CONTENTS: THE TEXAS QUARTERLY / Winter 1973 Vol. XVI, No. 4

Hawthorne's Smile

Vern Wagner 6

Other Choices

Ruth Berces 32

Poems

Henry Hubert Hutto 39

Travelers in a Foreign Land

Margaret Bolsterli 41

Gilbert and Sullivan Through a Glass Brightly

N. W. Henshaw 48

A True Account of the Miraculous Last Days of San Grueso Del Cruce

John Degenais 66

Poems

Frederick Morgan 77

Relief

Gifford Loda 81

The Dog That Only Barked at Anglos

Helene Phipps 87

Aldington's Enquiry Concerning T. E. Lawrence

Phillip Knightley 98

Glencoe's Way

William Sayres 106

Poems

Adele Watson Wirtz 115

The Faint Black Line

Roger Skillings 117

Supplement to Vol. XVI, No. 4

Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript with the Hand of Robert Herrick

Norman K. Farmer 121
Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript with the Hand of Robert Herrick

Edited, with Introduction and Facing Transcriptions

by

NORMAN K. FARMER, JR.

© NORMAN K. FARMER, JR.
Introduction

Among the poems published here in facsimile are twelve pages containing the only known autograph poetry in the hand of Robert Herrick (1591–1674). Owing to the extreme rarity of such autographs for poets of the early seventeenth century, this manuscript naturally caused ripples of excitement when it was placed on auction in London at Sotheby & Co. on June 29, 1965. Subsequently purchased by The University of Texas at Austin, it is now among the rare books and manuscripts in the Humanities Research Center.

So far as can be determined, the manuscript had been sold only once before, when the famed collector, Sir Thomas Phillips, purchased the library of the Rev. Stephen Isaacson at Puttick and Simpson’s in May, 1849 (lot #158). At that time it was identified as the commonplace book of George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury (1562–1633). When it most recently sold, it was designated “Robert Herrick’s Commonplace Book.” In the present facsimile, however, the poetry found in that book has been excerpted from the sizeable quantity of prose, and it appears under the title, Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript with the Hand of Robert Herrick. The reason for this designation is simple. There is, as yet, no conclusive evidence as to who actually “owned” the book or who determined what materials would be entered in it. And while it seems certain that Robert Herrick did indeed have a substantial role in the compilation of the book, the motivations for his entries and numerous corrections throughout, and the motivations for all the entries by other hands (both prose and poetry) remain a puzzle. It will doubtless be some time before the puzzle is solved—if ever. And one of the reasons for this facsimile is to encourage investigation and speculation to that end.

Aside from these questions, though, the facsimile will surely be of interest to specialist and nonspecialist alike. For the latter, it will offer an excellent example of what a seventeenth century manuscript looks like. The variety of hands represented in these pages is uncommonly wide, and some of the hands are exceptionally fine. Moreover, the hand identified by Mr. Peter Croft of Sotheby & Co. as that of Robert Herrick himself is bold, distinctive, and uncompromising, and it lifts (albeit temporarily) the veil of obscurity from the poet’s personality. In addition, the facsimile will allow readers a better understanding of the methods whereby poetry was recorded and transmitted in a society where print had not yet triumphed over the hand-written word. And significantly, some of the poems that
appear here (notably those beginning on facsimile pages 63, 75, 93, 113, and 114) are known to exist in no other manuscript or printed source. They thus appear here for the first time in a public setting.

Because of the importance of the manuscript it has seemed desirable to provide a facing transcript for each page of facsimile. The decision to do so rests on the premise that the specialist as well as the nonspecialist will appreciate some guide to the handwriting in the text. This transcription, however, is not a diplomatic text. It 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 that it might otherwise be. No alterations, though, have been made in the diction or syntax of the original.

THE CONTENTS OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Since the Sotheby Sale Catalogue for June 29, 1965, contains a page-by-page description of the entire manuscript, the following remarks are intended simply to give the reader a general sense of the book’s contents and a working familiarity with the topicalities and events to which allusion is made in the poems.

Generally speaking, the principal contents of the manuscript relate to the following occurrences during the period from 1612 to 1623: (1) efforts to colonize the New World, especially Virginia; (2) the death of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury on May 24, 1612; (3) the divorce of the third Earl of Essex and Lady Frances Howard in 1613, the subsequent remarriage of Lady Frances to Robert Carr (Viscount Rochester and later Earl of Somerset), and the trials in 1615 of all those (including Lord and Lady Somerset) implicated in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury; and (4) the efforts of George Villiers (later Duke of Buckingham) to secure a match between Prince Charles and the Infanta of Spain in 1623.

