie lykned
read that thou in Mercye lyk'd

For oh is there yet full teame
read oh is ther yet full Tenne?

For pluck thy kyndled Ire
read slacke thy kyndled Ire,

For And send the greater,
read And save the Greater,

For And then enobled by thy grace and favour
read And Then (enabled by Thy Grace & favour)

For Lowsey projections,
read Lowsey Projectours,

For One prickes A mannor,
read One drinks A Mannour,

For That ate the harvest
read That eate the hearbes

For And wee have Skipp-jackes, caverliers (I dare say),
read And we have Skipp-Jackes Courtiers (I dare say)

For The fruits of all our labour, all our wheat.
read The fruiites of all our Labour, all our Sweate.

For Kingwood and his Mate
read Ringwood & his Mate

For More daringe ever,
read More daringe once,

Errata in "Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript . . ." 171
Was that all Europe envyed; wee, ever wee
Are Slaves to those were kept in Slaverye.

You must redeem the time that's lost, I knowe,
you must redeeme the Tyme that's loste, & knowe,

You must redeem the time that's lost, I knowe,
you must redeeme the Tyme that's loste, & knowe,

You must redeem the time that's lost, I knowe,
you must redeeme the Tyme that's loste, & knowe,

You must redeem the time that's lost, I knowe,
you must redeeme the Tyme that's loste, & knowe,
God send our Charles saffe home againe
And lett hir worship tarry.
(The hir worship refers to the Infanta, whom the poet wishes to remain in Spain when Prince Charles returns to England.)

page 177 For falit indignatio versum.
read facit indignatio versum.
page 177 For As vow his wils
read As vow his wits
page 177 For Of ras'd estates
read Of rais'd estates
page 179 For they owe all his cloth and meate.
read they are all his cloth and meate.
page 179 For but here suppose
read Hee'se yeeld to owne such flatterers as those.
page 179 For but ne're suppose
read Hee'se yeeld to owne such flatteries as those.
page 179 For Such an extension
read Such an extortion
page 181 For the dog-star ragines
read the dog-star raignes
page 181 For Your eggs (which might be adle too)
read Your eggs (which must bee adle too)
page 181 For Ther tis so seething that in Spaine,
read Then tis so seething hot in Spaine,
page 183 For The liver and gizard
read The liver and the gizard
page 183 For Not that our Prince
read Nor that our Prince
page 185 For the Princes hand.
read the Princesse hand.