Prose tracts of a political (or even propagandistic) nature, copies of personal and official letters, records of state trials, copies of official pronouncements and proclamations—all these combine with epigrams, epitaphs, bitter and denunciatory satires, lyric poems and verse epistles to make this a volume of extraordinary literary variety. Nonetheless, there is a keen sense of topicality throughout the manuscript, with only a few exceptions that will be noted below. Taken as a whole, the book would appear to be something of a barometer indicating the pressures of opinion and individual resentment directed toward prominent persons and institutions at a time when England seemed to be experiencing particularly sordid scandals of one kind or another. Three long (and relatively undistinguished) poems toward the end of the volume bear this out: “To the Blessed St. Elizabeth” (p. 330), “To the Most High and Mighty Jehovah” (p. 332), and “A Gracious Answer from the Blessed St. Eliza” (p. 338). For these pieces poignantly recall the Golden Age of Queen Elizabeth I, under whose governance justice took precedence over royal favorites, such as Somerset and Buckingham, and regal dignity gave moral as well as political leadership to the realm.

In this connection, the manuscript is unusual in yet another respect. Where most manuscripts of the period contain quite random samples of anonymous poems, or groups of poems in various genres by such well-known poets as Donne, Jonson, Randolph, or Carew, this manuscript is rather tightly organized about the topicalities mentioned above and about one particular poetic genre: satire. Exceptions to this will be discussed presently. But the impression persists, when one reads this book in its
entirety, that its contents were determined more by some rational, preconceived plan than by any compulsion to copy at random. For in addition to its rather strict adherence to topicalities and its equally strict devotion to the genre of poetic satire, the items appear generally in chronological order. Once again there are exceptions; there are even indications that many items were entered some years after particular events had occurred. But this does not obscure the point that someone, for reasons that remain unknown, wanted a record that contained notices of events, summaries of proceedings, and poetry related to both events and proceedings. What is more, that person knew in considerable detail the precise nature of events (some of them rather obscure) even to the pseudonyms of participants. Since such details appear in very few surviving private documents and are contained commonly in public and official records, the conclusion must be drawn that this person had access to the latter sort of records.

The earliest datable topicality is to be found in the very first poem (p. 63 of the manuscript) on the beheading of Mary Queen of Scots at Fotheringhay in 1587. The latest datable topicality is to be found in the poems at the end of the manuscript on the proposed Spanish match and the journey of Buckingham and the Prince of Wales to Spain in 1623.

**CAPTAIN NEWPORT’S EXPEDITION TO VIRGINIA**

The second poem in the book (p. 63), and the first poem of considerable length, was prompted by Captain Christopher Newport’s expedition to Virginia in 1609. In May of that year a fleet of nine ships with five hundred colonists under the leadership of Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Summers set out for John Smith’s Virginia colony. Prior to reaching the New World, however, the fleet encountered a terrific storm, and the Sea-Adventureship was driven down to the coast of Bermuda where it ran ashore. The other ships reached the mainland, but it was not until a year later that Gates and Summers finally reached their destination. The adventures of these men and the crew of their ship were immediately published in England, where this episode and the narrative growing from it gave William Shakespeare the idea for *The Tempest*. In this connection, the satire on the Virginia voyages is distantly related to the poem on p. 113 of the manuscript, where the names of four notable Shakespearean actors are mentioned: John Hemmings and Henry Condrey [Condell]—who were jointly responsible for the publication of the First Folio in 1623—as well as Nathan Field and Richard Burbage. More directly related to this satire is the copy of a letter (pp. 283–89 in the ms)—possibly by George Sandys—that gives a detailed account of the massacre by Indians at the Virginia Colony on March 22, 1622. A few passages from this letter are quoted in Captain John Smith’s *Generall Historie of Virginia*, but no other copy as complete as this one is known to exist.

**SATIRES ON ROBERT CECIL, EARL OF SALISBURY AND PRINCIPAL SECRETARY**

The first truly personal satires in the manuscript are the four poems on Robert Cecil that appear on pp. 73–78. Though there are known texts of the first three poems, there is no other known text—either manuscript or printed—for the fourth. Each of these poems is quite literally a celebration of the Secretary’s death in 1612, but the attitude conveyed by these poems is hardly surprising when one considers the profound enmity and distrust that Cecil inspired among large numbers of his countrymen. What seems noteworthy here, though, is that the circumstances surrounding Cecil’s death are seen by the satirist (or satirists) to confirm their worst suspicions about the man.

For at least a year it had been rumored that Cecil was seriously ill, and the most widespread rumors of all were that he was fatally afflicted with venereal disease. After months of worsening illness he set out at last for Bath in April, 1612, hoping that the curative waters would bring him a measure of relief. And indeed, after about a week he declared that he was somewhat mended. Suddenly, though, his illness took a turn for the worst. And fearing that the end was quite near, Cecil resolved to leave for home in spite of his condition; he wanted to die, he is reported to have said, in his own bed. Accordingly, the party left Bath on May 21. But by the time they had reached Marlborough, Cecil was unable to travel further. He died in the parsonage house at Marlborough on May 24.

Present at his death, as well as during the preceding weeks at Bath, was Cecil’s personal Chaplain, the Rev. John Bowles. And it is from Bowles that details of Cecil’s final illness are to be found. The following, for example, was written on the day of Cecil’s death:

> Heare I remembered my Lord, “that God had shewed him great mercy.” First in that God could have taken him awaye in the Act of any Symne, as he did King Herod. My Lord gave instance of another, & apprehended with great comfort, that God had spared him & reserved him “to repentance.” After Dynner, Doctor Poe did rise, & I came unto him. My Lord’s Head laye upon two pillows uppon Master Townsend’s lapp. Raphe Jackson was mending the Swinge which supported him.” “Soe,” saith he, “lifft me upp but this once.” Then he called to Doctor Poe, for his Hand which hanginge, he griped some what hard, & his eyes began
to settle. When he cried, "O Lord—" & so sinked down without Groane, of Sighe, or Struggling. At the same Instant I joyned in Prayer with him, "That would God receive his Soule & Spirit." Which short words being so disdainfully spoken by me, he was cleane gone, & noe breath nor motion in him. [Francis Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa* (London, 1732) I, lib. VI. p. 15]

Ostensibly, Bowles sought merely to give an historical account of the passing of a great man, but one remains suspicious that he sought to preserve for posterity his own role at that significant moment. Naively, he included in his account just the sort of detail that quickly became commonplace in the satiric rejoicing over the Principal Secretary’s death. For example, Bowles’s rather tactless remark that “God could have taken him away in the Act of any Synne, as he did King Herod” was doubtless taken by many as a confirmation of their suspicion that Cecil did indeed die of the “Herodian” disease. Moreover, the presence of a certain Doctor Poe added fuel to these speculations on the cause of Cecil’s death.

On the basis of these speculations, Sir Anthony Weldon, *The Court and Character of King James* (London, 1650), was to write some years later that neither did

his Friends, wit, or wealth, raise him so much [as some believe] as the ill offices done by him to this Nation, in discovering the nature of the people, and showing the King his way, how to enhance his Prerogative so above the Laws, that he might enslave the Nation, which though it took well then, yet it hath been of sad and dangerous consequence in after times. For first, Hee caused a whole cart-load of Parliament Presidents, that spake the Subjects liberty, too be burnt: Next raising two hundred thousandpound for making two hundred Baronets, telling the King he should find his English Subjects like Asses, on whom he might lay any burthen, and should need neither bit nor bridle, but their Asses ears ... And by these courses he raised himself, friends, and family, to Offices, Honours, and great Possessions; Yet as punishment, he lived long enough to have lost all, had not Death prevented him between the Bath and London: For the Duke of Bullion being here, about the overture of that unfortunate Match betweene the Palgrave, and the Lady Elizabeth, had so done his errand, and discovered his juggling; It is most certaine, hee had beene stript of all at his returne, which hee well understanding from his Friends at Court, did expedite his End; but he dyed opportunely to save his honour, and his estate for his posterity, though to leave a mark of ignomine on himself by that Herodian disease, that for all his great Honours, and Possessions, and Houses, Hee found no place but the top of a Molehill, near Marlborough to end his miserable life.

Clearly, it is only a short step from the stern, unyielding, and moralistic tone of Weldon’s account to the satires themselves. And this observation should serve as a reminder that whoever caused the present manuscript to be compiled seems to have been as interested in the moral judgments implicit in such satires as in satire for its own sake. This is to say that regardless of the bawdy nature of many of the satires, the compiler or overseer could as easily have been a conservative Puritan as a loose-living courtier, and, indeed, it often seems more likely that it was the former.

It is important, however, to recognize that the verses are practically contemporaneous with the event, while Weldon was writing many years after the fact. That the satires are not dependent upon later published accounts is confirmed by Francis Osborne, *Traditional Memoreyes of the Raigne of King James* (London, 1658), who cites two of them—"Here lyes buried womes meate" and "Here lies Hobinall our sheepearde whileare"—and adds that they were a direct consequence of Cecil’s “sharpe proceedings against the late Earl of Essex, and his enclosures of Hatfield-Chase" after he had to his so great advantage exchanged it for his Manor at Theobals. “These,” he declares, “caused the black cloud of detraction” to fall upon him “to which the misfortunes accompanying him from his birth (i.e. his physical deformity) did not a little add.” But even though Osborne is more sympathetic toward Cecil than was Weldon, it is nonetheless his judgment that no mere prejudice caused people to see the similarity between Cecil’s death and Herod’s, nor was it mere chance that caused talk about

the place it attacked him on, viz. Salisbury plaine in his Coach, not Po his Phisitian then present (a mere Emperick, and celeb rated for no skill but in the cure of the &c.) small inducements to the reports which followed. Yet when these were spent, and he was as it were retired into the Sanctuary that doth hide reproach rather than increase it, Inexorable Fate, by the assistance perhaps of some Imposthume (which his maligners Translated into an efffect of God’s vengeance, and did dedicate it to his farther Infamy) brake the lead he was wrapped in, with so much noise and stench as affrighted the by-standers: Therefore, no wonder
he met with no fairer Ecomiums, of which I shall relate these, not savouring so much of scurrility, though perhaps lease of wit then many then current. (pp. 86-87)

THE ESSEX DIVORCE, THE SOMERSET MARRIAGE, AND THE MURDER OF SIR THOMAS OVERBURY

The second group of topical satires is devoted to events that followed the death of Robert Cecil, namely, the Essex divorce, the re-marriage of Lady Frances to Robert Carr, and the subsequent discovery that the bride had actually caused the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury in the Tower of London. Since the names of those involved in this succession of satirized scandals are included in the poems reproduced here, it will once again be helpful to provide the reader with a brief recapitulation.

The story begins with Frances Howard’s growing dissatisfaction with her marriage to Robert Devereux third Earl of Essex and the son of the second Earl who was beheaded for treason in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The marriage had taken place amidst great rejoicings in 1606 when the bride was but thirteen and the groom fourteen. King James had been particularly pleased with the match because it seemed to signal an end to the feud between the families of Howard and Devereux that had flared dangerously when the Windsors helped Robert Cecil to bring the young Earl’s father to the scaffold in 1601. By 1609, however, the Countess was letting it be known that her marriage had never been consummated; and by 1613 it was common gossip that her desire for a divorce was a consequence of her infatuation with Robert Carr.

At this time Carr had already advanced up the ladder of courtly preferment with uncommon rapidity. On King’s Day, 1607, when he was merely a page in the retinue of Lord Hay, Carr was thrown from his horse; and as he lay on the ground before King James, writhing with a broken leg, the King had instantly been taken by his good looks and his helplessness. While Carr’s leg mended, James came frequently to his chamber to read to him and to bring him gifts; in fact, James doted upon him. By the closing days of 1607 Carr was appointed Gentleman of the Bedchamber and was knighted. In 1609 he received from the King the estate of Sherborne in Dorset that had belonged to the hapless Sir Walter Ralegh who was then in the Tower. In 1611 he was elevated to the peerage with the title, Viscount Rochester; and in April of that same year he became a Knight of the Garter. By 1613 he had become Lord Treasurer of Scotland—and the object of Lady Frances’ ardent affections.

Clearly, the intensely political Howards were as pleased at this turn of affairs as their forebears had been many years before when Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, encouraged his nieces, Ann Boleyn and Catherine Howard, to capture the affections of King Henry VIII. For if they could achieve a permanent alliance through marriage with the King’s favorite, the Howards could regain the political influence they had lost upon the death of Robert Cecil.

In May, 1613, the King’s own interest in the happiness of his favorite having coincided perfectly with the designs of the Howards, a preliminary hearing was conducted at Whitehall to determine if there were indeed grounds for a divorce. Serving on that commission were George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury; John King, Bishop of London; Launcelot Andrews, Bishop of Ely; and John Neile, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. They served along with Sir Thomas Parry, Sir Julius Caesar, Sir Daniel Dun, Sir John Bennet, and Doctors Francis James and Thomas Edwards. After weeks of cross-examination in which practically every detail of the Earl’s sexual capabilities was explored, the Archbishop called a halt to the proceedings on grounds that although Essex had never consummated this marriage he was, nonetheless, capable of consummation. The Archbishop counseled the unhappy couple to seek remedy in prayer and fasting, knowing all the while that he was obstructing political as well as marital proceedings.

It is of no small interest that a report of the pre-divorce examinations appears along with the satires in the manuscript. Moreover, prominence is given to the Archbishop’s role in the episode. In addition, the handwritten entry is practically to a word the same as the printed records which appeared many years later in A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings, 4 vols. (London, 1709). One must conclude that whoever caused these reports to be entered in the manuscript had direct access to the official documents as well as a lively interest in recording their contents.

When James received word of the Archbishop’s obstructive posture, he was predictably furious. Immediately, he appointed two supernumerary Commissioners—Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, and Buckridge, Bishop of Rochester (whose names are mentioned in the poems)—whom he could count on to help in over-riding the Archbishop’s opposition. And once this was done, the way seemed clear for Frances Howard to have her wishes. Nevertheless, one major obstacle remained, and it was upon this obstacle that the plans of the Howards foundered once again.

Robert Carr’s close friend, Sir Thomas Overbury, had never been persuaded that Lady Frances was trustworthy, and he freely conveyed this opinion on many occasions to his friend and mentor when it became evident that Carr was interested in something more than a casual affair. What Overbury did not realize, however, was that even the mildest opposi-
tion to the marriage would be interpreted by the Howards as a matter of grave concern that could not possibly be overlooked. And indeed, they took immediate steps to remove him from the scene. On April 21, 1613, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and the Earl of Pembroke—who were not, incidentally, particular friends of Carr—officially informed Overbury that the King wished to send him on an embassy abroad; he would go either to the Low Countries or to France. Overbury, however, refused, knowing instinctively that absence from his mentor, Carr, could spell a serious loss of influence and possible royal favor. But when his refusal was reported to James, it was interpreted as a direct insult, and Overbury was remanded to the Tower where he lay during the long proceedings described above. By September, 1613, he was dead by reason of “natural causes.”

Meanwhile, Carr and Lady Frances—now Viscount and Countess Rochester—enjoyed one of the most elaborate of Jacobean weddings. And by July, 1614, Somerset had become Lord Chamberlain. So far, the plan of the Howards had worked. For access to the King and all the power that such access implied was theirs through the Earl. But in the summer of 1615 this bubble of political success was suddenly broken by the revelation that Sir Thomas Overbury had been poisoned to death while imprisoned in the Tower of London. In this connection, it should be noted that at the top of p. 89 in the following manuscript someone has written “Thee ensuign were sithence the discoverie of their poysoneing.” The poems on pp. 89–101 accordingly, derive directly from the scandal.

By October, 1615, the conspiracy had been totally exposed, and Lady Somerset had been thoroughly implicated. At her direction, tarts laden with arsenic had been smuggled into the Tower for Overbury; and when these had failed to kill him (they only made him desperately ill), a clyster (or enema) poisoned with mercury was administered and the effects were immediately fatal. Lady Frances stood trial before her husband, and the sentence of death was passed upon both. But after they had been living in the Tower for a long while—until 1622 as a matter of fact—they were eventually released and pardoned, and they lived thereafter quite obscurely in Oxfordshire.

BUCKINGHAM AND THE JOURNEY TO SPAIN WITH PRINCE CHARLES

The fourth group of topical poems in the manuscript pertains directly to a policy initiated by the favorite who replaced Robert Carr when the latter fell into decline in 1615: George Villers. Even before Somerset had reached the peak of his favor, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the religious and political conservatives who surrounded him in opposition to Somerset—Pembroke, Ellesmere, Southampton, and Winwood—adroitly maneuvered Villers (an extraordinarily good-looking young man of twenty-two) into a favorable vantage point at court. Knowing James to be highly susceptible to such a man as Villers (a fact that is the subject of the poems on pp. 319 and 325 of the manuscript), they sought this means of countering the influence, through Carr, of the Howards, whom they regarded as pro-Catholic and pro-Spanish. In this connection, it should be noted that all of the satires in the manuscript reflect this conservative point of view. It is not difficult, then, to imagine the profound disappointment of George Abbot and his political friends when the new favorite proceeded to do the very thing the conservatives most feared and opposed: to make an alliance with Catholic Spain.

On February 18, 1623, Villers (now Marquess of Buckingham since 1617), secretly embarked for Spain with Prince Charles in an effort to secure an alliance with Spain through marriage between the Prince and the Infanta. So intent were they upon the absolute secrecy of their departure that they slipped out of London for Gravesend using the names of Jack and Tom Smith and wearing false beards. Long before they reached Dover, however, the ineptitude of their disguises was such that by morning on the 19th of February half of London knew that “Tom” was the Marquess of Buckingham, Lord Admiral of England, and that “Jack” was in fact the Prince of Wales.

In Spain, however, things did not go as Buckingham had planned. The Infanta was anything but enthusiastic over marriage to Prince Charles, and there were serious difficulties over concessions in religion that the English would have to make. Though the visit became more and more public to the point where the visitors moved to lodgings in the Spanish royal apartments and appeared openly with King Phillip at the Spanish court, it became increasingly evident that there would be no marriage and no alliance. On August 30, after a six month’s absence from England, Charles and Buckingham returned home and the proposed match was called off. A service of national thanksgiving was then held in St. Paul’s Cathedral, and the words of the anthem from Psalm 114 fully reflected the national concern that had emerged over the Spanish match: “When Israel came out of Egypt; and the house of Jacob from among the strange people.”

POEMS BY (AND ABOUT) RICHARD CORBETT, BISHOP OF OXFORD AND NORWICH

Nine poems in the manuscript are either ascribed properly to other poets than Robert Herrick or are suspected to have been written by others. One of the satires on Robert Cecil, “Here lies Hobinall,” has often been ascribed
to Raleigh as has the poem that appears on p. 113, "What is our life, a Play of Passion." Sir Henry Wotton is known to have composed "How happie is he borne or taught" (p. 78) in 1612. Robert Herrick, of course, wrote "The Farwell to Sacke" and "The Welcome Againe" on pp. 106–109; and Richard Corbett wrote (or is believed to have written) "The starre that rose in Virgo's traine" (p. 103), "When I can pay my parents or my King" (p. 251), "I came from England into France" (p. 277), and "I've read of Islands floating and remov'd" (p. 348). Two additional poems in the manuscript, "A reverend deane" (p. 291) and "False on his deanery false, nay more he lay" (p. 346) are anonymous satires on Bishop Corbett.

The presence in the manuscript of the poems by and about Corbett makes it necessary to recall that in the political and religious controversies that inspired so much allusion here, Corbett belonged among the followers of Laud and the Armenians. He was thus on the side of Archbishop Abbot's opposition and quickly made a reputation for himself among the conservative Protestants and Parliamentarians as a pliable and amiable person whose allegiances were apt to be determined by his sense of his own well-being and advancement. The poem on p. 291, for example, gleefully satirized the fiasco when Corbett preached before the King at Woodstock in 1621. Just prior to the service, James had presented Corbett with a ring dangling from a ribbon. And during his sermon, Corbett became so preoccupied with the ring that he literally forgot his sermon and had to leave the pulpit to the derision of the university community at Oxford. The subsequent ridicule appeared in numerous satiric poems. When his patron, Buckingham, and Prince Charles were in Spain, however, Corbett opened himself still further to ridicule by sending after them the most obsequious and hyperbolic letters imaginable. The satire on p. 346 is a direct reflection of his blind adulation of the Earl.

EXCEPTIONS TO TOPICALITY: THE TWO POEMS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY HERRICK

The consistent political orientation of the allusions in this manuscript makes all the more curious the appearance of two poems known positively to have been written by Robert Herrick. It also makes curious the appearance on p. 253 of the two exercises in Herrick's hand on a theme suggested by John Donne's "Go and catch a falling star."

The first two poems were, of course, the most widely circulated compositions by Herrick during the early seventeenth century. "The farewell to Sacke" appears in some seven contemporary manuscripts and commonplace books, while "The welcome againe" appears in more than sixteen. But what is even more curious is the fact that the scribe who entered the poems omitted one line on p. 108 which was subsequently added by the poet. One can, of course, conclude that the book was Robert Herrick's all along. But there is a dangerous circularity in such an argument, for it tends to support a position arbitrarily taken rather than to encourage examination of the possible motives that might have caused the manuscript to be compiled.

Still another puzzle is why, in a book that has been alleged to have belonged to Robert Herrick, a scribe entering one of the poet's most well-known poems should dutifully sign the piece "R. Herrick"? Could it be that these poems once had a topical significance like virtually all the other poems in the manuscript, a topical significance that has now been lost? Could it even be that Herrick's pastiche on Donne's famous song is itself topical in some long-forgotten way? These, and many other questions, remain to be answered, among them the question whether Robert Herrick was indeed the author of some—or all—of the anonymous poems that have not been traced elsewhere. Certainly, the association of these poems with Herrick, should the ascription of the dominant hand to the poet stand the test of time, is an argument to be considered. Nonetheless, it is difficult to believe that Herrick could have so completely avoided repeating in these manuscript poems the phrases and diction of his acknowledged work. The concordance to Herrick's poems, for example, shows no instance where some of the choicer phrases or even some of the terms from the anonymous poems appear in Hesperides. In addition, it must also be considered that the appearance of poems and even corrections in the hand of a known poet is no guarantee that he actually composed the pieces in question.

Aside from Herrick's poems on "Sack," however, the poems by Wotton and Raleigh mentioned above do not appear to be topical, nor does the pair of companion poems that appear on pp. 114–117, poems for which no other text has yet been traced.

THE HAND IDENTIFIED AS THAT OF ROBERT HERRICK

It is, nonetheless, the identification of Robert Herrick's hand in this manuscript that has given it such unusual prominence. In the previously mentioned Sotheby & Co. catalogue, Mr. Peter Croft has written: "this hitherto unrecorded volume contains the only known autograph poetry by Herrick, and the only manuscript of any of his verse which can be directly associated with the poet himself. The first fifty pages appear to have been originally a separate manuscript and contain nothing in Herrick's hand. The verse begins on p. 63 and the first poem in Herrick's hand is on p. 73: thereafter pages in his hand occur intermittently throughout the volume, the last being p. 343. Further, Herrick's is the only hand which occurs right
through the volume making corrections on many pages, and—among an interesting variety of scral hands—his is the one hand of outstanding individuality. The conclusion must be that the book belonged to Herrick, and was compiled under his supervision. It is the only manuscript poetic miscellany which can be shown to have belonged to a major poet of the period."

In order for the reader to make some comparison on his own, a facsimile is provided in this Introduction of an acknowledged Herrick holograph, a letter written by the poet to his uncle from Cambridge ca. 1615 and published here (page 4) with the permission of the County Archivist at Leicester. It should be pointed out, though, that even when absolute palaeographical determinations can be made, they are never reached on the basis of facsimiles alone. Nonetheless, it is possible to see similarities between the orthography of the letter and that of the manuscript, pp. 73, 74, 82, 102–103, 253, 319–21, 323, 328–29, and 343.

CONCLUSION

Whether or not this manuscript is finally determined to have belonged to Robert Herrick, it is without doubt an extraordinary document. Obviously compiled by someone vitally interested in current events, it is distinct from most other commonplace books of the period in having a consistent point of view conveyed through a wide variety of literary forms and popular genres. Moreover, it has the distinction of being organized so that documents and allusions to events follow a rough chronological order. The term “rough,” though, is most important. For the lapses from absolute chronology suggest strongly that a portion of the manuscript was compiled after events had taken place and not actually during their unfoldment.

King James’s proclamation concerning the proposed Spanish marriage in April, 1617 appears, for example, on p. 119. It is followed on pp. 123–36 by “The proceedings which happened touching the Divorce, betweene the Lady Frances Howard and Robert Earl of Essex” which occurred in May, 163. The reports of the Overbury murder trials in 1615 are entered on pp. 137–204; while back on p. 110 there appears a proclamation by Sultan Zolyman of Turkey, dated from Constantinople June 3, 1620.

Taken as a whole, this manuscript is a significant document and an important source of primary data for social historians, political historians, historians of literature, and literary critics. Furthermore, its association with Robert Herrick raises the possibility that new ascriptions can be made to the Herrick canon. Its importance, therefore, will undoubtedly increase as it is subjected to the scrutiny of those interested in the intricacies of the Jacobean era in England.

SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS