ABSTRACT

The importance of manuscript sources for certain types of poetry in the 1580s and 1590s has only slowly become apparent. The subject of this thesis is a group of manuscript poetic miscellanies from this period, which preserve an important collection of poems. Although most of these poems were never published, they circulated in manuscript among minor courtiers and students at the Universities and Inns of Court. Six of these miscellanies share a number of poems in common and have texts which are sometimes related; they provide the main focus of these studies. They are MSS Rawl.Poet.85 (in the Bodleian Library), Harl.7392 (in the British Museum), and certain sections of MSS Dd.5.75 (in the University Library, Cambridge), Z3.5.21 (in Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin), V.a.89 (in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington) and the Harington MS at Arundel Castle.

These six miscellanies (and others that impinge on them from time to time) have been considered from a number of points of view. The importance of manuscript circulation in the literature of the period is discussed, and problems of dealing with manuscript material are examined. The six miscellanies are described in some detail, the compilers being identified where possible and suggestions made about the dates when the poems were copied.

The miscellanies preserve a fairly coherent body of Elizabethan lyrics. These have been indexed by first line, attributed where possible

and the whereabouts of other texts noted. Some of these poems present complex problems of text, authorship and literary or social history. One of the most complicated textually is "The French Primero", preserved in four versions of varying length and numerous textual differences, which has been taken as a test case for discussing methods of editing a poem preserved only or mainly in manuscript texts. Another poem, "My mind to me a kingdom is", (perhaps by Sir Edward Dyer) has been examined as an illustration of the effects of popularity on the text of a poem.

The bulk of the poems which are ascribed in the miscellanies are the works of courtier poets who had no interest in publication. Eight of these writers are examined in some detail for the light the miscellanies throw on problems of text and canon. These manuscripts are the most important sources of texts and ascriptions of poems by Sir Edward Dyer and Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford. The canons of both these poets have been re-examined, and edited texts of their poems presented. Certain lyrics which appear in the miscellanies by the Queen, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Ralegh and Sir Arthur Gorges (all well edited in recent editions) are examined for the information they yield about how courtly lyrics circulated in manuscript. Poems from the miscellanies by Nicholas Breton (better known as a professional writer than a courtly lyrist) and Ferdinando Stanley, Earl of Derby (hitherto barely known as a poet) are presented and discussed.

Three of the miscellanies (MSS Cambridge Dd.5.75, Rawl Poet.85 and Harl.7392) preserve a number of poems written by their compilers and their friends or charges, and these imitate current poetic fashions of the court, and provide interesting evidence of poems in English being written by young Elizabethans at various stages of their education. These little-known poems have been transcribed and discussed, and the social backgrounds of their authors examined.

In brief, the object of these studies has been to describe the six miscellanies, to examine and compare their contents, and to discuss their textual problems. The texts by courtiers and courtly imitators which they preserve are studied, and the poetry placed in its proper social context. Some conclusions have been reached about Elizabethan taste and popularity, which may suggest the significance of these manuscripts in contributing to a better knowledge of the state of English poetry towards the end of the sixteenth century.

STUDIES IN SOME RELATED MANUSCRIPT POETIC MISCELLANIES OF THE 1580s

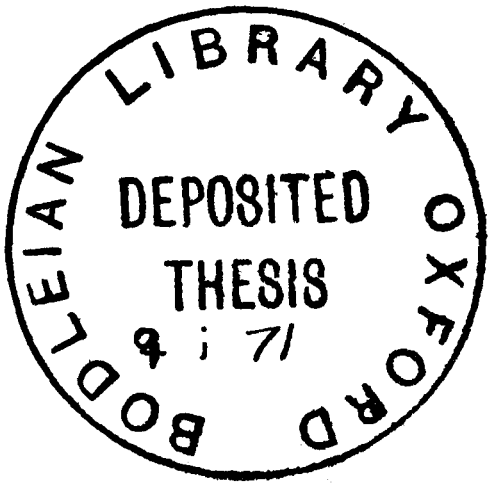
by

L. G. Black

(MT 1970)

A thesis submitted for the degree of

D. Phil. in the University of Oxford.



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Any errors and inaccuracies are my own.

University College,

October 1970.

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ABBREVIATIONS, SHORT TITLES AND SCRIBAL CONVENTIONS

B.M.	The British Museum
Complete Peerage	The Complete Peerage by G.E.C., ed. V. Gibbs and others (1910-59) 13 vols.
Cummings	Cummings, L.A.D., "John Finet's Miscellany", unpublished Thesis, Washington University, Missouri (1960).
D.N.B.	The Dictionary of National Biography from the Earliest Times to 1900, ed. L. Stephen and S.Lee (Oxford, repr. 1921-2) 22 vols.
Grundy	Grundy, Joan, ed. The Poems of Henry Constable (Liverpool 1960)
HLQ	The Huntington Library Quarterly (San Marino, California)
H.M.C.	Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission
Hughey	Hughey, Ruth, ed. The Arundel-Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry (Ohio 1960), 2 vols.
	Columbus
Latham	Latham, Agnes, ed. The Poems of Sir Walter Ralegh (Muse's Library 1951)
MLN	Modern Language Notes (Baltimore)
MLQ	Modern Language Quarterly (Washington)
MLR	Modern Language Review
MP	Modern Philology (Chicago)
OED	A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, ed. J.A.H. Murray and others, (Oxford 1884-1933) 10 vols. and supplement
OHS	Publications of the Oxford Historical Society
PCC	The Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury (for Wills in Somerset House)

PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America (Wisconsin) Menasha,
PQ	Philological Quarterly (Iowa)
Puttenham	Puttenham, George, The Arte of English Poesie, ed. Alice Walker and Gladys Willcock (Cambridge 1936)
P.R.O.	The Public Record Office
RES	The Review of English Studies (Oxford)
Ringler	Ringler, W.A., ed. The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney (Oxford 1962)
Robertson	Robertson, Jean, ed. Poems by Nicholas Breton, not hitherto reprinted (Liverpool 1952)
SB	Studies in Bibliography (Virginia) Charlottesville
SP	Studies in Philology (North Carolina) Chapel Hill
STC	A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland 1475-1640, A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave (1926)
Sandison	Sandison, Helen, ed. The Poems of Sir Arthur Gorges (Oxford 1953)
Sargent	Sargent, R.M., At the Court of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford 1935): reprinted as The Life and Lyrics of Sir Edward Dyer (Oxford 1968)
Spenser	Spenser, Edmund, Poetical Works, ed. J.C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (Oxford 1912: reprinted 1965)
TLS	The Times Literary Supplement
V.C.H.	The Victoria Histories of the Counties of England
Ward	Ward, B.M., The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford (1928)

Conventions

Where manuscript material has been transcribed, the following conventions have been used:

[ ]	deleted matter
⟨ ⟩	illegible matter or lacunae
/ /	interlineations

Abbreviations and contractions have, where possible, been expanded and underlined, although Latin contractions have for the most part been transcribed as they stand.

No place of publication is given for works published in London.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Miscellanies are by their very nature miscellaneous, and a series of studies dealing with a number of different miscellanies is bound to be a rather composite affair. There will, in the following pages, be no single, clear, central guiding theme, but rather a variety of subjects approached in a variety of different ways. It is hoped, however, that these studies will not be disconnected, for they all, ultimately, deal with aspects of the six manuscript miscellanies that are the basis of this thesis.

Studies in these miscellanies will differ not only in subject but also in depth, for scholars have, over the years, examined the miscellanies while pursuing other fields of research, so that some aspects of them are well-known, while others have barely been touched on. Much still remains undone: a work of this sort could not hope to cover fully and adequately all the aspects of such rich and varied sources. The choice of topics discussed in these pages has been very selective. A group of related studies such as this always runs the risk of exploding in all directions, of an endless number of interesting and enticing alleyways opening up on all sides - alleyways which would be more or less profitable to pursue depending on a number of factors (usually those of time available and the general accessibility of sources). I have followed a number of these byways, sometimes with success, sometimes without, and not all these explorations have been recorded here. Some turned out to be blind alleys, taking one no further,

generally because records had not been preserved and information could not be uncovered; some gave promise for further investigation, which might perhaps result in a useful note or an article adding to the stock of information about the Elizabethan literary scene. Some extensive pieces of research have proved too unwieldy to be neatly dovetailed into place here, and I have thought best to leave them out, keeping them as fruitful subjects for later elaboration.

The two main aspects chosen to be examined here in some detail are the complementary and parallel themes of the "public" and "private" contents of the miscellanies, elaborated at the end of chapter two: the popular poems by leading writers of the time, and the private, usually occasional, poems, written by or having some connection with, the compilers of the miscellanies and their friends. These two themes have thus a core and fringe, a macrocosm and microcosm relationship, with some bearing on the place of poetry in the last decades of the sixteenth century. They provide the two focal points for Parts II and III of the discussion below.

Part I of the discussion consists of three general studies, laying down guide-lines for the two subsequent parts. There is a preliminary survey discussing the place of manuscript material in the literary history of the Elizabethan period and examining present-day attitudes to this material. In chapter two the six main miscellanies that provide the basis for all the subsequent studies are described in detail. And in chapter three methods of dealing with manuscript material and

principles of editing are examined, using as a working example a poem which is one of the most popular of all those to be found in the miscellanies, and which is distinguished by the unusual complexity of its textual situation.

Most of the "public" poems by leading writers that can be attributed with some confidence are the work of courtiers who did not, on the whole, publish their poetry, but practised it as a social grace, circulating among their friends copies of poems, some of which found their way into more general manuscript circulation. The most prominent of these writers are the Queen; Sir Edward Dyer; Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford; Sir Walter Ralegh; Sir Arthur Gorges; Sir Philip Sidney; Nicholas Breton; and Ferdinando Stanley, Earl of Derby. To each of these writers a chapter of Part II will be devoted, and texts of their poems discussed, in chronological order of the dates of their births, except that Gorges has been placed next to Ralegh because of the close connection between their poems. Most of these writers have been edited once or more in the past century, but with differing emphases. They are treated here in varying detail, depending on the extent to which they belong in the six miscellanies, and the amount of information that can at this stage be added to the existing studies of their work. Much of the concern of these chapters is textual - examining the texts of their works preserved in the miscellanies, collating new texts that have turned up, trying to determine the inter-relationships of the various texts, checking the canon.

Thus a poet like Sir Philip Sidney, though probably the most popular and prolific of all the poets whose works were collected in the miscellanies, has also one of the fullest and best modern editions, and so is discussed here in much less detail than Sir Edward Dyer and the Earl of Oxford - the two poets for whom the six miscellanies are the most important (and practically the only) sources, and who still await satisfactory modern editions. For this reason the examination of the work of Dyer and Lord Oxford is not confined rigorously to the poems in the manuscript miscellanies under discussion (as it is for the other writers) but includes as well a more general discussion of their work as a whole. One poem of Dyer's with a particularly complex textual history is discussed in considerable detail for the light it sheds on the fate of a popular poem through nearly four centuries.

Each of these chapters has a slightly different focus of interest: the studies of the Queen, Ralegh, Breton discuss critically current lines of research into these poets' works and consolidate new information that has come to light about them; that of Gorges (also recently well-edited) is mainly devoted to examining his text and canon with a more detailed knowledge of the manuscript miscellanies; while the study of Lord Derby is concerned with uncovering new information about a hitherto almost unknown courtly writer. Enough is known about Sidney's texts to allow in his case a more detailed investigation into the lines of descent of the texts in the miscellanies from the author's own copies of his work. A consolidation of current findings relating to these

writers and an examination of them side by side in this way will, it is hoped, enable discussion of a point relating to one writer to illuminate or clarify a problem concerning another, so that the spectrum of Elizabethan courtly writers becomes clearer.

The works of the courtier poets form a fairly homogeneous group that holds together quite well in a discussion of this sort, and enables conclusions to be drawn about the nature of this type of courtly verse that circulated in manuscript, and the positions of the miscellany compilers in the circuits of manuscript transmission. The other poetic contents of the miscellanies are more varied, and are treated here much more cursorily, the main principle of inclusion in or exclusion from the discussion being one of space, and, to some extent, homogeneity.

In Part III the "private" poems are examined from a rather different point of view - for the evidence they afford of the place of English verse in an Elizabethan education, and of the interest in poetry in certain families and in the Universities and Inns of Court and Chancery. My intention has here been to bring out of obscurity poems which have not for the most part been published or really considered in any detail by scholars before, and to investigate the background of their authors and, if possible, examine the occasions for which they were composed. Thus whereas the chapters of Part II are mainly textual, and each deal with an individual poet, those of Part III are more concerned with presenting new poems and examining their social and literary-historical

background, and each deal with a particular miscellany. Of the three miscellanies discussed from this point of view, MS Cambridge Dd5. 75 preserves poems written by two young boys and their older mentor in three inter-related families; MS Rawl.Poet. 85 preserves the work of a group of young graduates and undergraduates at Cambridge in the late 1580s; and MS Harl. 7392 seems to preserve work by a similar group either at Oxford or at the Inns of Court in the early and middle 1580s. These three chapters thus cover amateur verses written by young Elizabethan gentlemen between the ages of nine and their early twenties, and reflect several salient features in the literary history of the period. In addition MS Cambridge Dd5.75 preserves a large enough number of poems whose date and occasion can be determined to enable a detailed commentary on the private poems in that miscellany to be written, bringing to light a number of facts about its compiler, the families with which he was associated, the persons to whom poems were addressed and the occasions for which poems were written. This provides an insight into the writing of such complimentary and occasional verse over a period of more than thirty years.

Most of the evidence to accompany these studies will be found in Volume Two, which contains the texts and variants on which the discussions in Volume One are based, together with the relevant lists and tables, family trees, the First Line Index and the List of Works Consulted. These texts and tables are arranged according to the chapters in Volume One to which they refer. They too vary from writer to writer -

the section of Sidney, for instance, has some detailed textual discussion. Volume Two contains a large number of edited texts and transcriptions, for much of the material exists only in manuscript form and so is not easily available.

Because of the disparate nature of these studies, some information is repeated in various parts of the thesis. Thus a poem's sources and ascriptions are given not only with its text and variants, but also in the First Line Index. This Index lists all the relevant portions of the six basic miscellanies. Each poem's author has been identified, where possible, and other texts listed, together with any additional relevant information. This Index provides therefore one of the keys to the whole thesis; it is hoped that it will stand by itself as a rudimentary tool for further research in this field, for it gathers together as much information as possible about the individual poems in it. From time to time poems mentioned in the discussions in Volume One will be referred to by their numbers in this Index, which thus provides one set of cross-references to the various different studies.

Perhaps the work as a whole could best be described as a collection of poems preserved in six basic manuscript miscellanies, which has been annotated in varying degrees and in a number of different ways. One might, in fact, say that most of the studies deal with puzzle poems - puzzling either because they were intended as puzzles or because they have become puzzling since they were written. The puzzles they present range from the literary and textual to the biographical

and socio-historical, from problems of French history and an obsolete card game to those of genealogy and stemmatics. Certain poems are treated in considerable detail, usually because they are particularly interesting from the textual point of view, and act as useful test-cases for elaborating and putting into practice various methods and techniques of dealing with manuscript material: one of the main objects of this thesis has been to examine and try to master a number of scholarly techniques suited to manuscript study. In particular, a major concern has been to attempt to arrive at principles for editing the works of poets like the courtly writers, preserved for the most part in these manuscript miscellanies.

The following studies will, I hope, suggest their own conclusions. They amount to an investigation of certain aspects of manuscript circulation in the late sixteenth century. They provide information about tastes and popularity, poetic interests and attitudes, and, it is hoped, fill in several minor gaps in the overall picture of the literature of the period.

PART ONE

PRELIMINARIES

Chapter One

COURTLY POETRY and THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND

> What should I come to our Court where the otherwhile vacations of our grauer Nobility are prodigall of more pompous wit and choice of words than euer tragicke Tasso could attaine to ?
>
> Nashe's Preface to Menaphon

> Others haue also written with much facillitie, but more commendably perchance if they had not written so much nor so popularly.
>
> Puttenham's Arte

What happened to English poetry between the time of Wyatt and Surrey, and that of Sidney and Spenser, is a problem which has worried many critics of sixteenth century literature. C.S. Lewis's description of the "Drab Age"[1] is well known, and Professor Bradner has written of "that strange slough of despond between the death of Surrey in 1547 and the appearance of The Shepherd's Calendar in 1579," in which time "English poetry did not stagnate: it went definitely backwards."[2] Bradner supported his views by comparing the poetry of Tottel's Miscellany (1557) with that of The Paradise of Dainty Devices - a printed poetic miscellany which first appeared in 1576 and had been

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1. See English Literature in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford 1954).
2. L. Bradner, The Life and Poems of Richard Edwards (~~Yale~~ New Haven 1927), p.83.

reprinted seven times by 1606 (a popularity rivalling that of the Miscellany).

The choice of the dates of publication of works like the Miscellany, the Paradise and The Shepherd's Calendar to help one define, as it were, the temporal location of this "slough of despond" is symptomatic of the problem involved here. Today, the appearance of a poet in print signifies a certain recognition of his achievement, and so a critic trying to find out what poetry was being written between 1547 and 1579, tends to turn to the Short Title Catalogue, the Stationers' Registers and other bibliographical aids, in order to find out what poetry was printed in those years.

This, however, presupposes that sixteenth century poets and their audiences set the same store by a poet's appearance in print - that any Elizabethan poet worth his salt would have been sure to find somewhere a printer or publisher to set the seal on his achievement. And, moreover, it is known that many leading poets (Wyatt and Surrey, Sidney and Ralegh) were courtiers, primarily men of politics and state affairs, whose poems circulated in manuscript because they disdained, with proper courtly hauteur, "the stigma of print". Editors of sixteenth century poets now diligently consult manuscript as well as printed sources before presenting what they believe to be what the author actually wrote.

Yet although the importance of manuscript poetry has been generally recognised, there has as yet been little sign of any change in present-day attitudes to early Elizabethan literature, in spite of Mr. J.W. Saunders's

excellent article "The Stigma of Print"[1] which has emphasised the importance of manuscript material during this period. Saunders made two fundamental points: first, that it is to the courtly poets that one should look for most of the best poetry of the time; and secondly, that these poets "were not addressing the sort of audience a printed book would normally find".[2] He went on to point out that the professional poet of the time was obliged, to earn his living, to satisfy what the publishers thought would appeal to as large a reading public as possible, and at the same time to the courtiers on whom depended any hope of social promotion and the monetary reward this would bring. The courtly poet, on the other hand, did not have to write for his living, and poetry for him had a social role: his purpose was "the communication of experience within a limited group of intimate friends".[3] This meant, for the most part, that while the professional writer strove for impressive literary effects, the courtier wrote easily and naturally.

The importance of these remarks does not seem to have been fully felt. Mr. E.H. Miller, for example, who has read and refers to Saunders's article, proceeds to concern himself mainly with the professional writers

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1. Essays in Criticism i (1951) p.139.
2. Ibid., p. 139.
3. Ibid., p.154.

of the period, for "Middle-class writers and printers dominated the printing trade, and ... gave to literature a middle-class foundation."[1] He describes the habit of preserving poetry in manuscript as "a Renaissance tradition made obsolete by the printing press", and refers to the courtly poets as "poets only in their idleness" who "subordinated art to pursuits worthy of courtiers." Indeed one begins to suspect in Mr. Miller a basic lack of sympathy with the whole courtly ideal. The courtiers who come and go in his rather fanciful descriptions of the cross-section of Elizabethan society to be found in the walks around St. Paul's Cathedral are always mincing affected fops; and he writes of "aristocratic amateurs who could not resist the temptation to trifle in poetry and occasionally in prose scorned, or pretended to scorn, the printing press and the readers who bought books at St. Paul's."[2]

Another critic, Mr. D.L. Peterson,[3] makes the rather surprising claim that "Most of the good poems written in the two decades following the appearance of Tottel's Miscellany in 1557 are to be found among the works of Barnabe Googe, George Turbervile, and George Gascoigne." This statement follows on from Mr. Peterson's differentiation between the "plain" stylists of the sixteenth century - the poets who wrote didactic or contemplative poetry in a simple, straightforward, unadorned language -

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1. The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1959) p.6.
2. Ibid., p.7.
3. The English Lyric from Wyatt to Donne (Princeton 1967) p.134.

and the "eloquent" stylists - the courtiers who wrote occasional or amorous poems in an elaborately rhetorical tradition. Mr. Peterson's sympathies, it soon becomes apparent, are with the anti-courtly lyric and the plain style.

There seems in both Mr. Miller and Mr. Peterson a determination to admire the professional writers of the sixteenth century as the men really concerned with "literature" in contrast to the courtly "triflers". It may be that they are attracted by the tribulations of some of the first people who attempted to make writing a profession. The life of an Elizabethan professional writer was not easy unless one had a good patron, and these were scarce. The Universities and Inns of Court were turning out young intellectuals eager to make an impression on the court or be employed in state affairs, and unless one was prepared to undertake the impressive Classical translations which leading patrons seem to have valued most highly, the rewards for literature were small.[1] The situation of these young aspirants is well portrayed in the three Parnassus plays.[2]

It may be that in comparison with the professionals, the Elizabethan courtier poet is not an attractive figure, seen from the point of view of modern democratic and egalitarian ideals. He was, however, one of the most important figures on the Elizabethan literary

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1. See Eleanor Rosenberg, Leicester Patron of Letters (New York 1955).
2. Ed. J.B. Leishman (1949).

scene, and so (at the risk of repeating much of what Saunders has already emphasised) one must attempt once again to put the case for courtly poetry, and in the process try to find some of the answers to the original problem of what became of English poetry in the first two decades of the Elizabethan age.

One of the first problems is that there seems to be some uncertainty about the use of the word "courtier". Several critics (like Miller and Peterson) seem to use the term to designate not only the leading and influential noblemen and gentlemen of the court (like Wyatt and Surrey, Sidney and Ralegh, and the Earls of Oxford and Essex) but also writers such as Spenser, Breton, Gascoigne, Turbervile, Googe, who wrote largely in the hope of gaining recognition by the court circle and employment in state affairs. These latter were courtiers in the sense that they appeared, now and then, at court, and sometimes wrote poetry for a courtly audience. But they were also involved in trying to make their living through publication, and so their poetry is not quite so exclusively courtly as that of the amateur poets who were more closely involved in the life of the court.[1]

This means that in considering the early Elizabethan poets one must also consider the type of audience they were writing for. In a carefully stratified society like that of Elizabethan England there was a wide range of literary tastes, and the choice of an audience would have a marked effect on a poet's work. The courtiers wrote, for the most part, for themselves - their friends and their circle of admirers or disciples.

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1. J.W. Saunders's revised edition of Phoebe Sheavyn's The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age (Manchester 1967), appendix II, has a useful list giving the social status of 200 Renaissance poets.

The courtly professionals wrote mostly to impress the court, and other professionals, like the translators of the Classics and the writers of popular ballads, obviously had other audiences in mind. Many professional writers, such as Turbervile, Churchyard and Whetstone, tried their hand at a number of different genres, writing for whichever audience would afford them a chance of a successful sale. With no royalties coming in from books already printed, the professional writer would have to keep writing manuscripts to be sold to the publishers unless he could obtain a position of some sort from the State or a patron. In these circumstances, it seems to me that the best test of courtliness in literature is the medium, and that poems should be considered courtly if they are preserved mainly in manuscripts rather than printed texts.

For confirmation of the distinction between courtly and professional writers, one can turn to The Arte of English Poesie, a treatise on poetry published in 1589 but probably dating in places from the 1560s (and therefore spanning most of the early Elizabethan period).[1] Here, in the discussion of those "who in any age haue bene the most commended writers in our English Poesie" is the passage:

> And in her Maiesties time that now is are sprong vp an other crew of courtly makers Noblemen and Gentlemen of her Maiesties owne seruantes, who haue written excellently well as it would appear if their doings could be found out and made publicke with the rest, of which number is

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1. Ed. Alice Walker and Gladys Willcock (Cambridge 1936), pp. xlix, li. [hereafter referred to as Puttenham].

> first that noble Gentleman Edward, Earle of Oxford. Thomas Lord of Bukhurst, when he was young, Henry Lord Paget, Sir Philip Sydney, Sir Walter Rawleigh, Master Edward Dyar, Maister Fulke Greuell, Gascon, Britton, Turberuille and a great many other learned Gentlemen ... (1)

Some interesting points arise out of this. In the first place, the author (probably George Puttenham)[2] saw this "other crew of courtly makers" as successors to Wyatt and Surrey, whom he had described earlier as "the two chieftaines" of "a new company of courtly makers" appearing in the reign of Henry VIII.[3] Secondly, he has named his "other crew" in order of social precedence: it may be that he was merely wishing to ingratiate himself with the court circle and therefore kept carefully to protocol, but it also suggests that there was a difference, in Elizabethan eyes, between the courtiers Lord Oxford, Lord Buckhurst, Lord Paget, Sidney, Ralegh, Dyer and Greville, on the one hand, and, on the other, Gascoigne, Breton, Turbervile and "the great many other learned Gentlemen" on the fringe of the court circle. Puttenham's definition of a courtly poet, one may note in passing, seems to be "Noblemen and Gentlemen of her Maiesties owne seruantes, who haue written excellently well ..."

For both Puttenham's groups of courtly makers (or, as he might have

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1. Puttenham, p.61.
2. Ibid., pp. xi ff.
3. Ibid., p.60.

described them, the writers of "songs and sonets") one must rely for the most part on manuscript material, for reasons already pointed out. These poets not only did not seek print - they actively shunned it. Publication was, after all, of benefit to the printer rather than the poet, and it would have been as unthinkable for a courtier to have sold poems of his to a publisher as for him to have expected payment for his dancing or his jousting. The courtly poets were not seeking the admiration of the common reader, and made little attempt to preserve their verses, so that many of them have been lost. Some poems perhaps never found their way out of the close circle of their original audience. Others seem to have made their way in more or less mutilated and deteriorating forms into wider and wider circles of friends, like the ripples from a stone dropped in a pond. They would be copied out from copies, perhaps late at night in dim candle-light, after an evening's entertainment, or possibly in the case of short songs, remembered and later written down. Eventually one or two might reach the hands of a publisher and be printed, but not a large number did so, and the state of the printed texts is thus usually similar to that of the manuscripts preserving the same poems.

Many poems, however, exist today only in manuscript form, and for most of these one is indebted to the keepers of miscellanies and commonplace books. The habit of keeping notebooks into which one copied poems, fragments of poems, pieces of prose and often other miscellanea such as recipes, calculations, mottos and epigrams was widespread in the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries if one can judge from the numbers of such books preserved. There seems to have been a variety whose collectors concentrated mainly on collecting poems, so that they are really manuscript collections of "songs and sonets" or poetic miscellanies. These are the most important for the present discussion: they were kept sometimes by members of the courtly circle, like the Haringtons, father and son, who would probably have known many of the poets personally and so had access to texts; and sometimes by young gentlemen at the Universities and Inns of Court, or in noble households - by people with an interest in poetry and connections which would enable them to receive copies of manuscript texts.[1]

The main method of manuscript transmission seems to have been by loose sheets - some of these have been preserved, bound together to form a sort of loose-leaf miscellany.[2] Others seem to have passed from hand to hand and been copied by collectors into their collections. This method of transmission continued until well into the seventeenth century, as the printer of Poemata Stromata (a collection of Corbet's poems published in Holland in 1648) confirms in his address to the reader:

> I heere offer to thy view, a collection of certaine peices of poetry, which haue flowne from hand to hand, these many yeares, in private papers, but were neuer Fixed, for the publique eie of the world to looke upon, til now. (3)

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1. See Chapter 2 below.
2. E.g. Bodl. MS Rawl.Poet.172 ~~in the Bodleian~~.
3. Quoted by E.Wolf in "The Textual Importance of MS Commonplace Books of 1620-1660" (Virginia 1949) p.15. Charlottesville

Richard Tottel seems to have been one of the first printers to publish such a collection of manuscript poems, and the success of his venture was such that printers for the rest of the century kept a close watch for other miscellanies. These collections, however, must be regarded in essentially the same light as manuscript collections, for a printer's copy for them was, so far as one can judge, usually a manuscript collection.

Once again, though, one must take into account the difference in audience. Some of the printed collections, like Tottel's Miscellany, The Paradise of Dainty Devices, and the later Phoenix Nest (1593) and Englands Helicon (1600), consist mainly of courtly poetry; others are collections of ballads, like A Handful of Pleasant Delights (?1566),[1] or thundering moralistic verse, like A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions (1578), printed in the hope of lucrative gains. Publishers were seldom concerned with preserving what little unity of tone or style a miscellany might have, and especially in the early miscellanies included all sorts of verse by both courtly and professional writers, for wider sales appeal.

Mention should also be made of printed collections of "songs and sonets" which are the work of a single professional writer. These seem to have been published in the hope of profiting from what was apparently a current vogue, and are in a sense the fore-runners of the sonnet cycles

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1. See the edition by H.E. Rollins (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1924) p.x.

of the 1580s and 1590s. They include Barnabe Googe's Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes (1563); George Turberville's Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs and Sonets (1567); Thomas Howell's Arbor of Amitie and New Sonets and pretie Pamphlets (both 1568); George Gascoigne's Hundreth Sundry Flowers (1573, rearranged as The Posies in 1575).

All these miscellanies and anthologies indicate that verse collection was a pastime practised by readers of all tastes, from the common people who collected street ballads to the courtiers who collected courtly lyrics. That people bought the printed miscellanies is apparent from the number of editions of Tottel's Miscellany (nine by 1587) and The Paradise of Dainty Devices (seven by 1606). What is not so evident is exactly who bought them. They may have been popular in London, and at the Universities and Inns of Court, but Mr. Miller in his examination of the contents of noble libraries in Elizabethan times finds little indication of books of poetry in English.[1] They may, it is true, have been read to death, but the courtly distaste for print could certainly have extended to reading as well, and it is questionable whether leading courtiers would have bought printed verse. Hobbes once said that "the Readers of Poesie are commonly Persons of the best Quality"[2] but H.E. Rollins has pointed out the comments of Richard Niccols in The Furies

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1. E.H. Miller, op. cit., pp. 46ff.

2. In Homer's Odyssey, quoted by F.W. Bateson in English Poetry (1966) p.200.

(1614) that many people despised all printed poetry: they

> esteeme of verses vpon which the vulgar in a Stationers Shop hath once breathed as of a peece of infection, in whose fine fingers no papers are holesome, but such, as passe by priuate manuscription. (1)

In view of this, it is difficult to say whether a courtier's acquaintance with the work of poets represented even in Tottel's Miscellany and The Paradise of Dainty Devices came from the printed texts, or from similar manuscript sources to those used by the publishers for their editions.

It is thus likely that most of the courtly poetry which has been preserved is to be found in manuscript, and an examination of the manuscripts that exist today shows that this is so. Manuscripts, however, are of different kinds: there are collections of the poems of primarily one poet, like the Wyatt MS, Egerton 2711, or the "vannetyes and toyes of yowth" of Sir Arthur Gorges, MS Egerton 3165. There are collections of poems neatly copied out by professional scribes, like MS Harl. 6910; there are collections kept by one person who copied poems into his book from time to time, like MS Rawl.Poet. 85; there are collections kept by several different people at different times, like MS Marsh Z3.5.21; there are composite collections of loose sheets of different sizes and in different hands, like MS Rawl.Poet. 172.

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1. In his edition of Tottel's Miscellany (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge Mass., rev. 1966) ii, 293. See also the remarks by William Covell about The Paradise in his Polimanteia (1595) sig.[Q4].

The collectors of manuscripts such as these preserved most of the courtly poetry that now exists, but they were, on the whole, less careful to preserve the names of the authors of the poems they copied. Perhaps they did not always know who had written the poems; certainly it is commoner to find poems unascribed in manuscripts than to find ascriptions, although it is only because some compilers did ascribe certain poems that there is any canon at all for poets such as Dyer, Lord Oxford and Ralegh. The difficulty was being experienced even in Puttenham's time, for it will be remembered that he remarked on the excellence of the courtly makers "as it would appeare if their doings could be found out and made publicke with the rest", and Drummond of Hawthornden agreed:

> He who writeth the Art of English Poesy praiseth much Raleigh and Dyer: but their works are so few that are come to my hands, that I cannot well say anything of them. (1)

Another problem concerning manuscript circulation is that of dating the poems. A printed work has the great advantage that one can generally be sure of the date of its publication. A manuscript is more difficult: one does not always know who kept it or when it was kept, and even if one knows when a particular poem was copied out, that date often bears no relation to the actual date of composition. This is very evident from the poems that found their way into print: Wyatt died in 1542,

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1. **Works** (1711) p.226.

Surrey in 1547, yet Tottel's Miscellany did not appear till 1557. The Paradise of Dainty Devices is generally thought to contain poems collected by Richard Edwards in manuscript; it first appeared in 1576, although Edwards was dead in 1566.[1]

One is tempted to suggest that the printed miscellanies were almost invariably later in date than the composition of the poems they contained. The conditions of manuscript circulation meant that poems on the whole would not become available to people likely to publish them until they had been in circulation for some time. Sidney's poems, for example, which are among the most popular in manuscript collections of the 1580s and had probably been written by 1582,[2] were not published in any number until the 1590s. Greville's, though probably written also in the 1580s,[3] seem to have been kept even more closely, for they were not published for more than twenty years, and seldom appear in manuscript copies.

Many of the manuscript miscellanies may also preserve rather earlier poems. Manuscript circulation meant that a poem could continue to make a fresh impact on new readers long after it was first written. Most of Ralegh's lyrics seem to have been written before he lost the

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1. See H.E. Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1927), p.xiii.
2. See Sidney's Poems, ed. W.A. Ringler (Oxford 1962), p.xliii [Hereafter referred to as Ringler].
3. See G. Bullough, Poems and Dramas of Fulke Greville (1939)i pp,38ff.

Queen's favour in 1592[1] - yet Ralegh is among the most popular authors appearing in manuscript miscellanies well into the seventeenth century. It is important to remember too, that the miscellanies (both in manuscript and print) include poems written at different times, so that many poets who appear to be contemporaries because their poems exist side by side in the same miscellany may not have been contemporaries at all.

Manuscripts usually present a greater textual problem than printed texts because scribes tend to be more idiosyncratic than compositors and often have peculiar habits of orthography and punctuation. Nor were their materials always satisfactory - often the ink has now so faded as to be illegible (like parts of MS Rawl.Poet. 172) or, at the other extreme, has eaten right through the paper (like MS Ashmole 781). Sometimes (though not often) compilers of manuscripts seem to have taken their texts from printed rather than manuscript copies so that a sort of feed-back develops whereby the poems in printed miscellanies (themselves really manuscripts which have found their way into print) might work their way back into manuscript circulation.[2] The resulting textual merry-ge-round makes it in some cases almost impossible to arrive at an authentic text. Not only did possibilities for textual

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1. See Agnes Latham's edition of his Poems (1951) p.89. [Hereafter referred to as Latham].

2. This may have happened with some of the texts in MS. Harl. 6910.

contamination abound in the sixteenth century, with many different texts of a single poem in circulation, but one can also usually suspect error in all the extant texts of a poem. In almost no cases at all is a courtly lyric preserved in an authentic authorial version:[1] there are only copies exhibiting (or concealing) a greater or lesser degree of corruption. In the case of poems which were obviously very popular and much copied at the time, to try to arrive at a stemma which will show the relationships of the few remaining witnesses is rather like trying to reconstruct a lost tree from a handful of its leaves.

For the courtly lyricists of the middle sixteenth century it is fortunate that a number of manuscripts exist which preserve poetry of a similar sort from roughly the same period. They include the Arundel Harington MS; MSS Rawl.Poet. 85 and 172; MSS Harl. 6910 and 7392; B.M.Add.MS 34064; Cambridge MS Dd.5.75; Marsh's Library MS Z 3.5.21; and Folger MS V.a.89.[2] Of these, the Harington MS, collected between about 1540 and 1600 preserves poems by both Puttenham's groups of courtly makers,[3] while the other manuscripts, kept for the most part in the 1580s and 1590s, preserve poems mainly by writers in Puttenham's second group - the courtly makers of Elizabeth's reign. The similarity

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1. Gorges is an exception here.

2. See the discussion of the miscellanies in chapter 2.

3. See Ruth Hughey's edition of The Arundel-Harington MS (Columbus Ohio 1960) [Hereafter referred to as Hughey].

in poems copied into these manuscripts and the reappearance of certain poems in several manuscripts suggest that these miscellanies preserve one strain of early Elizabethan poetry catering for a particular taste one would probably describe as courtly.

In view of this, one can examine the poets whose work occurs most often in these manuscripts and see to what extent Puttenham's remarks are reflected there. The test seems a fair one, for Puttenham was contemporary with the manuscripts, and he quotes from some of the poems preserved in them. As a basis for comparing poets who appear to be contemporaries, one must bear in mind also their relative ages.

The most popular poet in the miscellanies of this period seems to have been Sir Philip Sidney (born in 1554), over ~~thirty~~ fifty of whose poems were in manuscript circulation. These were mainly lyrics from the Arcadia and Certain Sonnets, written by 1582.[1] Next in popularity are probably Sir Edward Dyer, the Earl of Oxford and Sir Walter Ralegh, who all seem to have been writing in the 1570s. Dyer is the oldest of the three: born in 1543, he was alive before Wyatt and Surrey were dead, and was eleven years older than Sidney - a fact one tends to forget when his name is continually linked with Sidney's by their contemporaries. Dyer's last editor sees him as beginning to write poems in the 1560s, and continuing until the 1580s;[2] he is thus one of the

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1. See Ringler, p.xliii.

2. R.M. Sargent, At the Court of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford 1935) p.166. [Hereafter referred to as Sargent].

first main figures of the post-Tottel era. Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was probably another. Born in 1550, he seems to have been writing poems by 1566.[1] Ralegh was the same age as Sidney, and like him was writing poems by the mid 1570s.[2]

Nicholas Breton was probably the most popular of the poets who were not leading courtiers but whose poetry made its way into the manuscript miscellanies. Born in 1555, he was writing verse by 1575.[3] Gascoigne (Breton's step-father) and Turbervile (both born c.1540) do not appear to have been popular with the miscellany compilers, although Puttenham mentioned them together with Breton. Fulke Greville, Sidney's friend and exact contemporary, is also mentioned by Puttenham, but only one or two of his poems are preserved in manuscript copies.[4] Of Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, and Henry, second Lord Paget, (both born c.1536) there are no courtly lyrics at all, although they may have been the authors of some of the many unascribed lyrics in the manuscript and printed miscellanies.[5]

If one looks among the poems in the manuscripts that can be

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1. See below, chapter 6.
2. See Latham, p.3.
3. See Jean Robertson's edition of his Poems (Liverpool 1952) p.xxxii. [Hereafter referred to as Robertson].
4. In the Arundel-Harington MS.
5. On the Pagets, see chapter 12 below.

attributed for works by writers not mentioned by Puttenham, there are not very many. There are some poems by Sir Arthur Gorges (born 1557), whose works seem to have been confused with those of Ralegh, his cousin;[1] and a group of sonnets by Henry Constable (born 1562), some of which were written by 1588. The Queen herself is moderately popular; born in 1533, she is praised extravagantly elsewhere in The Arte of English Poesie.[2] There is also the occasional poem by writers such as Thomas Churchyard (born 1523), George Whetstone (born c.1544), Geoffrey Whitney (born 1548), Thomas Watson (born 1557), and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex (born 1566).

Spenser, whose Shepherd's Calendar heralds for Mr. Bradner the deliverance of English poetry from the "slough of despond", does not appear to have come into general circulation. Only one poem of his appears in any number of the manuscripts[3] and the Arundel-Harington MS has a text of another. Puttenham does not place him among the courtly makers (he was not really one of them) but praises him "for Eglogue and pastorall Poesie".[4]

One can, at this point, draw up a list of the most popular poems to be found in the manuscript miscellanies of the period; interestingly,

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1. See below, chapter 8.
2. Puttenham, p.63.
3. See below, chapter 2, p. 38.
4. Puttenham, p.63.

it corresponds quite closely to Puttenham's list of courtly makers:

The Queen: The doubt of future foes (T8)[1]

Dyer: He that his mirth hath lost (H2)
?My mind to me a kingdom is (M18)
As rare to hear, as seldom to be seen (A32)
I would it were not as it is (I22)

Oxford: Sitting alone upon my thought (S12)
The lively lark stretched forth his wing (T19)
?When I was fair and young (W24)
When wert thou born, desire ? (W31)

Ralegh: Calling to mind mine eye long went about (C1)
Like to a hermit poor in place obscure (L10)

Sidney: Lock up fair lids the treasure of my heart (L13)
The fires to see my wrongs for anger burneth (T14)
If I could think how these my thoughts to leave (I29)
Ring out your bells (R5)
What length of verse may serve (W9)
Who hath his fancy pleased (W38)

Breton: In the merry month of May (I44)
Some men will say there is a kind of Muse (S17)
The air with sweet my senses doth delight (T3)

Gorges: Her face, her tongue, her wit (H6)
The gentle season of the year (T16)

Anon: The state of France as now it stands (T37)
Die, die, desire, and bid delight adieu (D3)
Short is my rest whose toil is overlong (S5)
Though I seem strange, sweet friend (T51)

It becomes apparent from these manuscripts, I think, that Dyer and Lord Oxford occupy key positions, coming between the courtly makers of Tottel's Miscellany and the later courtly makers, contemporary with Sidney. They belong (Dyer especially) to the 1560s and 1570s, to the generation of

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1. These numbers refer to the poem's entry in the First Line Index (Volume 2, p. 393).

Gascoigne, Googe, Turberville and The Paradise of Dainty Devices, and once this becomes appreciated, their differences from these professional writers becomes apparent. Tottel's Miscellany, one must remember, was not published until 1557 - the year Dyer turned fourteen and the year before Elizabeth's accession. Dyer one might see, in fact, as a sort of minor successor to Surrey, and it is interesting to note that when in the 1580s Geoffrey Whitney wished to address Sidney in an emblem about the state of English poetry, he called him the successor to Surrey; Sidney however declined the honour, which he said should go to Dyer.[1] This has usually been interpreted as another example of Sidney's modesty, but might it not, one wonders, indicate on Sidney's part an exact estimate of Dyer's place in literary history?

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1. Sargent, p.84.

Chapter Two

THE MISCELLANIES

> She had a book wherein she had collected sundry good ditties of divers mens doings, in which booke she would needes entreate the aucthor to write some verses.
>
> Gascoigne: Posies

The importance of the manuscript miscellanies of the 1580s and 1590s has only gradually been appreciated. Although many of them have been known to scholars for some years, and editors of individual poets have dipped into them from time to time in search of new texts, until recently little attention has been paid to their contents as a whole and their significance in the literary history of the late sixteenth century. The main objective of the present discussion will be to examine the contents of a number of these manuscripts which seem in some respects to be related, and to attempt an estimate of their literary importance.

Six manuscripts form the main body to be considered here. Two, MS Rawlinson Poetry 85 (in the Bodleian Library) and MS Harleian 7392 (in the British Museum) are the core of the group, with nearly fifty poems in common; four more, MSS Dd 5.75 (in the University Library, Cambridge), V.a.89 (in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington), Z 3.5.21 (in Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin), and the Harington MS at Arundel Castle, overlap with these two central manuscripts and with

one another in varying degrees. As these six manuscripts form the basis of this thesis, it will be necessary at the outset to examine them in some detail.

In the discussion which follows, each manuscript will be described and its contents summarised: any obvious grouping of certain texts together will be noted, as will texts of works by the courtly poets Sidney, Dyer, Lord Oxford, Ralegh, Gorges, Breton and the Queen, whose position in the literary history of the period was examined briefly in the preceding chapter. From a literary point of view, the works of these poets are among the most important texts found in these manuscripts, and, together with those texts which can be attributed to other writers with some certainty, they provide a basis for examining the reliability of the ascriptions in each manuscript.

Certain poems appearing in these manuscripts or in other texts bear a date; others can be dated approximately because they refer to, or were apparently associated with, events which can be dated. A number of the texts found in the manuscripts also appear in various printed sources, giving dates by which the poems were in circulation - though it must of course be remembered that manuscript circulation made it possible for a poem to be copied in a miscellany or printed collection long after it was written. Of the poems for which a date can be suggested, a number appear in most of the manuscripts under discussion and so form a useful control group in an examination of the contents of these manuscripts. This control group consists of:

T37[1] "The French Primero": dated 1585 and referring to political events in France at the time (see chapter 3 below)

T8 The doubt of future foes: the Queen's poem about the northern rebellion, 1569-70 (see p. 126 below)

W24 When I was fair and young: associated with the Queen and Anjou, who left England in February 1581/2; perhaps by Lord Oxford (see p. 202 below)

T19 The lively lark: by Lord Oxford - in print in 1576 (see p. 185 below)

S12 Sitting alone upon my thought: associated with the scandal concerning Lord Oxford and Anne Vavasour in 1581 (see p. 194 below)

T24 The man whose thoughts against him do conspire: probably by Dyer; sung to the Queen at Woodstock in September 1575 (see p. 153 below)

P12 Prometheus, when first from heaven high: by Dyer, (see p. 149 below)

A8 A Satyr once did run away for dread: Sidney's answer

M8 More than most fair, full of the living fire: by Spenser, but confused with Dyer in one text and imitated by Greville. Probably all three poems were written at Leicester House c.1579-80 (see p.38 below)

A25 "The Oxford Libel": dated 1564 and referring to Oxford persons and events of the early 1560s.

I2 "The Cambridge Libel": refers to Cambridge persons and events up to c.1573.

M17 "The Libel on Baeshe": refers to events up to c.1572.

Finally, an attempt will be made to identify the compiler or compilers of each manuscript, and to suggest dates for the period of compilation. Where the compiler can be identified with some probability,

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1. These numbers refer to the entries of the poems in the First Line Index - Volume 2, pp.393 ff.

his or her social and educational background will be briefly discussed, for the light this may shed on the transmission of texts in manuscript circulation.

a) MS Rawlinson Poetry 85 (hereafter RP85)

This manuscript has been well known to scholars for some time. Bliss and Grosart both used it, and so have twentieth century editors of most of the Elizabethan courtier poets. It has recently been edited from microfilm in an unpublished doctoral thesis submitted to Washington University, Missouri, by Professor L.A.D. Cummings.[1] Professor Cummings has discussed the manuscript and its contents in some detail, and discovered a good deal about the compiler, so that only a short account is necessary here.

RP85 consists of 128 leaves (size $7\frac{1}{2}$" x $5\frac{1}{2}$") of the original miscellany, rebound rather tightly in the nineteenth century,[2] when some extra leaves were added at the beginning and end. The present (pencil) foliation runs from 1 to 127 (there being two leaves numbered 39) but there are also two other sets of foliation numbers, contemporary with the text, which help explain certain gaps and mutilations in the manuscript.

It was, apparently, originally a book bound in vellum (the back cover still remains, now f.127) with all four margins ruled in on each page. The original foliation, crossed out but still legible, now runs

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1. John Finet's Miscellany (1960); a microfilm is available in the Bodleian - Diss.Films 273. [Hereafter Cummings]

2. The watermark, appearing at the middle of the spine on certain leaves, is thus obscured.

from 14 to 180, with numerous gaps where pages were lost or removed. Probably some of these missing leaves had entries on them,[1] but over most of the gaps the text now runs without interruption,[2] and into two of the gaps were inserted new sheets of paper, without ruled margins (now ff.39a & b; 66-7) and the compiler's second foliation is present from 1 to 127, with only three gaps.[3] Stubs of missing leaves are still visible after ff.75,83,116 (in the modern foliation) and some of these were lost after the second foliation was made. The manuscript has thus been through two stages of deterioration, the first of which was partly repaired by the compiler. It now contains 150 items.

The contents of RP85 show a certain stratification: the first fifty poems (ff.1-36) are mainly the work of court poets such as Sidney, Dyer, Breton, Lord Oxford, Ralegh and Gorges, many of them ascribed. The opening poem is "When I was fair and young" (W24), ascribed to the Queen "when she was supposed to be in loue with mountsyre" and others can be roughly dated: on f.2v is a Latin poem on the death of Sir Thomas Gresham (S1) in November 1579;[4] Dyer's Woodstock song of 1575 (T24) is on f.7, and "Sitting alone upon my thought" (S12), here associated with Lord Oxford and Anne Vavasour, on f.11.

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1. The poem on f.85 is headed "Eccho made in imitatione of Sr P. Sidneys echo going before pagi:5:" but Sidney's poem does not appear in the MS and was presumably on the lost f.5.
2. There are however two altered catchwords - at the foot of ff.13v and 65v.
3. See Vol.2, p.2 for a comparative table of foliations.
4. See DNB.

This section of the manuscript shows some grouping in places: ff.5v-9v preserve four poems by Dyer, five by Sidney (including an answer to one of Dyer's) and the sonnet by Spenser (M8) here attributed to Dyer (and elsewhere imitated by Greville).[1] This suggests that some of these ten poems were written when Sidney, Dyer and Spenser were all writing poems together at Leicester House in 1579-80.[2] Ff.14v-16v have a group of poems by Lord Oxford, 24v-34 a group by Breton, and 20-24 a group of six songs from Sidney's Arcadia. As Cummings has pointed out,[3] all the poems in this section could have been written by 1584, except Breton's two elegies on Sidney (ff.26v,27 - A21, D1) which must date from after October 1586.

The next section of the manuscript (ff.37-43v) brings a change of tone, for it consists of poems by Robert Mills and "I.F." of Cambridge, two Latin speeches made by the Queen (in 1564 and 1566 at Cambridge and Oxford respectively) and some Latin Goliardic verse - all items more typical of the University than the Court, although among them appear a poem each by Dyer and Sidney.[4]

More items of a courtly nature follow (ff.42-53), though now few

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1. See Ringler p. xxxiii n.1.

2. See L.A.D. Cummings, "Spenser's Amoretti viii" in Studies in English Literature, iv (Winter 1964) p.134.

3. Cummings, p.40.

4. See Vol.2, pp. 341-4 for a list of the Cambridge contents of RP85.

are ascribed. They include items by Gorges and Ralegh, a poem by Geoffrey Whitney printed in 1586 (f.46v - A12) and one by Thomas Churchyard printed in 1580 (f.51 - I42). Then from ff.53v-84v is another section of University material, with poems by Robert Mills, James Reshoulde, "I.F." and Edward Chapman of Cambridge; more Latin Goliardic verse, and Latin poems on the death of Leicester's son in 1584 (f.56v - D8)[1] and the execution of the traitor Parry in 1585 (f.65 -T58).[2] This section includes also the Libels on Oxford and Baeshe (ff.66-76), and one or two poems by courtiers like Sidney and Lord Strange.

The last forty items (ff.85v-127) are mainly courtly again, though many are anonymous. Among them are poems by Sidney, Dyer, Lord Oxford, Ralegh and Lord Essex. On f.104 is "The French Primero" and on f.106v a final Cambridge poem by Mills.

These groupings are not entirely distinct, but they help to give some impression of the contents of the manuscript. RP85 is notable for the number of poems in it by Sidney - twenty-four in all, of which thirteen are correctly ascribed, nine unascribed and two wrongly ascribed, one to Breton and one to "Mr. Nowell". There is a slight confusion between the works of Sidney and Breton: probably twelve of Breton's poems are preserved in the manuscript, six ascribed to him and one to

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1. See M. Waldman, Elizabeth and Leicester (1946) p.174.

2. See DNB.

Sidney. On the whole, though, the level of accuracy among the ascriptions is high, as far as these can be tested. There are eight poems ascribed to Dyer, and one perhaps by him given to "W.R."; five poems ascribed to Lord Oxford and five, probably by him, unascribed; one ascribed to Ralegh and four of his unascribed; and one poem ascribed to the Queen (but probably not hers). In addition, there are poems signed with initials such as "A.H.", "R.H.", "W.N.", "Mrs. M.R.", "R.T." whose identity remains obscure.

Several of the poems preserved in the manuscript were in print by the late 1580s or early 1590s - one is in Tottel's Miscellany (1557); one in The Paradise of Dainty Devices (1576); three were set to music by Byrd in 1588; two are mentioned in The Arte of English Poesie (1589); ten are in Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591); ten in The Phoenix Nest (1593); and five in The Arbor of amorous Deuises (?1594). As well as the courtly and academic verse mentioned, RP85 contains also numerous anonymous pieces - imitations of popular poets, songs, epigrams, elegies, and short ribald pieces.

The Cambridge poems provide the clue to the identity of the compiler - the "I.F." of the poems, or John Finnet (1571-1641) of Soulton, Kent. Finnet was admitted to St. John's College, Cambridge, as a fellow-commoner in 1588;[1] his friends were Robert Mills, who had been admitted to St.

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1. See Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses (Cambridge 1922) pt.i, under Fennet.

John's in 1583 and taken his B.A. in 1586/7,[1] and James Reshoulde, who though admitted to Trinity Hall in 1582, also took his B.A. from St. John's in 1586/7 and his M.A. in 1590.[2] Finnet at seventeen or eighteen would have been more mature than many of his undergraduate contemporaries, and his relatively exalted social position as fellow-commoner meant that he would dine with the fellows and be well placed to make friends with two new B.A.s.[3]

Finnet, a gentleman and courtier, was later knighted and became Master of Ceremonies to James I, having something of a reputation for entertainment - in Anthony Wood's words, he "was always bred in the Court where by his wit, innocent mirth and great skill in composing songs, he pleased K.Jas. very much."[4] Cummings suggests that Finnet began collecting poems at court and continued at Cambridge, and that his collection was perhaps started about 1584 and finished before 1590.[5] Certainly the entries were made before Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, became Earl of Derby in 1593, and before Dyer was knighted in 1596. The poems are all in the same hand, and additions and corrections

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1. See Venn, op. cit., under Mylles

2. Ibid., under Resoulde.

3. See below, chapter 13, for a further discussion of Finnet's circle at St. John's.

4. Wood's Fasti, ed. Bliss (1815) i, 492. More information about Finnet is in the article on him in the DNB, ~~and the other references quoted there.~~

5. Cummings p.45.

seem to indicate that Finnet kept an interest in the texts of the poems he had copied. Though he was fond of Sidney's poetry, and fond of sonnets, the absence of any of the sonnets from Astrophil and Stella, which found its way into print in 1591, and from any of the sonnet cycles it gave rise to, suggests that Finnet had finished his collection before the 1590s.[1] Finnet's taste was sure and the quality of his miscellany is high, making RP85 really a personal anthology preserving many of the best lyrics of the 1570s and 1580s.

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1. Mary Bowen first pointed this out in MLN x (1895) p.236. RP85 does preserve some of the songs from Astrophil and Stella, but as Professor Ringler has noted, these were in separate circulation - see Ringler p.453.

b) MS Harleian 7392 (2) (hereafter H7392)

Less attention has been paid by scholars to this manuscript, which merits a more detailed examination here. The miscellany is the second in a group of three articles bound up together in one volume. In its present state the manuscript consists of: ff.1-10v, a manuscript copy of Goddard's "A Neaste of Wasps", printed in 1615; ff.11-78v, the poetic miscellany to be considered here; and ff.79-151v, two Italian burlesques.

The miscellany was originally a separate volume, (size 7¾" x 5¾"), its pages numbered correctly from 1 (f.12) to 135 (f.78), ~~except for the leaf numbered 36/7 which is missing after f.29~~. What is now f.11 seems to have been originally the cover or the flyleaf - it is stained and has a number of names, short jottings and Latin couplets, and the main entries begin on f.12 with Dyer's "Fancy" (H2).

The poems are numbered from 1 to 127, although there are some later additions unnumbered - usually short poems added in a space at the foot of a page - and a group of unnumbered poems at the end. In all there are 148 items, and about ten epigrams or couplets among the preliminary jottings. Forty-six items, or nearly a third of the miscellany, also appear in RP85.

Most of the miscellany is written in a single hand except for the text of "The French Primero" on f.62v in a more cursive hand, and five items at the end of the manuscript (ff.77-8) in a more untidy hand, signed "Robert Allott" or "R.A.". On the last page (f.78v) are two

epigrams in yet another hand, signed "I.I.". Ff.29v-30 are blank, a ~~leaf having dropped out after f.29 and~~ the poem on f.29 being left unfinished. There are also some extra items on ff.11 and 61, apparently added later.

As in the case of RP85, there is a certain grouping of contents: poems attributed to Dyer appear consecutively on ff.12-18, 22-24; poems attributed to Ralegh on ff.36-37; and poems from Sidney's Arcadia and Certain Sonnets on ff.38v-39; ff.66-66v contain a little group of correlative poems by Sidney and Gorges. F.25 has the Sidney and Dyer companion sonnets (P12, A8) and f.28 part of Spenser's sonnet (M8). Dyer's Woodstock song (T24) is on f.34v, the poem the Queen was supposed to have written about Anjou (W24) is on f.21, and the poem she certainly did write about the Northern Rebellion (T8) is on f.27v. The Cambridge Libel appears on f.54, followed by a scurrilous item about a group of actors (T13) which may date from 1580.[1] The poem associated with Lord Oxford and Anne Vavasour is on f.63.

Six poems had appeared in print by 1576 in The Paradise of Dainty Devices; three were in print in 1582, one on f.75v (T36) in Watson's Hekatompathia, and two (ff.24v,47 - H4, W40) in George Whetstone's Heptameron of Civil Discourses. Two were set to music by Byrd in 1588, and three touched on in The Arte of English Poesie; seven appeared in Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591) and eight in The Phoenix Nest (1593).

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1. See E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford 1923) ii, p.98.

The manuscript has more of Dyer's poems than any other source - ten ascribed to him and one more that may be his. It has also five of Lord Oxford's ascribed and five unascribed; three of Ralegh's ascribed and one unascribed; four poems probably by Gorges (one ascribed to him, two to Ralegh and one to Sidney); three ascribed to the Queen; and two probably by Breton, unascribed. There are fewer poems by Sidney than in RP85: five ascribed to him and five unascribed, mostly from the Arcadia and Certain Sonnets, though there are two unique texts.[1] Unlike RP85 there are no songs from Astrophil and Stella, nor are there any elegies on Sidney's death. Poems assigned to courtiers such as Dyer, Lord Oxford, Sidney, Ralegh, tend to be more frequent in the first third of the manuscript.

Entries are usually signed "DY." for Dyer, "SY." or "SYD." for Sidney, "RA." for Ralegh, "GOR." for Gorges, "LO.OX." for Lord Oxford, and "EL." for the Queen. Other poems are ascribed to "Russell", "L.Con̄.de E & L", "RO.POO."[2] or "R.P.", "Ioh.Ed." or "I.Ed", "TY.SO.", and to initials such as "N.S.", "E.E.", "H.E.", "H.W.", "R.W.", "E.N.", "R.N.", "I.F." and "Mrs. C.N." most of whom remain unidentified. In addition, there are two rather curious sets of what may or may not be ascriptions: eight poems are subscribed "Ballet" or "Ball", three of which also have other ascriptions in the form of initials; and eighteen

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1. See Ringler, AT19,21. (P8, S11).

2. This might perhaps stand for "R. Pooly", who may be the mysterious "Yloop" to whom poems in The Paradise of Dainty Devices are ascribed - see Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1927) p.lxv.

poems are ascribed "H.Con." or more usually "H.C.", although five of these have other ascriptions and in nearly all cases the "H.C." has later been deleted. It is apparently because of these "Ballet/Ball." and "H.C." subscriptions that H7392 has in the past been criticised for the low level of reliability of its ascriptions.[1] Apart from a confusion of Ralegh and Gorges (which modern scholars have not yet succeeded in fully resolving)[2] the ascriptions in the manuscript are otherwise fairly reliable, supporting and comparing well with those in RP85.

The subscriptions "Ballet" and "Ball." seem to me to indicate that these poems were regarded by the compiler as songs or "ballets",[3] and so the signatures should not be considered ascriptions so much as descriptions. Of the eight poems so designated, four were printed, in slightly differing texts, in The Paradise of Dainty Devices (which purported to be a miscellany of songs collected by Richard Edwards before his death in 1566). Two are preserved in musical settings - one by Byrd (printed in 1588) and one by William Barley (1596), and another was printed in T.W.'s Tears of Fancie (1593) in a rather different version. The four poems not in The Paradise all appear in other manuscript texts and so were popular poems in quite widespread

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1. See Ringler's article in SP xlvii (1950) and Ringler p.353.
2. See below, chapter 8.
3. See for example, numerous poems described as "ballets" in B.M. MS Cotton Vespasian A.xxv.

circulation - one even became transformed into a black-letter ballad.[1]

The "H.C." subscriptions appear to stand for Humfrey Coningesby, who, it will be suggested below, compiled the manuscript and may have added his initials to certain poems for some reason - perhaps because he admired them. Most of the "H.C."s seem to have been added later than the texts of the poems to which they refer, and as nearly all have subsequently been deleted, they should not, in my opinion, be given much weight.

These subscriptions and pseudo-ascriptions emphasise that names and initials placed at the end of an entry in a manuscript could mean any of a number of things apart from an indication of authorship: they could indicate the scribe or the person from whom the text was procured, or perhaps even the person referred to in the text (as, apparently, in the case of the poem attributed to the Queen during Anjou's courtship - W24). They could also be simply notes made by the compiler or a subsequent owner, describing the item or adding a comment.

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1. M18. The other "ballet" poems are I28, B4, T51, T25, W21, W44, S5. These poems should not be confused with the entries at the end of the miscellany subscribed "R.A." or "Robert Allott" which seem to have been added by Allott in his own hand and signed, perhaps to indicate that the texts derived from him. Allott may not have been the author of these - one is headed (f.77v) "Incerti Authoris". Miss Hughey (Arundel-Harington MS, ii, 313) misreads the subscription of the poem on f.73v as "RAll" rather than "BALL", and so takes all the "ballet" poems to be ascribed to Allott, which does not seem to me to be the compiler's intention. Another possible source of confusion is the compiler's use of "RA." for ascriptions to Ralegh - which should not be confused with "R.A." standing for Robert Allott.

When Professor B.M. Wagner first drew attention to this manuscript in 1935,[1] he stated it to be "in the autograph of the antiquary St Loe Knyveton of Gray's Inn (d.1628) whose signature it bears ff.11,16." Three years later[2] he suggested that Kniveton may have copied the poems from Humfrey Coningesby whose name also appears on f.11 and who is perhaps the "H.C." signed to many of the items.

That the manuscript does have a connection with the Inns of Court seems likely: "Syllowe Kniveton" of Mercaston, Derbyshire, was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1584,[3] and the same year Robert Allott of Driby, Lincolnshire, entered the Inner Temple.[4] The poem about the Duttons on f.59 seems connected with a brawl between a group of actors and young men from the Inns of Court in 1580 (T13).

A closer examination of the manuscript, however, leads one to the conclusion that Wagner was mistaken, and that Coningesby, not Kniveton, was the compiler. Kniveton's three signatures on ff.11,61, to which Wagner draws attention, all appear at the end of Latin quotations added among the jottings on those pages: f.11 has two epigrams[5] ascribed "S.Knyveton", written in an Italian hand which is not that of the rest

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1. "New poems by Sir Edward Dyer", RES xi (1935) p.466.
2. "New poems by Sir Philip Sidney", PMLA liii (1938) p.118.
3. See Foster, Gray's Inn Register (1889).
4. See Admissions to the Inner Temple, 1547-1660 (1877).
5. One quotation, ascribed "Ovid" is from the Ars Amatoria i, 663.

of the text; f.61 has an epigram and its English translation, both written in a more formal secretary hand than the rest of the manuscript, and ascribed by the compiler "Saintlowe Knyvetowne". The three items in the manuscript to which Kniveton's name is attached are thus wholly or partly in Latin, and all additions, not in the hand of the compiler. By comparison, f.11 has Coningesby's name at the head of the page and again in the middle, and "H.C." at the end of jottings; f.11v has four epigrams in the compiler's hand signed "H.C." or "H.Con."; ff.53v and 54 contain two deleted poems subscribed respectively "H.C. of Q.R." and "H.C. to C.G." and both in the compiler's hand.

Kniveton's hand[1] is a small neat Italian hand, with little resemblance to H7392. In fact there is little evidence to suggest (as Wagner does) that Kniveton was interested in English poetry: MS Harl. 4286, to which Wagner refers erroneously as Harl.8268 and describes as "another anthology that [Kniveton] owned (and perhaps transcribed)"[2] is really a volume of genealogical jottings, and on ff.56-71 Kniveton appears to have used for his notes the reverse of sheets containing sixteen songs, copied in a curious spidery hand, probably from printed sources.

If H7392 is the work of Humfrey Coningesby, it takes on a new

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1. Cf. B.M. MSS Harl.3375, 4286, 4840 and Add.5861 (f.178v) and 6697 (p.36); also Bodleian MSS Tanner 174, 245 and Rawl.B.144 (f.190).

2. PMLA liii (1938) p.118. There is no MS Harl.8268 in the B.M.

interest, because as Wagner pointed out, Humfrey Coningesby (Cunnisby) of Worcestershire was an undergraduate at Oxford, and matriculated under the auspices of Christ Church in November 1581, aged 15.[1] This suggests that the miscellany is an Oxford counterpart to the Cambridge RP85, and an interesting confirmation of this might be seen in the fact that RP85 preserves a copy of the Libel on Oxford, and H7392 a copy of that on Cambridge. Further, Robert Allott (Allatte) of Lincolnshire matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1581, at the age of 18.[2] According to Foster[3] Coningesby became M.P. for St. Albans in 1584, and does not seem to have gone on to the Inns of Court, but his cousin and Sidney's friend Sir Thomas Coningesby was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1584,[4] when Allott went to the Inner Temple.

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1. See Foster, Alumni Oxonienses (Oxford 1891) pt.i. There appears to be no mention of Coningesby in the Christ Church records of the late 1570s or early 1580s. His name appears only in the University Matriculation Register (Univ. Oxon. Arch. P., p.17) among a group of four Christ Church men matriculated apparently in November 1581, but out of place in the Register (c.f. p.21). He did not sign the Thirty-Nine Articles (Univ. Oxon. Arch. A.b.1, f.4) as matriculants were supposed to do after 17th November 1581, but this may have been because he was under sixteen. See A. Clark's edition of the Oxford Registers (O.H.S. x-xiv, 1887-9) for discussion of these points - especially vol.x, p.xxiv.

2. See Foster's Alumni Oxonienses. According to the records in Corpus Christi College, Allott was admitted to the College as a scholar in September 1577, aged fifteen. See Clark, O.H.S., x p.xxiv for an explanation of the difference in dates between entry to a College and matriculation.

3. Alumni Oxonienses.

4. See Foster, Gray's Inn Register (1889).

The Coningesbys are a difficult family to disentangle.[1] The family home was Nene Solers in Shropshire,[2] but in the late fifteenth century a younger branch moved to Rock, Worcestershire, and then to Hampton Court, Herefordshire, in the early sixteenth century.[3] Sir Humfrey Coningesby, Chief Justice under Henry VIII, at his death in 1535 left three sons: Thomas, the eldest, inherited the Herefordshire estate; the second, William, also a Judge, settled in Norfolk; and the third, John, settled on his wife's estate at North Mimms in Hertfordshire.[4] Thomas's grandson Sir Thomas Coningesby of Herefordshire was the courtier and soldier who accompanied Sidney on his

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1. In addition to the detailed references noted below, there is information about the family in: W. Berry's Pedigrees of Hertfordshire Families (1842) p.161; F. Blomefield's History of ... Norfolk vii (1807) p.413; H. Chauncy's Historical Antiquities of Hertfordshire (1700) pp.462,531; R. Clutterbuck's History ... of the County of Hertford (1815) i, pp.50,105,230,444; W. Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire (rev.1730) p.759; Le Neve's Pedigrees of the Knights, Harl.Soc.vii (1873) p.69; Notes and Queries, 1st ser.vi, p.406; xii, pp.222,312,414; 4th ser.viii, p.165; H. Robertson's Stemmata Robertson et Durdin (1895) p.133; C.J. Robinson's Manor Houses of Hertfordshire (1873) p.146; Visitations of Hertfordshire, Harl.Soc. xxii (1886) p.45; Visitation of Worcestershire, Harl.Soc.xxvii (1888) pp.14,43; R.E.C. Waters's Genealogical Memoirs of the Extinct Family of Chester (1878) p.259; V.J. Watney's Wallop Family (1928) p.222; and B.M.MSS Add.5524 f.70v, Add.6693 f.16 and Harl.807 f.102v. See Family Tree in Vol.2, pp.3-4.

2. The Genealogist, n.s. xxvi (1909) p.212.

3. Shropshire Arch. Soc., xlvii (1933) p.142.

4. London & Middlesex Arch. Soc., iv (1871) p.260.

grand tour, entered Gray's Inn in 1584, and was later Gentleman Treasurer to Queen Elizabeth.[1] John of Hertfordshire had two sons, the eldest of whom was Sir Henry who inherited North Mimms,[2] and the second was Humfrey, later M.P. for St. Albans.[3] Foster identifies this Humfrey with the Humfrey at Christ Church in 1581; his family had lands in Worcestershire,[4] though their main seat was in Hertfordshire.

Humfrey Coningesby married Mary Lee, daughter of Sir Richard Lee of Sopwell,[5] and through his father-in-law's influence seems to have been M.P. for St. Albans and Steward of the city in 1587.[6] He was Muster Master and Provost of Hertfordshire in 1589,[7] and a governor of Barnet School in 1591.[8] He died without an heir[9] and his widow

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1. Shropshire Arch. Soc., xlvii (1933) p.142. Sir Thomas was present at the Seige of Rouen in 1591, and kept a diary, which was printed by the Camden Soc., vol.xxxix, (1847).

2. Clutterbuck's Hertfordshire, i, p.444: he was Sheriff of Hertfordshire in 1569, and died in 1593.

3. Ibid., p.53.

4. See various references in Nash's Worcestershire (1781); and in the V.C.H. Worcestershire, iii (1913).

5. Clutterbuck's Hertfordshire, i, p.444.

6. Ibid., p.50.

7. See P.R.O., SP/12, vol.ccxxiv, item 94, and vol.ccxxv, item 19. Both documents concern the musters in the county, but they are in different hands which are not identified, and neither is in the same hand as H7392.

8. F.C. Cass, South Mimms (1877) p.116.

9. And apparently without a will - see P.C.C. 15 Montague (1602).

married Ralph Pemberton Esq.; she had no children and was dead by 1635.[1]

In the senior branch of the family that had remained at Nene Solers there was also a Humfrey Coningesby,[2] apparently a contemporary of his cousin Humfrey of North Mimms. Humfrey of Nene Solers was described as a "scholar and traveller"[3] and seems to have failed to return from his travels in 1611, whereupon his cousin Sir Thomas of Herefordshire inherited the Shropshire estates.[4]

The contents of H7392 are so similar to those of RP85 that one is tempted to see them both as anthologies kept by undergraduate courtiers. There is even the same distinction in grouping, the first part of H7392 being, like that of RP85, mainly courtly and ascribed. Coningesby, like Finnet, maintained an interest in his texts, adding poems and correcting others.

The connections with the Inns of Court occur mainly in the second half of the manuscript; Allott's contributions (which I suggest might be in his own hand) are added right at the end. If the anthology began

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1. Clutterbuck's Hertfordshire, i, p.105.
2. V.C.H. Worcestershire, iii (1913), p.285.
3. Visitation of Shropshire, Harl. Soc., xxviii, p.129.
4. Shropshire Arch. Soc., xlvii (1933), p.142. For his rather complicated will, suggesting a family quarrel, see P.C.C. 62 Weldon.

with an Oxford connection and continued with an association with the Inns of Court, another member of the group could have been a John Edmonds. There are poems ascribed "I.Ed.", "I.E." or "Ioh.Ed." on ff.64v, 67, 72-3, and the registers record a John Edmonds of Monmouthshire who matriculated at Gloucester Hall aged 20 in 1584, and was perhaps the same year a student of Gray's Inn from Clement's Inn.[1]

There is no real evidence to connect either of the Humfrey Coningesbys with H7392, although the possible connection with Oxford and the Inns of Court may be a point in favour of Humfrey of North Mimms. The manuscript has fewer datable items than RP85, but all the poems for which a date can be suggested belong in the first half of the 1580s or before, among the latest being "The French Primero" of c.1585 (f.62v). The lack of sonnets, the absence of poems associated with notable events of the late 1580s (such as Sidney's death) suggest very strongly that the manuscript was largely complete by the middle 1580s, which would agree with the dates of the association with Oxford and the Inns. This would make H7392 some years earlier in date than RP85. Perhaps it was begun when Coningesby was at Oxford, and continued when he was a young M.P. and Allott and Kniveton were at the Inns of Court. The miscellany is of as high a standard as RP85, and particularly valuable for its texts and ascriptions of courtly poems, especially those by Dyer and Lord Oxford.

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1. See Foster's Alumni Oxonienses and Gray's Inn Register. See below, chapter 13 for a further discussion of the Oxford and Inns of Court associations.

c) Cambridge MS Dd 5.75 (F) (hereafter Dd575)

This miscellany has received very little notice from scholars, and is interesting enough to warrant a detailed discussion.[1] Its contents are in two parts: the first twenty leaves and the leaf now f.57 (which has become misplaced)[2] contain occasional poems, mostly dated and with personal associations; and the rest of the miscellany, from ff.23-63v, is a collection in part of poems and songs of the same type as those appearing in RP85 and H7392, and in part of short riddles, or "ÆEnigmata" as they are called at one point (f.63v). The portion of the manuscript which overlaps in contents with the other manuscripts under discussion is the first twenty-two leaves of the more courtly section, from ff.25-47. F.32 is an exception to this, for it contains a large number of short riddles and epigrammatic jottings, some of them apparently from Classical authors, and from f.47v to the end of the miscellany the contents are mainly riddles and epigrams, interspersed with a few carols on ff.51v-52.

The manuscript thus presents a rather different overall impression from RP85 and H7392: there are many more occasional poems and riddles, and a marked emphasis on songs. The courtly section contains eleven poems by Sidney, two by Dyer, one by Ralegh, two perhaps by the Queen,

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1. See also the Commentary on the personal section of this MS and the families associated with it, below, chapter 12, Appendix.

2. See Commentary, p. 308 below.

two by Breton, and - interestingly - ~~seven~~ six by Gorges. Only Ralegh's one poem (C1) is ascribed, this section of the miscellany having very few poems with ascriptions.

Another feature of Dd575 is that unlike RP85 and H7392 it contains a number of texts apparently copied from printed sources. These can therefore be dated more accurately than much of the manuscript material, and they appear among the texts taken from manuscript circulation in a chronological order which gives some idea of the dates when neighbouring items might have been copied.

Like H7392, the courtly section of Dd575 opens with Dyer's "Fancy" (H2 - f.25); ff.26-7 include five poems from Sidney's Arcadia and two from Certain Sonnets, and a poem by Ralegh. An item on the traitor William Parry (executed in March 1585),[1] printed in Stow's continuation of Holinshed's Chronicles (1586) is on f.27v (W47), and on f.28 a speech made by the Queen to Parliament in 1575. "The French Primero" is on f.29; ff.30-31v have twenty-two songs copied from Nicholas Yonge's Musica Transalpina (1588).

A poem ascribed "ferd.Strange" (A7) and so copied before Ferdinando Stanley became Earl of Derby in 1593, is on f.32v, followed by a poem about Drake. On ff.34-5 are five poems taken from the anonymous pamphlet Marre Mar-Martin, probably published in late 1589 or early 1590.[2]

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1. See DNB.

2. See W. Pierce, An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts (1908) p.230.

The ~~seven~~ six poems by Gorges are on ff.36-40v, interspersed with other items such as four poems from Sidney's Arcadia (ff.36v-38). Spenser's sonnet (M8) is on f.37v, two poems by Breton on ff.37v,38v and the poem purporting to be made by the Queen about Anjou (W24) on f.38v.

The Libel on Baeshe is on ff.41-3, followed by a Latin poem about Mary Queen of Scots (03). F.43 has an item printed in Churchyardes Chance (1580) (D7), followed by a poem of Dyer's. Three poems on ff.44-46 appear in The Paradise of Dainty Devices (1576) and on f.46 is an entry headed "to the Q. by the players. 1598" (A33). It is followed by six riddles copied from Bartholomew Yong's translation of Gil Polo's Enamoured Diana, published in 1598, and, finally, on f.47 is a text of the ninth song from Sidney's Astrophil and Stella.

The preliminary section of the manuscript is the most interesting from the point of view of ascriptions and personal associations. It consists of nearly eighty poems and a number of short riddles. The poems are mainly described as new year's gifts, and are by William Paget to members of his family (dated 1581-6); by the compiler to Elizabeth Carey (1595-7); by H. Stanford to Lady Hunsdon in 1609 and 1610; by George Berkeley to members of his family and household (1610-12); and by H. Stanford to Lady Berkeley and Theophila Berkeley in 1612.

These ascriptions indicate that the miscellany was compiled by Henry Stanford (who was a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, 1573-81)

and that from 1581 to 1587 he was a retainer in the household of William, later fourth Lord Paget (1572-1629); in 1595 in that of Lady Elizabeth Carey (1576-1635), daughter of Sir George Carey, second Lord Hunsdon; and in 1610-12 in that of George, later eighth Lord Berkeley (1601-58). It appears that Stanford may have been a chaplain and tutor of some sort, and that he wrote verses himself as well as collecting the poetic efforts of his charges, the young lords Paget and Berkeley. The dates of the poems correspond quite closely with certain facts about the Paget/Carey/Berkeley families which are examined in detail below[1] as they provide a good deal of information about the compiler and the origins of the manuscript.

The preliminary section of Dd575 thus ranges from 1581 to 1612, and the rest of the manuscript seems to cover the same time span, though most of the courtly lyrics on ff.25-47 were apparently copied before 1600. Stanford may have begun collecting poems at Oxford, for he acquired texts of several of the poems also acquired by the compiler of H7392. His texts of [illegible] poems by Gorges suggest a personal connection, and Miss Sandison[2] has pointed out the links between Gorges and the Paget, Carey and Berkeley families. Gorges took his B.A. at Oxford in 1574,[3] when Stanford was a Fellow of Trinity, and there are four of his

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1. Appendix to Chapter 12.

2. H.E. Sandison, The Poems of Sir Arthur Gorges (Oxford 1953) p.xxxvii [Hereafter referred to as Sandison]

3. Clark, Oxford Registers, vol.ii, part iii, p.43. (OHS xii, 1888).

poems in H7392, which may suggest that poems of his were in circulation at Oxford in the late 1570s or early 1580s - although the texts in H7392 could also date from after 1584, when both Gorges and Coningesby were young M.P.s.[1]

Dd575 is all in the same hand, and extends to 63 leaves, size c.7½" x 5½". It was rebound in 1956 when some of the pages were deranged, so that the foliation now reads 1-36,38,37,40,39,42,41,44,43, 46,45,48,47,50,49,52,51,53-63. The miscellany is particularly interesting because of all the dates it provides, and for the insight it gives into the education of young gentlemen, and the interests of a noble household.

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1. Foster's Alumni Oxonienses.

d) Folger MS V.a.89 (hereafter Va89)

This miscellany was formerly classified as Folger MS 1.112, and is described as "The Cornwallis-Lysons MS" by Mr. W.H.Bond in an article in Joseph Quincey Adams Memorial Studies.[1] Mr. Bond describes it as a thin quarto of nineteen leaves, which has been interleaved and rebound, and has some notes made by Samuel Lysons who owned it at one time.[2]

It consists of two distinct sections: a group of seven poems, all signed with variations of the name John Bentley, on ff.3-5 in an odd irregular hand; and then twenty-six poems in a different hand on ff.6-18v.

The second section opens with an item ascribed to Lord Oxford, followed by a poem also found in The Paradise of Dainty Devices. On ff.6v and 9 are two poems ascribed "Vavaser" and apparently associated with the affair between Lord Oxford and Anne Vavasour.[3] F.8v has W24, usually thought to be written about Anjou by the Queen, but here attributed to Lord Oxford, Poems ascribed to Dyer are on ff.7,13,13v and another that may be his on f.11. F.7v has a poem ascribed to Ralegh, and another of his, unascribed, appears on f.12v. On f.9v is an item ascribed to "G.M." (but apparently the work of Sir William Cordall - M9),

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1. Ed. Macmanaway and others, (Washington 1948), p.683.
2. I have not seen the MS, but have worked from film.
3. See below, pp. 194-8.

and on f.14 the only item by Sidney - his answer sonnet to Dyer's on f.13 (both ascribed). F.15 preserves a text of a poem with Shakespearean associations (W30 - printed in The Passionate Pilgrim, 1599);[1] some anonymous pieces follow, and the last item in the manuscript is "The French Primero", written probably in 1585 rather than 1588 as Mr. Bond suggests,[2] and apparently the latest item in the manuscript.

Seventeen of the twenty-six items appear also in other texts. The hand appears to be early, and the predominance of Dyer and Lord Oxford as opposed to Sidney suggests an early date - perhaps in the middle 1580s. Mr. Bond suggests a date in the first half of the 1590s, but this is partly because he dates "The French Primero" in 1588: I see no reason for a date after 1590.

The John Bentley poems are obviously a separate item, in the style of Dyer and Lord Oxford and the poetry of the 1560s and 1570s. Nothing seems known of John Bentley, and his connection with the other poems in the manuscript is obscure, if there is any connection at all.[3]

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1. According to Mr. Bond, this MS was known to Malone and other Shakespearean scholars because of this text, one of the earliest MS examples of a piece associated with Shakespeare. There is another text in H7392, f.43.

2. See below, p. 84.

3. The Oxford Registers record a John Bentley who was a Student of Christ Church in 1567, took his M.A. in 1574 and was licensed to practise medicine in 1589. The Cambridge Registers mention a John Bentley admitted as a pensioner at St. John's in 1577.

There is, however, one interesting note at the front of the manuscript - the inscription "Anne Cornwaleys her booke" in a hand not unlike that of the main portion of the miscellany. Mr. Bond (and Lysons before him) suggests that this refers to Anne, daughter of Sir William Cornwallis, who married the Earl of Argyll in 1609.[1]

The Cornwallis family had been courtiers in the first half of the sixteenth century, but they were Catholics and retired to their Suffolk estates at Brome in Elizabeth's reign, apparently keeping out of public affairs. They were a large family, with several branches in different parts of East Anglia, and at various times during the second half of the century, there were at least eight people by the name of Anne Cornwallis.[2] There seems no way of deciding which (if any) of these Annes is the one referred to in the manuscript; Lysons may have decided on Anne, later Countess of Argyll, because she had a reputation as a writer,[3] but as she was married in 1609, she may have been rather

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1. Register of St. Botolph's, ed. Haller (1889), p.44.

2. See Family Tree in Volume 2, p. 5 . For details of the family, see: Gentleman's Magazine xcvi (1826) pt.i, p.406; HMC 75 Downshire II, p.216; Lincolnshire Pedigrees, Harl. Soc. 1 (1902) i, p.270; W.C. Metcalfe's Visitations of Suffolk (Exeter 1882) p.21; The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis 1613-44 (1842) p.xxxii; Proc. of Suffolk Inst. of Arch. xiv (1912) p.227; Visitation of Norfolk, Harl. Soc. lxxxv (1933) i, p.56; Visitations of Nottinghamshire, Harl Soc. iv (1871) p.161; Visitations of Suffolk, Harl Soc. lxi (1910) p.50.

3. See Complete Peerage, sub "Argyll".

young to collect poems in the 1580s.

The family was certainly interested in literature: Sir William Cornwallis, eldest son of Sir Charles of Beeston in Sprouston, Norfolk, was noted as an essayist and writer,[1] and Lysons' notes at the front of the manuscript trace the family tie between Sir William Cornwallis of Brome (father of Anne, Countess of Argyll, and uncle of Sir William the essayist) through his wife Lucy, daughter of Lord Latimer, to the de Veres, Earls of Oxford. This may add some weight to Va89's ascriptions to Lord Oxford. The miscellany is valuable also for its Dyer attributions, and its texts are often quite close to those in RP85 and H7392.

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1. See STC, nos. 5774-5783.

e) Marsh's Library MS Z 3.5.21 (hereafter Z3521)

This is a small volume of nearly two hundred pages of prose and verse, (size $6\frac{1}{2}$" x $4\frac{1}{2}$"), in several different hands. The verse is mainly concentrated at the beginning of the volume, and the section of most concern here is ff.1-34, consisting of forty-eight items in what appear to be three different hands.

The book still has its original vellum cover[1] and is bound in gatherings of eight leaves, though certain leaves are missing. The first two gatherings (ff.1-14v) are in a single secretary hand (which may be called Hand A); ff.1-2 are cognate, 3-4 are loose, and either f.5 or f.6 is missing. This gathering contains, among other items, a poem written perhaps by Lord Vaux before 1576 (when it appeared in The Paradise of Dainty Devices - T27), one written by Sir Henry Goodyer when he was in the Tower in c.1572 (I27), and a poem ascribed to "T.B." on the death of the Duke of Norfolk (1572 - T18). The second gathering starts on f.7 with the Oxford Libel (c.1564) and Dyer's "Fancy" (H2). After f.14v a leaf has been torn out, and a new gathering begins on f.15. Most of these items copied in Hand A thus appear to date from the 1570s or earlier.

The second hand (Hand B) begins on f.15 with Dyer's "Amarillis" (A20), ascribed to "G.Dier". This is followed by five unascribed poems by Sidney (four from Certain Sonnets, one from The Arcadia), two poems

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1. Cf. RP85 which still has the back cover remaining, f.127.

ascribed to Lord Oxford (one of them S12, here headed "Verses made of the Earle of Oxenforde, and Mrs. Ann Vauesor"), and two short Latin items also in RP85 (including S1, on the death of Sir Thomas Gresham in 1579). Hand B is a small neat Italian hand, quite unlike the florid secretary of Hand A. After f.19v, another leaf is missing.

On f.21v, what seems to be a third hand (Hand C) appears, bearing more resemblance to Hand A than to Hand B. It copied four items including "The French Primero" and a similar poem about Mary Queen of Scots, written perhaps in 1586 (S8). Hand C has also apparently added material in blank spaces of the preceding pages - a short Latin piece in lighter ink on f.3 (H5), and the Latin epigrams in darker ink on f.20 (P5). It has also added two pieces on f.34, ascribed to "D.H." and "H.A." (T40, I31).

Hand B continues on ff.23-30v with unattributed poems by Ralegh and Lord Oxford, and fifteen sonnets from Henry Constable's Diana, some signed "H.C." One sonnet on f.28 is headed "A Sonet in manner of a calculation on the natiuitye of a younge Ladye borne on a friday in this yeare.1588". (F3). Hand A reappears on F.31 with a long poem about recusants in Allertonshire (i.e. part of Yorkshire - R4).

After f.35 the manuscript consits largely of prose items in Latin and English, most of them mentioned by Edward Dowden in his brief description of Z3521.[1] Hand C adds some matter in English on ff.44v-49,

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1. "An Elizabethan Manuscript Collection" in Modern Quarterly of Language and Literature, i (1898) p.3.

after which two pages have been torn out, the foliation skipping from f.49 to f.52. F.93v-109v has "A short view of a large examination of Cardinall Allen his trayterous iustification of Sr W.Stanley and York, written by Mr. H.Const. and thus gathered out of his own draught" - an answer by the poet Constable (perhaps written in 1588)[1] to Allen's Letter ... concerning the Yeelding up, of the Citie of Dauentrie ... by Sir William Stanley ... (Antwerp 1587).

Ff.114v-124, 178 to the end, have some historical notes, chronicling events up to November 1587 (perhaps taken from Camden?); ff.124v-143v has lists of biblical kings and other figures; ff.146-157 consist of Bishop Corbet's "Iter Boreale"; ff.159-176 have some parliamentary speeches and other political matter; and f.176v a piece headed "A trew discription of Virgenia". On ff.125-126 are three of four barely legible texts of poems (in Hand C) including Ralegh's "What is our life? it is a play of passion", unascribed.

Although the items in Hand A seem earlier, part of the manuscript at least appears to be contemporary with RP85, for five texts (Dyer's A20; Lord Oxford's W36 and S12; the Latin S1 and "The French Primero", T37) all agree so closely with texts in RP85 that they must have been copied from the same originals. Except for T37, they are all in Hand B, which copied also the Constable sonnet dated 1588 - when Finnet was at

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1. See Constable's Poems, ed. Joan Grundy (Liverpool 1960) p.24.

St. John's, collecting some of the items in RP85. Constable was at St. John's as a fellow-commoner from 1578 to 1580[1] and it seems possible that some of his sonnets may have circulated in manuscript at Cambridge, because Sir John Harington, who was a fellow-commoner at King's College 1576-1581 and thus a contemporary of Constable's, acquired texts of twenty-one of the Diana sonnets, nine of which are also in Z3521.[2] Harington, however, dated his Constable texts 1589, and some of the texts in Z3521 give the impression of preserving earlier versions of some sonnets.[3] Z3521 appears to preserve the earliest Constable texts, and has been instrumental in changing Constable's position in the literary history of the 1590s by showing that some of the Diana sonnets had been written before the sonnet rage began to gather momentum with the publication of Sidney's Astrophil and Stella in 1591.

It is difficult to decide whether a Cambridge association should be suggested for Hand B, or merely a link with Finnet in the courtly circuits of manuscript transmission. Nevertheless a date of 1588 for the Constable texts in Z3521 is useful evidence in support of the dating of RP85 in the late 1580s, as suggested above. It is tempting to see the items copied by Hand A as earlier than those in Hand B, and the items in

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1. See Grundy, op. cit., p.17.
2. Ibid., p.87.
3. Ibid., pp.129, 175.

Hand C as roughly contemporary with those of Hand B, from the point of view of the subject matter. The only names appearing in the volume are "Robert Thornton" and "Mary Barnwall"[1] on the front fly leaf, "Samuell Ghilbart" in a later hand on f.93v, and "William Sheridan" on the back fly leaf, none of whom I have been able to trace satisfactorily. The composite nature of the volume would make an identification difficult to establish.

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1. The MS actually has "Μαργ βαρνναλλ ", together with "χερπωνεγως ".

f) The Arundel Harington MS

The Harington Manuscript at Arundel Castle is one of the most important of all the sixteenth century poetic miscellanies. It consists of 324 items covering the period from approximately 1540 to 1600, or, in other words, from the courtly makers of Henry VIII's reign to those of Queen Elizabeth's. The manuscript has been edited with great thoroughness by Miss Ruth Hughey[1] so that no more than a brief resumé is necessary here.

The miscellany was compiled by John Harington of Stepney (1520-1582) and continued by his son Sir John Harington of Kelston (1560-1612). There are thus two strata of poems, those collected by Sir John being those numbered by Miss Hughey 65-71, 91-92, 146-153, and 178-238. 65 and 66 have an association with Edmund Campion (martyred in 1581); 67 and 71 are by Sidney and ascribed to him (one from Certain Sonnets and the other a song from Astrophil and Stella); 68 is ascribed to Walter, first Earl of Essex (who died in 1576) and 69 to "Mr. Grevell" who may be Fulke Greville.

146-153 probably dated from the 1570s and are headed "Certayne verses made by vncertayne autors wrytten out of Charleton his booke"; they include Dyer's "Fancy" (H2, ascribed) and the poem written by Goodyer in the Tower, c.1572 (I27) also in Z3521. The major block of

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1. The Arundel-Harington MS (Columbus Ohio 1960) 2 vols (hereafter Hughey).

courtly lyrics overlapping with the other manuscripts discussed here are 171-238. They include items by early Elizabethan writers like Churchyard, Lord Vaux, Sir William Cordall, Sir Thomas Heneage, as well as later courtiers. Poems by Sidney (from The Arcadia and Certain Sonnets) occur as items 176, 191, 192, 196, 229 and 223 has the first sonnet of Astrophil and Stella, headed "Sonnettes of Sr Phillip Sydneys to the Lady Ritch". Lord Oxford's poem associated with Anne Vavasour is 179 (ascribed), followed by the three Libels - on Cambridge (180),[1] Oxford (181) and Baeshe (182). Spenser's quantitative iambics (printed in 1580) are 185 (unascribed), and unascribed poems by Greville at 198, Lord Oxford at 189 and Ralegh at 194, 235. 225 is Ralegh's epitaph on Sidney, here definitely attributed, and 201-221 "Mr Henry Conestables sonets to the Lady Ritch, 1589". 234 is Daniel's "Octavia to Anthony", unascribed.

The final section of the manuscript, made up of poems collected by the elder Harington before his death in 1582, includes two items by the Queen (238 - T8 - and 320, both unascribed) as well as poems by Churchyard, Richard Edwards, Lord Vaux, Sir William Cordall (including M9 - also in Va89), Sir John Cheke, John Astley and the brothers Lord John and Lord Robert Dudley (written before 1554). The manuscript is thus particularly important for its rich collection of texts covering most of the century,

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1. Here missing the first five stanzas.

and its valuable ascriptions, especially those to various minor courtly makers who would otherwise not be known as poets.

Sir John Harington was himself well-known as a courtier and poet, but it is interesting to see that his texts of poems by other courtiers are no better, on the whole, than those collected by lesser-known figures like Finnet, Coningesby or Stanford. He has, for example, very mutilated texts of the three Libels, and does not often appear to know the authors of the poems he collected. He does, however, seem to have had access to good texts of some of Sidney's poems, and knew Astrophil and Stella in manuscript.[1] His texts of Constable's sonnets are also important: he called Constable his friend[2] and his heading, giving the date and dedicatee, is ~~partly~~ particularly significant.

Sir John Harington is a figure who draws together several of the strands that have been running through this discussion. At Cambridge he was befriended by Essex and probably knew Constable. He went to Lincoln's Inn in 1581, but on his father's death the next year retired to Kelston in Somerset where he spent much of his time as a country gentleman, though he could not resist the attraction of a courtier's life and was often to be seen at court. He was a friend of Dyer's - a neighbour of his in Somerset[3] - and of Daniel's. He was a great

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1. See Ringler, p.553.
2. McClure, Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington, (Philadelphia 1930) p.40.
3. See his letter to Dyer in Bodleian MS Tanner 169 f.62.

favourite of the Queen's (his godmother), and though knighted by Essex in Ireland, escaped relatively lightly. His family seems to have been graced with the Queen's special favour for serving her faithfully in the dark days before her accession.

Sir John is thus courtier, poet and courtly anthologist. His was a literary family: his father wrote poems himself as well as collecting those of his friends such as Wyatt and Surrey, and Sir John was a great writer of epigrams and the translator of Ariosto (a presentation copy of which he sent to Sir Thomas Coningesby),[1] with a literary reputation that was deservedly high. Poems by both Haringtons are preserved in the miscellany, and there are also other volumes of manuscript poetry that they owned.[2] Like the other anthologists, Sir John probably started collecting poems at University, and continued at the Inns of Court and at the Court itself. His contribution to the miscellany would thus extend from perhaps the 1570s to after the turn of the century.

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1. McClure, op. cit., p.13.
2. See Hughey, i, pp.36ff.

These, then, are the six basic miscellanies, and the results they yield are surprisingly uniform. The same poems and poets turn up in them again and again, and their compilers, where these can be identified, appear to be young men (perhaps a lady) of good family, and to be courtiers or on the edge of the court circle. The manuscripts show too the importance of the Universities and the Inns of Court and Chancery, as well as the court itself, as centres of manuscript circulation, and the youthful interest in contemporary poetry fostered in these surroundings.

There are other miscellanies which overlap with these six basic manuscripts to a lesser extent. MS Harleian 6910 (hereafter H6910) in the British Museum has twenty-eight poems in common with one or more of the other miscellanies, and is the most important of the manuscripts with a more remote connection. It consists of 194 leaves containing over two hundred items, all written in a formal hand suggesting the work of one or more professional scribes copying to order - perhaps for a noble or wealthy patron. The first seventy-three leaves of the manuscript contain copies of Spenser's Complaints (printed in 1591 after having been "disperst abroad in sundrie hands").[1] These are followed by a manuscript text of Chapman's The Shadow of Night (printed in 1594)[2]

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1. See the Printer's note in the 1591 edition.

2. Adherents of the "School of Night" theory suggest that Shakespeare may have known a MS version of this when he wrote Loves Labours Lost - see M.C. Bradbrook, The School of Night (Cambridge 1936) p.127.

and, several pages later, by some passages from The Mirror for Magistrates, first appearing in the edition of 1563.

The rest of the miscellany consists of a large collection of poems, for the most part unascribed, and apparently culled from a variety of different sources. There are items by Campion, Essex, Southwell, Lord Vaux, and between ff.139v and 173v are scattered the poems also in other miscellanies, including eight by Dyer, five by Sidney, three by Lord Oxford, three by Ralegh and perhaps five by Breton. Of these only two of Sidney's are ascribed. The manuscript contains many short pieces (ff.160v-163, for instance, contain a collection of 374 posies for rings),[1] and almost half the items seem to be unique texts.[2] The contents were probably all copied in a fairly short space of time, and a note at the end of the Spenser texts on f.74v reads "E.T.1596", perhaps indicating the scribe and the date when that portion of the manuscript was completed.

The texts are often rather corrupt, and one has the impression that the scribe was more concerned with the visual impression of his page than the accuracy of his texts. The poems that are common with the other manuscripts indicate that the scribe of H6910 seems to have had access to some of the same manuscript sources that had been in circulation

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1. This is one of the earliest English collections of posies preserved - see Joan Evans, English Posies and Posy Rings (Oxford 1931).

2. Ringler, p.556.

in the late 1580s. They also, however, show, as Professor Ringler has pointed out, that "manuscript miscellanies, even when they have a number of poems in common, frequently draw them independently from widely differing sources."[1] For example, the texts of Dyer's three poems "Prometheus", "As rare to hear" and "I would it were not" are preserved in RP85, H7392 and Va89 as well as H6910, but in each case the H6910 text is derived from one tradition, and the other three manuscript texts from another.[2] On the other hand, the H6910 text of Sidney's "In a grove most rich of shade" descends from the same tradition as the text in RP85.[3] Ringler thus provides a timely warning of a danger that may have been threatening this discussion so far, in his caveat: "even when two or more manuscript miscellanies have a number of poems in common, we cannot assume that they drew them from the same originals, but must make a separate textual analysis for each poem."[4]

In view of the large number of unique texts in H6910, the number of texts which may have been copied from printed sources, the probable late date, the disparate nature of the contents and the lack of any clue about the compiler or owner of the anthology, H6910 has been excluded from the select group. It remains, though, an interesting

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1. Ringler, p.556.
2. See Volume 2, pp. 60, 90, 92.
3. Ringler, p.556.
4. Ibid.

miscellany standing just on the outskirts, and will reappear in the discussion from time to time.

Other manuscripts stand also on the outskirts with less claim to be included in the group. The Cosens Manuscript (British Museum MS Additional 34,064) shares eighteen poems with the manuscripts (fifteen with RP85); it seems to have a connection with the work of Nicholas Breton, and will be examined in the discussion of that poet below.[1] The Todd Manuscript (MS Dyce 44 in the Victoria and Albert Museum) shares seventeen poems with the manuscript group, but the majority of these are sonnets by Henry Constable, for which the manuscript is a major source.[2] British Museum Additional MS 38,823 (the commonplace book of Sir Edward Hoby, c.1582-96) has five poems in common with the miscellany group; so does Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poetry 148 (the miscellany of John Lilliat, c.1590-1600); and Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poetry 172 (a composite volume ranging from the late 16th century to the early 18th century) has six poems shared by the group. These, and other manuscripts that impinge briefly on the discussion at various points below, are noted summarily in the List of Works Consulted.[3]

There are printed sources too on the outskirts of the group: The Arte of English Poesie, probably the work of George Puttenham, (a treatise

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1. See p. 257.
2. See The Poems of Henry Constable, ed. Joan Grundy (Liverpool 1960), p.84.
3. See Volume 2, p. 452.

concerned mainly with discussing courtly poetry for a courtly audience) quotes or refers to eight poems also in the miscellany group, and sometimes seems to have drawn its texts from sources close to the manuscripts. It was printed in 1589, but seems to have been initiated in the 1560s, with much new material added about 1584.[1]

Then there are the printed miscellanies published after Tottel's as the interest in anthologies of this sort began to spread. These amount to either manuscript miscellanies which have found their way into print (like The Paradise of Dainty Devices), or anthologies collected by publishers or their agents especially for publication. The compilers of these printed miscellanies were thus in the same position as the manuscript compilers when it came to acquiring texts, and might have been less favourably placed for being farther from the courtly circles from whence emanated many of the choicest texts (though The Phoenix Nest is an exception here, undoubtedly courtly in tone).

There are six printed miscellanies which connect most closely with the manuscript group: The Paradise of Dainty Devices (1576: ten editions to 1606) was apparently collected by the court musician Richard Edwards before his death in 1566. At its maximum it contains 125 poems by over thirty authors, and shares thirteen poems with the six manuscripts. (Edited by H.E. Rollins, ~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1927).

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1. Puttenham, pp.xlix,li.

Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591) and The Arbor of amorous Deuises (probably first published in 1594),[1] were both printed by Richard Jones with the claim that they were mainly the work of Nicholas Breton,[2] although they include work by other writers. The Bowre has fifty-six poems by at least four authors, and shares thirteen poems with the manuscript miscellanies. (Edited by H.E. Rollins, ~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1933). The Arbor has forty-four poems by at least five authors, and the first surviving edition (1597) includes ten poems copied from the Bowre. The Arbor (edited by H.E. Rollins, ~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1936) shares six poems with the manuscript miscellanies.

The Phoenix Nest (1593), "set foorth by R.S. of the Inner Temple Gentleman", has seventy-nine poems in good texts, by at least thirteen authors, and sometimes seems to have drawn on sources close to those of the manuscript miscellanies, with which it shares eleven poems. (Edited by H.E. Rollins, ~~Harvard~~ Cambridge Mass. 1927).

Englands Helicon (1600), one of the best-known of the Elizabethan printed miscellanies, was perhaps edited by Nicholas Ling for John Bodenham. It has a good selection of poems - at its maximum 159 by over thirty authors - but some of the texts have been edited so that they conform better to the pastoral note that is the keynote of the anthology. Some of the texts drawn on are earlier, and nine poems appear also in the manuscript

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1. See Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge Mass. 1936), p.xi.

2. See below, p. 259.

miscellanies. (Edited by H.E. Rollins, ~~Harvard~~ Cambridge Mass. 1935).

A Poetical Rapsody (1602), edited by Francis Davison, is the last and largest of the Elizabethan printed miscellanies; at its maximum it has 250 poems by over twenty authors. Some of the poems were written "almost twentie yeers since", and seven appear in the manuscript miscellanies. (Edited by H.E. Rollins, ~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1931).

What all these miscellanies with items in common preserve to a greater or lesser degree is a body of poems which were circulating in manuscript between the 1570s and the 1590s. Some of these poems, written by the leading poets of the day, were well-known, and they were often ascribed to their authors in the sources in which they were copied. Other poems were well-known too, but ideas about their authorship were conflicting, or obscure, or altogether absent. These represent the popular poems, texts of which were generally accessible, and which seemed for one reason or another, to be of general appeal to the taste of the time.

These are the poems appearing in largest numbers in the two basic manuscripts, RP85 and H7392 - the two miscellanies that form the centre of the cluster of texts on which the following studies will be based. They provide too, the most important evidence of ascriptions; without them the already severely restricted number of poems that can be attributed to Dyer, Lord Oxford, the Queen, and, to a lesser extent, Ralegh, would be reduced almost to the point of extinction.

The other miscellanies contribute to the cluster in varying degrees, each adding also to the number of single texts - poems preserved, usually anonymously, in one source only. Some of these are songs or lyrics in the best courtly tradition; some are riddles or couplets or other ephemera, often apparently added to fill up a vacant space at the foot of a page. Others appear to be the work of the compilers of the miscellanies, their friends or charges - they are on the whole occasional poems, or the result of exercises in translation. They afford an interesting insight into the tastes of the day, and the way in which the poetry of the leading writers left its mark upon their imitators.

The body of poems to be found in these miscellanies has thus a double nature: on the one hand it consists of public, popular poems, and on the other of personal, private poems. These two poetic impulses exist side by side, intermingled in the same manuscripts, their differences shading off one into the other, as a private poem by a leading courtier finds its way into general circulation and into popularity - a text of a poem put into my Lady Leighton's pocket by Sir Walter Ralegh comes into the hands of an Oxford undergraduate.

Each manuscript has its own particular flavour, the result of the tastes of its compiler (or compilers) and the accessibility of poetic texts. Thus though the centre of the cluster, marked by the commonest texts, is clear, its edges are ill-defined, depending on the number of unique texts to be included. And of course the number of manuscripts

that have survived probably represent only a portion of those that existed during the period when these poetic texts circulated. New information may yet come to light, perhaps adding new texts to the cluster as it is here described.

For the purposes of this discussion, the cluster of texts will be represented by the First-Line Index of poems in Volume 2 (pp.393-451): it consists of the full contents of RP85 and H7392, together with those relevant portions of the other four manuscripts - a selection made necessary by size; a full index of all the manuscripts concerned would run to several thousand entries. The index gives an indication of the nature of the cluster of texts - the authors of the poems (where these can be discovered), the ascriptions, and the whereabouts of other texts, both manuscript and printed. It thus provides an indication of the situation regarding multiple and unique texts.

The two different sorts of poems, public and private, will provide the two focal points for subsequent parts of this discussion. In Part II are examined those of the public poems which can reasonably be connected with the courtly writers, the Queen, Sir Edward Dyer, Lord Oxford, Sir Walter Ralegh, Sir Arthur Gorges, Sir Philip Sidney, Nicholas Breton, and Lord Derby. It is thus a study of the miscellanies as repositories of courtly verse in manuscript circulation, and of the compilers' positions in the circuits of manuscript transmission, and it is mainly concerned with discussing (and, it is hoped, clarifying) problems of canon and text. In Part III are examined the private poems - those

preserved in single texts and probably the work of the compilers and their friends. It is thus a study of the miscellanies from the point of view of amateur imitations of the work of the leading courtly writers. It includes some little-known amateur poems and discusses points of literary history and social environment - in particular the place of poetry in the education of an Elizabethan gentleman.

Chapter Three

THE FRENCH PRIMERO :

A Study in Popularity.

Then, Guise,
Since thou hast all the cards within thy hands,
To shuffle or cut, take this as surest thing,
That, right or wrong, thou deal thyself a king.
Ay, but Navarre, Navarre, - 'tis but a nook of France,
Sufficient yet for such a petty king,
That, with a rabblement of his heretics,
Blinds Europe's eyes, and troubleth our estate.

Marlowe: The Massacre at Paris

'In another Country', quoth the Scholler, 'I saw one yeere such bloodshed, that there hath been warres euer since.' 'Alas' quoth the Angler, 'the massacre in Paris can be your witnesse for that truth: where the deuill and the Pope made the Duke of Guise the chiefe murtherer.'

Breton: Wits Trenchmour

Section I: The Poem and its Interpretation

Among the most popular of all the poems that courtly anthologists of the 1580s copied into their miscellanies is a rather neatly worked conceit of a game of cards, entitled "The French Primero". It is preserved in at least nine texts of varying length, but an edited version is presented in Volume 2 (page 13).

The note at the head of one text provides most of the clues necessary for the interpretation of the poem. The players are the King of France (Henry III); Henry, Duke of Guise; Henry, King of Navarre

(later to be Henry IV); and Charles, Cardinal Bourbon. The bystanders are Guise's supporters and confederates,[1] King Philip II of Spain; the Queen Mother (Catherine de Medici); and Pope Sixtus V.

The date, 1585, is significant for at that time France was embroiled in the War of the Three Henries - a struggle over the succession and a new phase in the religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants.[2] The Catholics were grouped round the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine in an association known as the Holy League, dedicated to stamping out the Protestant heresy. The opposing parties had been brought into the open in 1584, when the death of Anjou made the Huguenot Henry of Navarre the obvious heir to the French throne, and the assassination of the Prince of Orange made him the Continent's leading Protestant champion. At the end of 1584 the Holy League had therefore made the secret Treaty of Joinville with King Philip of Spain, whereby Navarre and his brother the Prince of Condé were to be excluded from the succession, and their uncle, Cardinal Bourbon, was to become heir. Philip in return agreed to subsidize the league with a monthly contribution of fifty thousand crowns. There seems little doubt that Philip was intending to influence the situation for his own ends, not

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1. "Packer, a confederate in a fraudulent design, a conspirator, a plotter. In cards, a shuffler." (OED)

2. Authorities drawn on here are:
J.B.Black in Oxford History of England (1959), viii, p.364.
A.J.Butler in Cambridge Modern History (1904), iii, pp.30,288.
J.H.Eliott, Europe Divided 1559-1598 (1968), ch.x.
J.E.Neale, The Age of Catherine de Medici (1943), ch.vi.
W.Sanders, The Dramatist and the Received Idea (Cambridge 1963) p.24.

only against the interests of Navarre, but also against those of England and the Netherlands. It seems that Guise, for his part, was aiming at nothing less than the Crown.

Henry III eventually gave in to the pressures of the League, and in July, 1585, the Treaty of Nemours placed North East France in the hands of Guise. The Huguenots were proscribed and the War began. Elizabeth, seeing that Henry was powerless in the face of the Catholic alliance, had no alternative but to send Leicester to the Netherlands in the hope of keeping the Spanish conflict confined there, and to give the United Provinces some assistance. In France fighting dragged on sporadically; in September the new Pope, Sixtus V, joined in the struggle with his Bull depriving Navarre and Condé of their estates and absolving their vassals from allegiance. The League, however, had no great successes; Navarre kept to guerilla tactics, and Henry III and Catherine tried to make peace. This was the state of affairs by the end of 1585 - when it seems that "The French Primero" was written.

The importance of these events to the English cannot be overestimated. The religious struggles in France gave an indication of what could happen, should the religious controversy be allowed to flare up once more in England. After the Pope's excommunication of Elizabeth in 1570, any massing of Catholic power in Europe was potentially dangerous. There was always the threat of Spain (which was to culminate in the Armada), and, nearer at hand, the Catholic plots which gathered round Guise's cousin, Mary Queen of Scots. It was partly Guise's schemes

for a Catholic rebellion in England starting from Scotland that led to the Babington plot and Mary's execution in 1587.

In the dark days of 1585, with the forces of the House of Guise, Spain and the Papacy massing against Navarre, backed only by what support England and the Netherlands could afford to give him, and with France powerless or in the grip of Spain, the situation must have looked bleak indeed for Protestantism in Europe. It is no wonder that English writers should have seen the affairs in France in a strongly partisan light, and have focussed their anxiety on those diabolical scape-goats, Guise, Philip of Spain, and the Pope. The popular view of the situation is probably well expressed in works such as Marlowe's play The Massacre at Paris, and in the contemporary Protestant pamphlets and Huguenot translations on which it was largely based.[1] "The French Primero" is the more courtly view of the situation. As Navarre's secretary wrote to Walsingham: "France is a stage on which is being played a strange tragedy in which all Christendom has a share. Many persons will come on, if not in the earlier acts, at any rate in the later."[2]

"The French Primero" describes the contemporary situation in France in terms of Primero, a gambling game very popular in the courts of Europe from the early sixteenth century. It was especially popular

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1. See Wilbur Sanders, The Dramatist and the Received Idea, (Cambridge 1968) chapter 2.

2. Quoted by A.J. Butler in Cambridge Modern History (1904), vol.iii, p.38.

among royalty and nobility - Henry VIII played it, Elizabeth liked to take a hand at it, and, if one is to believe a story told by Sir John Harington, even the Pope and his Cardinals were not above a game.[1] The stakes were frequently large: on August 6th, 1576, Roger Lord North lost £33 (equivalent to over £700 today), probably to the Queen.[2] It was just the sort of game in which the stakes might well be a kingdom; as Harington commented, "if her Majestie would play at Primero in that proportion of her estate as I have seen some of her mean subjects in theyr poor callinges, she showld play a dukedome at a rest, and a barrony stake ..."[3]

It is not entirely clear how the game was played, but the researches of, in particular, J.S. McTear have brought to light some of the details, and explain many of the technical terms used in the poem.[4] Play seems to have consisted mainly in staking money and betting

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1. See "A Treatise on Playe" in Nugae Antiquae (1779) ii, p.195.

2. See Sidney Papers, ed. A. Collins (1746) ii, p.83. [Letters and Memorials of State].

3. See Harington, op. cit., ii, p.183.

4. Notes and Queries, 11th series, vi (1912) p.347; vii (1913) pp.1,23,41.
   For other discussions of Primero, see:
   D. Barrington and J. Bowle in Archaeologia, viii (1787), pp.133, 147;
   M. St. Clare Byrne, Elizabethan Life in Town and Country (1961) p.244;
   Charles Cotton, Games and Gamesters of the Restoration, in The Compleat Gamester, 1674 (repr. 1930);
   Epigrams of Sir John Harington, ed. McClure (Philadelphia 1930) p.418;
   A. Forbes Sieveking in Shakespeare's England (Oxford ~~1950~~ 1916) ii, p.472;
   S.W. Singer, Researches into the History of Playing Cards (1816) p.244;
   J.S. Strutt, Sports and Pastimes of the People of England (1903) p.261.

on the strength of one's hand. A player would usually have to make three sorts of monetary contributions: Stakes, Rests,[1] and Vies;[2] the Stakes were placed in the pool first, and two cards dealt to each player, who could at this point withdraw from the game and Pass[3] (in which case he would forfeit his Stake), or remain in (in which case he had to contribute his Rest also). He could retain or discard the cards already dealt him and was dealt more cards, to bring his hand up to four. At this point the vying or betting began, the vie being a fixed sum placed in the pool. Players could Pass, Vie or Hold,[4] and when the stakes of those still remaining in the game became equal, there was a show of hands to decide the winner. Hands were valued according to set rules, the highest being a Flush (four cards of the same suit).

There are, however, certain points about the game which remain to be explained: in particular, the procedure for vying is obscure, but it was probably partly concerned with trying to bluff or outwit the other players. Both Harington and John Florio describe games of primero where

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1. "Rests: the stakes kept in reserve, which were agreed upon at the beginning of the game, and on the loss of which the game terminated. To set one's rest: to venture one's final stake, hazard one's all." (OED)

2. "Vie: a sum ventured or staked on one's cards; a challenge, venture or bid. To vie: to hazard a sum on the strength of one's hand, declare oneself able to win." (OED)

3. "Pass: in Primero, poker, etc., to throw up one's hand, retire from the game." (OED)

4. "Hold: to accept as a wager." (OED)

the players apparently make deliberately misleading statements about their hands.[1] When and how one discarded is also not entirely clear. Discarding seems to have been obligatory for some hands - Harington has another story where,

> The Kinge, 55 eldest hand, set vp all restes and discarded flushe; Domingo ... helde it vppon 49 ...; when all restes wear vp and they had discarded, the Kinge threw his 55 on the boord open, with great lafter, supposing the game (as yt was) in a manner sewer. Domingo was at his last carde incowntered flush, as the standers by saw and tolde the daye after; but, seeing the Kinge so merry, would not for a rest at Primero put him owt of that pleasawnt conceyt, and put vp his cardes quietly, yeelding it lost. (2)

There is an apparently similar situation in the poem, suggesting that the holder of a Flush had to discard:

> The King was rash without regard,
> And being Flush, would needs discard ...

The poem opens with some of the players (the King and Guise from what follows) vying on the strength of their hands, while the others hold. There is a warning that "best assured may prove too bold": primero, as Harington's stories show, was a game of surprises, where the over-confident could often lose. The King is still nominally in control of France and so holds a Flush and must discard. But first he passes, and Guise, with no real claim to the throne and so nothing of value in his hand, immediately vies.

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1. Harington, Nugae Antiquae (1779) ii, p.195; and Florios Second Frutes (1591), [K3].

2. Harington, op. cit., ii, p.197.

Navarre, the legal heir and sure of his cards, also passes, though the wisest bystanders (presumably the English and Protestant Europe) think he has the best chance of winning and urge him to stake everything on it by "setting his rest". The Cardinal, whose claim to the throne is remote and who has been dragged into the game because the League needed a Catholic heir to replace Navarre, has nothing worth betting on and would like to throw in his hand if he could, and as his friends advise him. But the powerful Guise party keep him in the game, so that through him Guise can acquire the crown. Also, "Cardinals' hats make busy heads", so he stays in the game.

All four players remain in, so the Rests go into the pool and the stakes begin to mount. Philip, worried at the strength of Navarre's hand, subsidizes Guise in the hope that he can outvie Navarre and so drive him from the game. This is an obvious reference to the Treaty of Joinville. The Pope also lends his influence in the form of his Bull declaring Navarre incapable of succeeding to the French throne. Navarre, however, is undeterred by these attempts to frighten him out of the game. Having contributed his Rest to the pool, he will gain nothing by retiring at this stage.

Guise now begins to sense that the odds are against him:

> With that the Guise pipes at his guard,
> "Help stock," quoth he, "else all is marred."

This is obscure and probably corrupt, but seems to be a rather shrill appeal to the "stock" - the cards remaining in the pile still to be dealt.

If, like Domingo in Harington's story, he can draw the right card, he may yet win. Meanwhile he has the assistance of the Queen Mother, whose attempts at appeasement carry the suspicion of cheating.[1]

The King, since he is still King of France, knows all their cards, and advises the others to reduce their vies before showing their cards. He attempts to delay the issue, in a last effort to save the game for both himself and Guise; and there the author of the poem leaves them, with the situation as it stood towards the end of 1585.

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1. "To pack cards: to arrange or shuffle to secure a fraudulent advantage; to make a cheating arrangement." (OED)

Section II: An Editorial Experiment

It has recently become a popular pastime for editors engaged in producing texts from various literary periods to present their methods and techniques in the form of an article in which these procedures are discussed and then applied to a particular poem as an experiment in editing.[1] Editorial procedures have advanced greatly in this century (largely thanks to the basic principles laid down by scholars such as Greg) but a foolproof method which can be applied to any text still does not exist (and probably never will), and it is thus to be expected that editors working in different fields will evolve their own methods of dealing with the individual problems that confront them.[2]

Briefly, the case has been one of adapting to the special needs of English Literature the techniques evolved by nineteenth century Biblical and Classical scholars such as Lachmann. This has consisted in examining the variants of particular texts and trying with their aid to arrange the existing texts of a work into a pattern demonstrating their genetic relationships - what Lachmann called a stemma or genealogical tree. This stemma is then used in the process of re-examining the variants and arriving through them at the original readings.

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1. For example, J.B. Leishman, "You meaner beauties of the night" in The Library, xxvi (1945) p.99; E. Wolf, "If shadows be a picture's excellence" in PMLA lxiii (1948) p.831; L.A. Beaurline, "A session of the poets" in SB xvi (1963) p.43.

2. For a list of works dealing with principles of editing, see Volume 2, p.466.

Since Greg's Calculus of Variants, the impetus has been to apply to the procedures of stemmatics various mechanical, mathematical or statistical techniques in the hope of thereby ensuring that the editor's human judgement is severely restricted. These methods are carried to their statistical limits in the work of scholars such as Mr. V.A. Dearing; but together with this supposedly scientific approach to editing, there has been in recent years a growing suspicion that such mechanical techniques are not the answer to editing a text: criticisms that have been voiced most cogently by Professor G. Kane in his edition of the A Text of Piers Plowman.

Professor Kane's main points are that for a poem like Piers Plowman, which was copied many times and is preserved in numerous texts, all some distance from the original, any genetic relationship of the texts that can be postulated does not take into account agreements in error which cut right across such relationships. Kane prefers instead to use tendencies of scribal variation, which arise from an analysis of the variants, as a better method of arriving at the original readings. All substantive variants are considered so that any misinterpretation from selection might be avoided, and each variant is considered on its own terms without the application of rigid statistical techniques founded on a doubtful genealogical hypothesis.

In the light of all this editorial discussion it is thus useful for a researcher engaged in examining texts to discuss the methods he

has used in his researches, and if possible to give a demonstration of his techniques in action before proceeding to a presentation of texts he has arrived at.

The editorial problems confronting an editor of the poems preserved in the courtly manuscript miscellanies of the 1580s are different from those facing other editors in certain important respects. Such poems are usually at some distance from their originals, they were copied for the most part by amateur scribes from unauthorised and unrevised copies, and the number of variant readings they preserve indicate that the texts are usually highly corrupt. In most cases there are no authorised printed texts, and in hardly any cases at all are poems to be found in holograph - few of them, in fact, give any indication of their author's identity. Being generally short and with a popular, social appeal, they tend to be particularly liable to corruptions resulting from the habit of manuscript circulation and from copies being made under less than perfect conditions - at a social gathering perhaps, or even from a musical setting.

Their popularity has often meant that out of the large number of copies made, only a few scattered texts remain, making it very difficult to construct any form of genealogical arrangement. With so many copies in circulation, the possibilities for conflation, contamination and chance agreement in error are so great as to make any genealogical grouping (even though it might correctly express the genetic relationship of the existing texts) of little use as a means of restoring the original

readings. The copyists too undoubtedly took liberties with their texts, correcting or emending freely, on what basis one cannot always tell. All this combines to produce a situation where, as Kane found in the case of Piers Plowman, the more scientific techniques of recension cannot always be applied with any great success.

"The French Primero" offers a good opportunity for such a discussion of editorial procedures. It is short enough to keep discussion to reasonable length, and it was one of the most popular poems in circulation in the late 1580s. It appears in five of the six manuscripts with which these studies are specially concerned, and also in five other manuscript texts, and these ten texts preserve what amount to four different versions of the poem. It has thus a rather curious and complex textual situation, and demonstrates many of the problems encountered in examining the transmission of a popular poem in manuscript.

Dr. C.F. Bühler first drew attention to the poem in an article in Joseph Quincey Adams Memorial Studies.[1] He came across a text on a single loose sheet in the Pierpont Morgan Library, and quoted other texts in MSS Folger 1.112 (since reclassified as V.a.89) and Harl.3787.

The texts of the poem preserved in the Folger and Morgan Manuscripts were of a poem 24 lines long, in the form of six quatrains rhyming in couplets. There are other texts of this version of the poem (which one might call the "b" version) in MSS Cambridge Dd5.75, Tanner 169 and

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1. "Four Elizabethan Poems", p.700; ed. Macmanaway and others, (Washington 1948).

Egerton 2642.

The third text referred to by Dr. Bühler (in MS Harl.3787) is however in a different form, consisting of 20 lines which are not broken into stanzas, and omitting lines 19-22 of the "b" version. A similar text, resembling that of Harl.3787 very closely, is preserved in MS.Harl. 7392: together these two texts form what one might call the "c" version of the poem.

Another shortened form of the "b" version of the poem is to be found in texts in MSS Marsh Z3.521 and Rawl.Poet.85. These two texts are very closely related and consist of 21 lines again unbroken into stanzas, and lacking lines 15 and 21-22 of the "b" version of the poem. This second shortened form of the "b" version (which may be called the "d" version) is in places rather further from the "b" group of texts than the texts in the "c" group.

The fourth version of the poem (which may be called the "a" version) is preserved in a single text, differing considerably from all other texts. It is to be found in MS Egerton 2642 (on f.324; the "b" text in the same manuscript is on f.232), and is almost twice as long as the "b" version, consisting of 44 lines in 11 quatrains, and amounting to the "b" version of the poem with 4 extra lines after line 10; 6 extra after line 12; and 10 extra after line 16.

Such a textual situation is not easy to interpret. The states of the text represented by the "c" and "d" versions are apparently derived from the "b" version of the poem, of which they represent slightly

mutilated texts - a common enough fate for a popular poem much copied in manuscript. But the relationship of the "a" and "b" versions presents more of a problem. There seem to be two possible explanations: either the longer "a" version is the original state of the text, so that what the "b", "c" and "d" texts exhibit one might call Progressive Erosion; or alternatively, the shorter "b" version may be the original state of the text, which was then expanded and revised into the "a" version.

Before a solution to this can be suggested, it is necessary to examine more closely all the variants preserved in these ten texts. A full collation is given in Volume 2 (p. 19) in which the longest version ("a") has been taken as a base. Each variant is analysed briefly so that one can select those that are significant. The notations come from Greg's Calculus[1] where "simple" variants are those with only two alternative readings: "type-1" is the description given to variants in one text only; and "type-2" to variants found in more than one text. According to Greg, "only those variants which give rise to at least two groups of more than one manuscript each" are "significant" (i.e. type-2 and above). And one should add, I think, that only those which are not reversible and which are unlikely to have arisen independently in different texts through scribal choice or coincidental variation should be regarded as entirely significant.

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1. Greg, The Calculus of Variants (Oxford 1927) 18ff.

Type-1 variants can never be significant, but each text should possess some of these to indicate that all the texts are terminal, and that no one text is a copy of any other text.

Two points emerge immediately from the collation. In the first place, some of the variants examined amount really to accidentals in that they reflect the scribe's habits of speech and his preference for one grammatical form or turn of phrase rather than another. They make little difference to the final poem, and give an editor very little indication of which form the author used, if be used any of them. Instances are the alternatives straightway/straightways in line 8; the While/Whiles/Whilst variants in line 26; the relatives who/that/which in line 39; and the variants away/our way/my way in line 44.

Secondly, the E26a scribe tends to be liable to attraction: he writes "his" instead of "is" in line 36, because of the "his" in line 35, just above; the extra syllable in line 12 is, I suggest, "best" which has strayed into line 12 from line 11. His diction seems to be somewhat more archaic than that of the other manuscripts - for example "full fayntely" in line 15, "gan to ryse" in line 25. Perhaps this slightly old-fashioned note may be from the original and has been polished away by later scribes. In this respect, more exact information of the dates when the various texts were made might be of interest as an indication of how changing scribal habits might alter a poem.[1]

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1. Most of the texts were apparently copied in the 1580s or 1590s, but T1 and PM date from the early 17th century.

Variants which might be the result of a time difference are stands/ standeth (1.37), makes/make (1.24), goes/goeth (1.40).

But the main function of a collation is to sort out the variants, and by making use of those thought to be significant, to attempt to fit the various texts into a stemma showing their genetic relationship. One might start by examining the omissions, and from these it would appear that state "c" of the poem (lacking lines 39-42) and state "d" (lacking lines 38, 41-42) are both truncated descendants of state "b" (the 24 line version), and, further, that they both descend from a state "x" lacking lines 41-42. Thus:

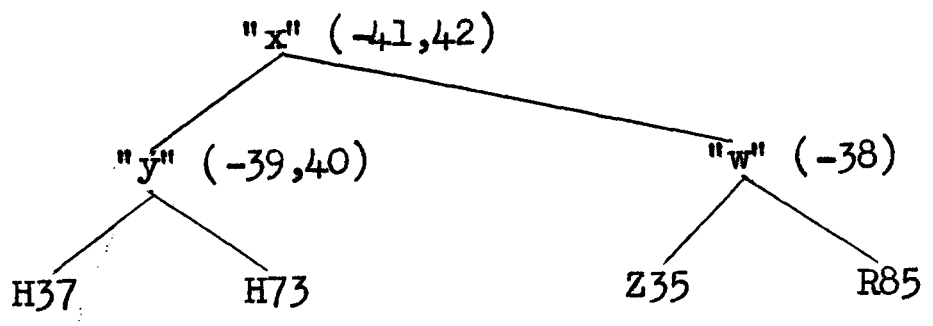

fig. (i)

Apart from the omissions, there are other significant variants, particularly lines 15-16 and 23-26. These resolve into patterns or arrangements[1] of three types:

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1. The patterns represented by figures (ii)-(vi) should not be considered stemmata: they are merely ways of indicating diagrammatically the apparent relationships between texts, showing variation but not descent. They are grouped horizontally to try to avoid suggesting that one reading is derived from another. Stemmata (such as figures (i) and (vii)) imply derivation and move vertically. It may be helpful to imagine the pattern diagrams as being constructed out of some flexible material, like wire, which will enable them to be converted into stemmata by bending

/Continued....

line 26

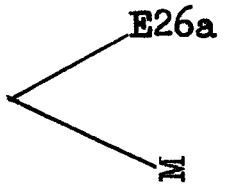

fig. (ii)

line 16

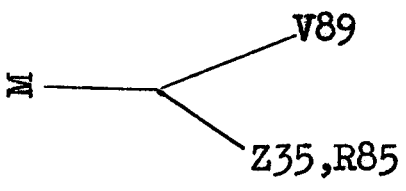

fig. (iii)

lines 15, 23, 25

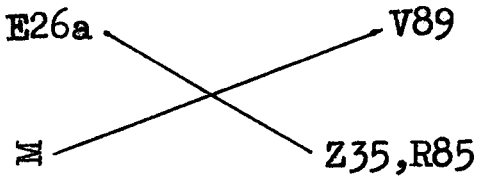

fig. (iv)

Figure (iv) is the most common arrangement, and includes the other two patterns.

There are also two points where the variants may perhaps be significant, but it is difficult to be certain:

line 4 (be/prove)

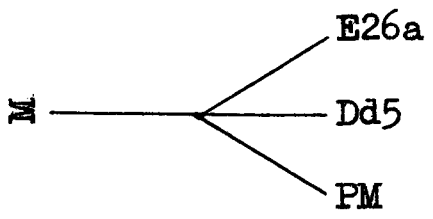

fig. (v)

line 37 (stood behind/standeth at)

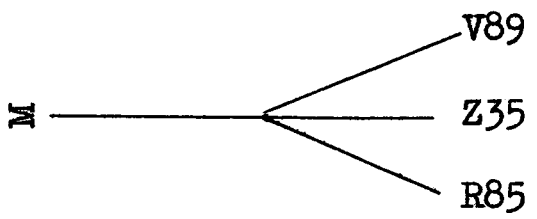

fig. (vi)

These groupings will not co-ordinate very well: figure (vi), for instance, seems to contradict figure (i), and there is little in the grouping of variants to support the suggestion of figure (i) that (Z35,R85) and

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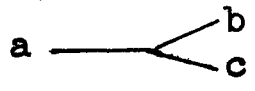
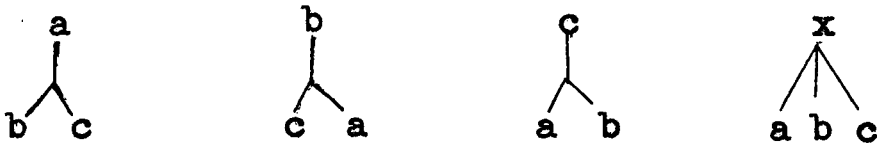
Footnote continued from previous page:

and twisting the diagram so that one extremity (or perhaps one of the points of intersection) is placed at the apex of the stemma and so is considered the ancestor, and the other extremities then become the descendants. Thus a pattern 

(like figure (iii)) could imply any one of four stemmata:



(H37,H73) descend from a common ancestor. Nor is there very much information about the exact relationships of the other texts which generally support the ℵ reading. If, however, one attempted to combine these various patterns into a single stemma, the result would, I think, be:

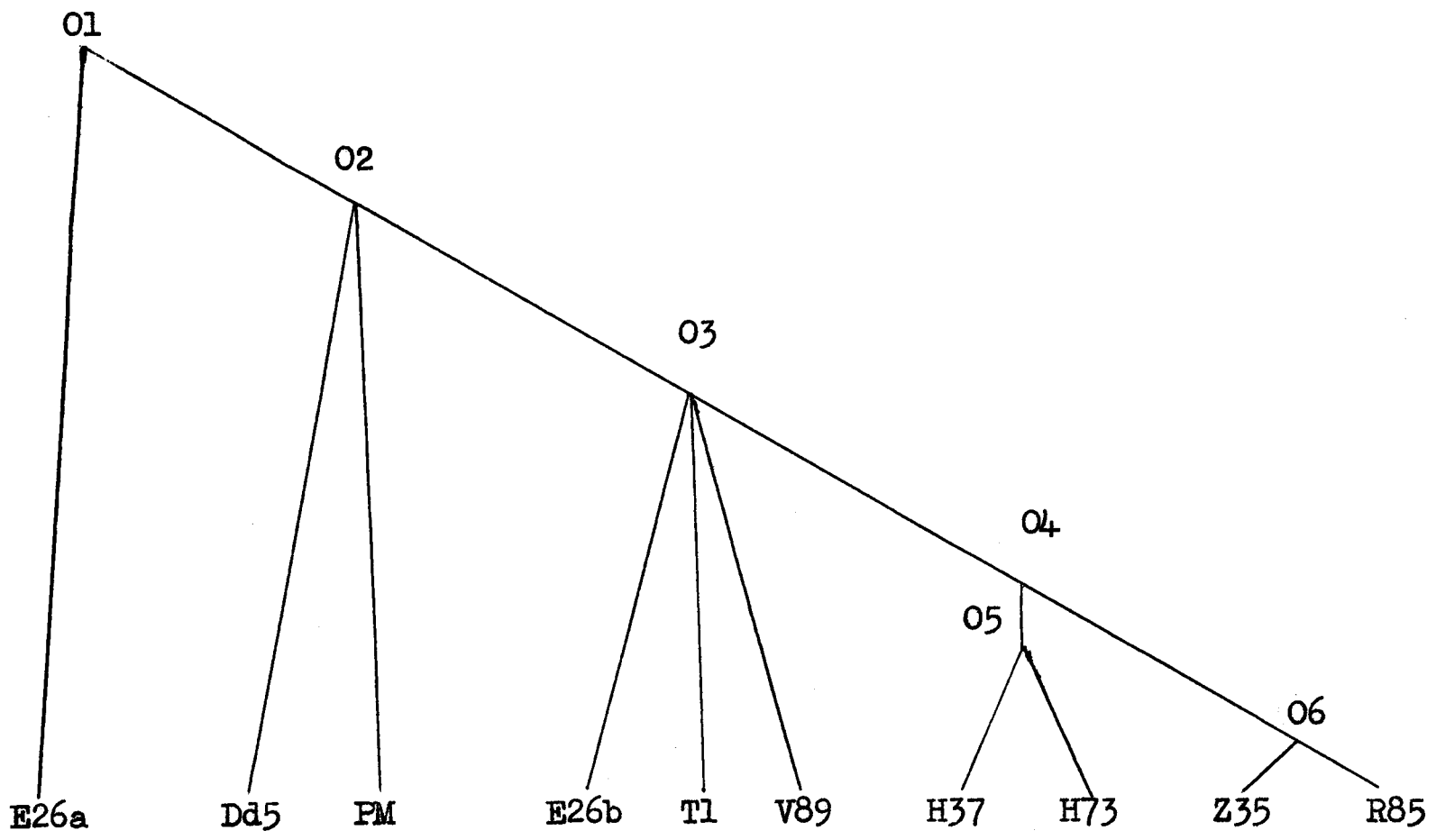


Fig. (vii)

although this does not include figure (vi) above, and obscures the dominant pattern of figure (iv) which seems to me the most significant one to emerge from the collation.

A definite stemma thus cannot be drawn with any confidence, partly because there is not really enough significant variation, and partly because there is a certain amount of conflicting evidence. I suggest, however, that even if one were able to reach a more exact stemma, one

would be faced with the ultimate grouping of ≷:E26a, or the "a" version : the "b" version, and a stemma cannot help resolve such an ambiguity.

The point of a stemma is that it should enable an editor to work from the variants of the extant texts back to the readings of the no longer extant version which was the ultimate ancestor of all these texts. This stemma, however, does not help greatly in this respect, for even if a reading is preserved in all texts except E26a, there is still an even chance that the E26a reading may be the original, since all the manuscripts except E26a demonstrably belong in the last resort to a single tradition - that of the shorter "b" version of the poem. A stemma of this sort emphasises that an editor should be careful not to allow himself to be astray by what one might call the Democratic Fallacy, and accept the majority reading as the original, though one can I think say that where a reading is shared by E26a with other texts, preferably in different lines of descent, it stands a good chance of being the original reading.

One is now in a position to return to the basic question of the relation of the longer "a" version of the poem (represented by the text E26a) to the shorter "b" version (represented by all the other texts). If one examines the points in the collation at which the E26a readings differ from those of the other texts as a result of the extra material in E26a (lines 15-16, 23-26) one finds a high degree of textual confusion. The "a" and "b" versions agree, more or less, for the first ten lines of

the poem and the last eight lines (ll.37-44). Between these two sections there is confusion and wide divergence. One might account for this by suggesting that E26a represents the nearest to the poem's original form, and that in the ancestor of all the "b" texts lines 11-36 were for some reason missing. One might call this the Erosion theory, and suggest further that lines 15-16 and 23-26 are two fragments salvaged from the missing portion in a slightly garbled form, which would account for the fact that they are the points of maximum variation in the collation.

On the other hand, one might also suggest that the E26a scribe or someone else has taken the original "b" version of the poem and revised it, adding extra material (lines 11-14, 17-22, 27-36), and altering lines 15-16, 23-26 so as to incorporate the new material more easily. One might call this the Revision theory.

Before one can decide between these two explanations, there are several more points of interest to be discussed in connection with the poem. In the first place, a closer examination of some of the lines in the "a" version lacking in the shorter "b" version reveals some interesting echoes. There seems to be some form of contamination between lines 17 and 23 of E26a and line 23 of the "b" texts, and between lines 21-2, 25-6, 33-4 of E26a and lines 25-6 of the "b" version. It is almost as if the couplet of lines 25-6 in the "b" version is made up of the first half of E26a's line 33, the second half of E26a's line 21, the first half of E26a's line 26, and the second half of E26a's line 22.

There is, too, some more physical evidence to be discussed: both E26a and E26b are to be found in the same manuscript - Egerton 2642, a fat volume of historical and heraldic material collected by Robert Commaundre, Rector of Tarporley (Cheshire) and Chaplain to the Lord President and Council of the Marches of Wales in Sir Henry Sidney's time.[1] Commaundre copied first the shorter "b" version of the poem (text E26b) on f.232v, and then seems to have come across a text of the "a" version which he copied, almost 100 pages later, on f.324v (text E26a). He apparently intended to cancel his earlier and shorter text (E26b), for after f.232v there are several half sheets which appear to have once been stuck over the poem.

The E26b text begins two-thirds of the way down f.232v, so that three stanzas of the poem are on that page and three at the top of the next page (now f.236, but originally part of the same opening as f.232v). Immediately following the three stanzas of the poem on f.236 is another little poem on more or less the same subject, "The Lordes do crave all".[2]

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1. See F.274: list of officers for 1578. Commaundre or Commander was apparently born in London c.1532, 5th son of William, a brewer. Educated at Eton (c.1544-8) and King's College, Cambridge (1548-50), he left the latter without taking a degree, having "destroyed many good books in the College Library". He seems to have been a keen Puritan, and was Rector of Tarporley from 1571 till his death in 1613. (See Venn's Alumni Cantab.I,i, p.377, and Sterry's Eton College Register (1943) p.81; also Omerod's Cheshire (1882) ii, p.236).

2. See Volume 2, p.26.

The rest of f.236 is filled with a poem by Commaundre himself about a jester called Shadwell.

At some later stage, Commaundre then stuck over the bottom third of f.232v a half sheet of paper (now f.233) on to which he copied his poem on Shadwell from the foot of the opposite page (with very slight variation). Over the upper part of f.236 he stuck another half sheet covering the second half of "The French Primero" and "The Lordes do crave all", and on this half sheet (now f.234) he wrote various epigrams. Finally, he stuck a third half sheet (now f.235) over the remaining part of f.236, covering up his poem on Shadwell (which he had copied out again on the opposite half sheet f.233). On f.235 he wrote some Latin verses on the Pope.

Commaundre seems to have been in the habit of cancelling things he wrote; he often, for instance, replaced single words with others pasted over on tiny slips of paper (as on f.149v). On f.193v he has stuck over a list of mourners a half sheet enlarging the list. On f.212v he has covered up two epigrams on the Pope, and on f.328v he replaced part of an item about Scotland with a revised version describing Scotland as part of England (a revision made after James's accession?).

It could be argued on this evidence that E26a is a revised and enlarged version of the shorter "b" version of the poem, perhaps by Commaundre himself. Commaundre was obviously interested in poetry, and seems to have been the author of certain poems signed in his name, but his texts of "The French Primero" bear the marks of copies rather than

original versions: lines 4 and 8 of the E26b text omit words that break the metre of the poem; and E26a has an extra syllable in line 12, while lines 35-36 seem obscure and are probably corrupt.

Immediately after his copy of the second and longer text of "The French Primero" on f.325, Commaundre has a second text of "The Lordes do crave all" which has a new and longer title in verse, and additions to lines 1, 9 and 10, aimed, apparently, at making the poem more regular. Commaundre would have been capable of making these alterations himself, but they do not alter the poem to the extent that the longer version alters "The French Primero". Commaundre obviously viewed this little poem and "The French Primero" as companion pieces, and so kept them together when he made his copy of the new and longer "French Primero".

There is a third copy of "The Lordes do crave all", amongst a mass of genealogical and heraldic material in MS Harl.4199 f.32. It is interesting in that it bears the heading "The State of Fraunce in ye 12 of September 1585" (a date three days after the Papal Bull absolving Navarre's subjects from their allegiance), and has an extra line, referring to Epernon, one of Henry III's "mignons":

"Monsher du pernon robs all"

Apart from these differences, it is more like Commaundre's first text than his second.

There is one other point of interest about Commaundre's first and cancelled texts of "The French Primero" and "The Lordes do crave all" -

they are both, according to their titles, "translated oute of frenche into Englishe Anno domini 1585". French poems do occasionally occur in English miscellanies of this period, and MS Additional 38823, the miscellany of the Elizabethan courtier and diplomat Sir Edward Hoby (1560-1617), preserves three poems in French. All are poems of political comment:[1] two deal with events of 1586 and 1587 respectively, but the first is a sonnet entitled "A Pasquill of Fraunce 1585" which preserves the conceit of the game of Primero, and also most of the characters of the English poem, though curiously (like the text of "The Lordes to crave all" in MS Harl.4199) it omits Navarre and substitutes instead Epernon. It could perhaps be the model for both English poems, although its relationship to them is general rather than specific. Even the shorter version of "The French Primero" adds material not in the French poem, and so one cannot rely on the latter to help determine whether the original version of the English poem was the longer or shorter form.

The French "Pasquill" was in circulation in England at this time for in MS Harl.7392, two pages before the text of "The French Primero" preserved in that manuscript (text H73) is a rather hasty and unfinished translation of the French "Pasquill",[2] and its appearance in MS Harl.7392

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1. See Volume 2, pp.27-8.
2. As such it gives an interesting glimpse of how Elizabethans set about translating poems - a popular pastime, especially among sonneteers. The translation has an impromptu air about it with all its alternative readings, but what may perhaps seem surprising is the way in which the translator has striven at first for metrical regularity without making any attempt at rhyme.

leads one to suggest that the compiler of the manuscript knew that there was in circulation an English translation of the "Pasquill". He obtained first this impromptu translation - or perhaps he may have attempted a translation himself - and then shortly after he was successful in acquiring a copy of "The French Primero". The latter is not however written in the same hand as most of the items in MS Harl.7392, which suggests that someone else who knew the poem or found a text of it wrote it in for the compiler.

This rather lengthy digression has shown that although there is considerable evidence bearing on the discussion of "The French Primero", one cannot, in the last resort, reach any certain conclusions about the relationship between the "a" and "b" versions of the poem. The evidence does not contradict either theory, and at this stage, I feel, an editor should make his own interpretation of the facts and leave it at that.

My interpretation inclines to the Erosion theory, and I would like to suggest that E26a represents the nearest approach to what the poem originally looked like,although the other texts indicate that the poem was in general circulation in a shortened form. This shortened form is not merely the E26a text lacking lines 11-14, 17-22, 27-36: the shortened text has apparently been adjusted slightly so that the omissions are not so obvious, and the poem reads fairly well without them.

I think that the "a" version is the original rather than a revision of the "b" version because the "a" is a fuller and more consistent poem; the "b" version has awkward breaks at lines 15-16 and 23-26. After line

10, for instance, E26a has a fuller explanation of Navarre's position in the game, and similarly after line 16, of the Cardinal's position. Lines 27 and 29 of E26a add references to the Treaty of Joinville (of December 1584) and the Papal Bull (of September 1585) respectively - both events with a direct bearing on the poem's subject matter. There is, too, a unity of style and thought about the longer poems which seems to me to indicate that the extra material consists of the author's own work rather than expansions and interpolations. The lines omitted by the "b" version are all couplets, and the extant texts H37, H73, Z35, R85 show that portions of the poem could and did fall away very easily. The longer "a" version is, I think, a better poem than the shorter form, developing both the game and the political implications more fully and consistently. The length gives greater play to the characters, making the poems more successfully dramatic, and a more exact comment on the state of France.

In suggesting why the ancestor of all the "b" texts should have lost most of lines 11-36 except for the confused fragments remaining at lines 15-16 and 23-26, one might put forward the suggestion that the "b" versions represent a memorial reconstruction of what was apparently a popular and topical poem, in which the beginning and end have been recalled more or less correctly, but the middle has not, except for one or two snatches of sentences. A less likely but more physical explanation would assume a text of the "a" version of the poem having the first 36 lines written on the recto of one leaf, and the last 8 lines on the verso

of the same leaf; a stain such as spilt ink might then have obliterated most of lines 11-36, leaving only odd lines still legible, from which lines 15-16 and 23-26 of the "b" version were salvaged. These lines may have been pieced together by the scribe from only partly legible fragments, and so seem in places to contain matter from obliterated lines.

But this is guesswork, and the question remains, what should an editor do, faced with a textual situation of this sort? I believe that an editor of "The French Primero" seeking the nearest to what the author wrote has little alternative but to print the "a" version of the poem, with corrections from the other texts where he feels this to be necessary. The choice of E26a as copy text means that where there is a split in the traditions between E26a and the other texts, and no good reason exists for choosing one variant rather than the other, Greg's conservative principle operates[1] and the reading of the copy text is preferred. An edited text will thus turn out to be very little different from E26a, only a few slight alterations being made where E26a is demonstrably wrong. This may seem rather unsatisfactory, but an editor can do little else if his investigations have convinced him that all the "b" texts are inferior. I think, however, that in this case, where the evidence is not conclusive, an editor should also give an edited version of the shorter "b" form of the poem, especially if he is dealing with manuscript circulation and interested in the literary history of the period. The "b" form is, after all, the version which seems to have been in general circulation.

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1. See "The Rationale of Copy Text" in SB, iii (1950) p.19.

In arriving at edited texts of "The French Primero", certain assumptions have been made: that the poem was originally divided into quatrains rhyming in couplets; that the rhymes and metre were adhered to; and that the poem made sense. In the matter of accidentals, I believe an editor dealing with courtly verse in manuscript has a certain leeway, depending on the audience he envisages and the use he intends to make of his text. He can either preserve the accidentals of his copy text, which have atleast a certain contemporary authority even if it seems unlikely that they preserve many of the author's own accidentals, or he can modernize. Only in very few cases is an editor of courtly lyrics likely to have an authorial manuscript collection (as is the case with Sir Thomas Wyatt and Sir Arthur Gorges), or a probable holograph (like the Ralegh "Cynthia" Manuscript at Hatfield), or even an authorized printed collection (as is the case with Sidney's works, published posthumously by his sister). More usually, an editor of poets such as Sir Edward Dyer, Lord Oxford, Sir Walter Ralegh, Nicholas Breton, or the Queen, has to gather together their scattered lyrics from manuscript and printed miscellanies whose texts have apparently no authority and are almost certainly at some distance from the originals. While there are obviously good reasons for keeping the manuscript accidentals in the works of Gorges and Wyatt, and the printed accidentals in the case of Sidney, they do not, I think, hold for the other courtier poets.

In examining the poems of various courtier poets in subsequent

chapters of this thesis I shall modernize the accidentals.[1] The variants of spelling preserved in the sources of these poems seem to me to indicate little more than the individual habits of the scribes, and in my experience scribes, especially the non-professional copyists who compiled the miscellanies, were, on the whole, more idiosyncratic in their accidentals than Elizabethan compositors tended to be. An examination of the accidentals of, for example, MSS Rawl.Poet. 85, Harl.7392 and Cambridge Dd5.75 soon reveals the habits and tendencies which individual scribes imposed on their texts - which is, after all, what one has come to expect from scribes and compositors of this period. Even where two texts are obviously very closely connected, as are the texts of "The French Primero" in MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Marsh Z3.5.21 (R85,Z35), there are still numerous differences in spelling.

I believe that a lyric like "The French Primero" loses very little if an editor modernizes the spelling and adds punctuation (of which there is almost none in the texts). Modernization allows a modern reader to approach the poem much as an Elizabethan reader would have done, without being distracted by the whims of Elizabethan spelling.

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1. Modernized texts are presented in Leicester Bradner's edition of The Poems of Queen Elizabeth I (Providence 1964), and in English Madrigal Verse, revised by Sternfeld and Greer (Oxford 1967). The case for modernization is put by J.R.Brown in SB, xiii (1960) p.49, and by F.W.Bateson in English Studies Today, 2nd ser. (1961) p.67.

It makes easier the task of discussing a poem critically and recording its substantive variants, and for an editor who has to collect together the scattered lyrics of a poet such as Dyer, it has the added advantage of giving the poems a consistency they would otherwise lack in a situation where different poems have copy texts from different sources. Modernizing also avoids the need for an editor to normalize any substantive readings he prefers in his edited text, which have accidentals differing from those of the copy text. That this is a real danger is indicated by Mr. R.M. Sargent's old spelling edition of Dyer's lyrics.[1] Mr. Sargent's text of "My mind to me a kingdom is" has in the first line the spelling "kyngdome" and cites MS Rawl.Poet.85 as the copy text; the reading in that manuscript is, however, "kindome" and all other contemporary texts of the poem read "kingdome".

It seems to me that however good the reasons for preferring in line 42 of "The French Primero" the reading of the copy text "hym Sellffe", it does invest the poem with an unwarranted quaintness which places unnecessary obstructions in the path of a modern reader. An Elizabethan could just as easily have written "himselfe" (as the Tl scribe did) and might even have written "himself". To prefer "hym Sellffe" seems to suggest a certain romantic desire for an Elizabethan poem to look as obviously "Elizabethan" as possible - and to be but one step away from "Ye Olde Tea Shoppe".

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1. Sargent, p.200.

There are, of course, problems in modernizing an Elizabethan poem: in "The French Primero", for example, the modernization of lines 35 and 40 imply particular interpretations where the meaning of the copy text is not entirely clear. In other courtly lyrics one comes across obsolete words which may be confused in modern spelling - for example "met" meaning "dreamt" - or obsolete usages like that of a singular verb with a plural subject - as in the E26a reading of line 24, "But Cardynalls hattes makes busy heddes". In the latter example three texts preserve the more modern usage "make", which I have preferred in the edited form.

Some of the texts presented in the following pages will be in old spelling - for example the Cambridge poems in MS Rawl.Poet.85 and the Paget, Berkeley and Stanford poems in MS Cambridge Dd5.75, where the texts are close to the authors' originals. Sometimes particular texts are transcribed as they stand for purposes of comparison and discussion (as in the complex of texts related to "The French Primero"), or like the text of "The Scottish Libel", which is written in an Elizabethan imitation of Scottish dialect.

On the whole, though, it seems to me that "The French Primero" and most other Elizabethan courtly lyrics modernize surprisingly well, and support Mr. J.W. Saunders' conclusions that the Elizabethan court poets preserved in their lyrics the purity of the language of the Court, whereas the professional writers were often affected or inflated.[1]

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1. See "The Stigma of Print", Essays in Criticism, i (1951), p.139.

Section III: Analogues and Influences

"The French Primero" seems to have been the start of a vogue for political poems of this sort. It has been mentioned above that Sir Edward Hoby's commonplace book preserves two other French poems, apart from the French "Pasquill", commenting on the state of affairs in 1586 and 1587. One is a series of statements made by various characters on the French scene, most of whom have appeared before.[1] The second is a double sonnet with a double meaning according to whether it is read across or down - perhaps an indication in itself of troubled times when dissembling might be necessary.[2]

The interest in French affairs indicated by the poems was not confined to England and Western Europe. The text of "The French Primero" in MS Harl.3787 is associated with an even more curious item, being "A Coppy of a lettre sent by the great lord, to the Kinge of Nauarr. translated out of greeke into Frenche. and soe into Englishe."[3] The letter is an offer to Navarre of assistance against Spain, and "the great lord" is Amurath III, Sultan of Turkey, who seems to have been in the habit of writing letters to his fellow Princes.[4] His letter to Navarre was apparently in circulation in England at the time - a fragment

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1. See Volume 2, page 28.
2. See Volume 2, page 28.
3. See Volume 2, page 29.
4. See, for instance, MS Egerton 2877 f.175: "Copies of a lettre sent by the great Turke to the Emperour Radulphus word, by word extracted out of Dutch."

of the French version is preserved in MS Cotton Caligula E xiii. History seems not to relate whether the letter is genuine or not (though it has a ring of authenticity about it), nor how the offer was received by Navarre. But the appearance of the document in an Elizabethan manuscript does add a curious footnote to the contemporary interest in "the state of France" at this time.

Conceited poems about card games, French history or both remained popular until well into the 18th century. In 1709, for example, was published a poem entitled "The Royal Shuffler, or, A New Trick at Cards: shewing how the French king has been Playing a Game at Picket with the Allies, and had like to have won the Set, but that P--- E---- and the D--- of M-----h finding the Cheat, are resolv'd to begin the Game again." Another, published in 1749, is headed "The Royal Gamesters: or, the old Cards Newly Shuffled; for a conquering Game, there is one Card more to be played yet."[1]

Although the fascination in poems of this sort was usually for French history, there is also a poem on the political situation in Scotland, told in Scots dialect and headed in one text "The Scottishe coqalane. 1586". This seems to have been a companion piece to "The French Primero" for copies of it are preserved side by side with the French poem in MSS Egerton 2642 and Marsh Z3.5.21; and a third text is to be found in Sir Edward Hoby's MS (Add.38823).[2] The French and Scottish

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1. I am indebted to Mr. David Foxon for drawing my attention to these.

2. See Volume 2, page 30.

poems are not unconnected in theme; mention has been made above of the Duke of Guise's interest in plots for a Catholic rebellion in Scotland centering on his cousin, Mary Stuart. In the Egerton MS, the "Scottishe Libell" is answered by the English in a suitably patriotic manner, ending with a prayer for the Queen, Church and Realm.[1]

But these pious blasts and counterblasts have moved away from the courtly conceits of "The French Primero", and the vogue for political comments of this sort takes a new twist with an adaptation of the short poem about the "Government of Fraunce" to a retrospective view of England in the reign of Elizabeth, written probably in the early years of James's rule.[2] This "satire upon 'the classes' under 'good queen Bess'" was published in The Atheneum for September 1887 in Hubert Hall,[3] who had come upon it while following up the fortunes of the quarrelsome Will Darrell, of Littlecote, Wiltshire. Darrell was imprisoned for treason in 1579 for having uttered in the hearing of his servants a "slander . particularly touching the Lords of the Privy Council, and after that the Ladies of the Courte, and laste the Judges of the londe." Hall suggests, without any direct evidence, that this "slander" was the poem he prints, but it seems to me that the poem dates from the early 17th century and the accession of James I, who is surely the "your Majestie"

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1. See Volume 2, page 33.
2. See Volume 2, page 34.
3. "The History of an Elizabethan Libel", p.311.

referred to at the end. There is another copy of this poem, differing slightly from Hall's text, in MS Rawl.Poet. 26 f.82, headed "The view of our late Estate vnder our Q.Elizabeth".[1]

One cannot help wondering what Elizabeth's courtiers would have made of this in the late 1580s, secure, for the time being, in their Church, their Realm and their Queen. It is in the second half of the 1580s that the vogue for conceited poems of topical political reference really belongs: a vogue of which "The French Primero" is one of the neatest and most successful products.

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1. See Volume 2, page 34.

PART TWO

THE COURTLY MAKERS

I near desearvd that gloriows name of Poet;
No Maker I, nor do I care who know it.
Occasion oft my penn doth entertayn
With trew discourse; let others Muses fayn;
Myne never sought to set to sale her wryting;
In part her frends, in all her selfe delighting,
She cannot beg applause of vulgar sort,
Free born and bred, more free for noble sport.
  My Muse hath one still bids her in her eare;
  Yf well disposed, to write; yf not, forbear.

Sir John Harington

INTRODUCTION

The proper life for an Elizabethan courtier was one of action; to this end theeducation of the gentry was directed, in the hope of producing capable and enlightened administrators, and shrewd and trusted counsellors at the service of the Queen and commonwealth.[1] The court was thus the centre of power and administration as well as the nodal point of the elaborately mannered Elizabethan civilisation. The English determination to see that their court rivalled the great European courts extended into all spheres, including literature, which had long been considered a courtly accomplishment. Such artistic accomplishments were not, however, pursued as ends in themselves, but as social and courtly graces, combining with other mental and physical graces in the figure of Castiglione's Courtier.

Thus the courtiers whose poems are preserved in the manuscripts under consideration here were, with one or two exceptions, men of affairs, important and powerful figures in the state. They wrote poems because poetry was a proper vehicle for commenting on the various aspects of life at court, but it should show little sign of labour, no reek of midnight oil, and appear as effortless a skill as dancing. The courtier's sprezzatura demanded that poems written with skill and care, and

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1. See Ruth Kelso, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century (Illinois 1929), pp.53 ff.
Urbana,

embellished with all the riches of rhetoric, should be spoken of as "toys" and "vanities", and though an earl might (and did) evaporate his thoughts in a sonnet, his most important contribution to courtly life was his involvement in affairs of state. Poetry, like dancing and jousting, hawking and hunting, was a necessary social accomplishment, not a career; a poem something to be sung to the lute after dinner, or left carelessly where the ladies would be sure to find it, or composed, apparently impromptu, to amuse one's friends. At most, a good poet (like Sir Walter Ralegh) might cultivate it as a sort of personal "bravery", as much part of his personality as his gorgeous clothes; poetry would be one of his special achievements in much the same way as Sir Christopher Hatton was noted for his dancing.

The problem with a courtly lyric is that, torn from its natural environment, lacking its accompanying music, its glittering setting (the colourful figures, the clothes, the manners, the social pastimes - even the furniture and the architecture), the immediate occasion and reason for its composition usually lost, and its allusions to contemporary people and events obscure, it often appears a poor relic indeed. This is mainly the fault of its occasional quality, and the way in which comments, requests, criticisms were veiled in pastoral modes and conventional phrases. A young gentleman might write for different audiences at the same time: he often had an inner meaning to convey to a lady or a friend, and a more conventional statement for the court at large. Poems were dark conceits, veiled requests: their ambiguities

were a necessary part of their involvement in the intrigues, the illicit loves and the anonymous backbiting, of court life.[1] And they had a perfect cloak for their ambiguities and doubles entendres in the language borrowed from the Italians, the French and the Spaniards - the Petrarchan imagery, the rhetorical flourishes, the conceits and devices - which provided an appropriate form and vocabulary for any courtly occasion.

The conventions of Elizabethan courtly poetry derive, then, partly from the European models which the English writers read and imitated, and partly from the social environment in which it was created. It seems fairly clear that writing verses played an important part in the social customs and modes of civilised living associated with the Elizabethan court and nobility.[2] Verses embellished numerous aspects of court life: they were painted on trenchers and musical instruments,[3] engraved on furniture, embroidered,[4] hung from trees.[5] Many of these courtly lyrics, mostly in a loose sense occasional, seem to have circulated in manuscript among a small group of friends, and were then left, textually battered, of

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1. For an elaboration of these points, see R. Southall's study of the early Tudor poets, The Courtly Maker (1964).

2. See T.F. Crane, Italian Social Customs of the Sixteenth Century (~~Yale~~ New Haven 1920), chapter xi.

3. See Thomas Whythorne's Autobiography, ed. Osborn (Oxford 1961) p.20.

4. See ~~MS~~ B.M. Add.22601 f.26. ~~(B.M.)~~

5. See E.K. Chambers, Sir Henry Lee (Oxford 1936) p.88.

dubious or unknown parentage, to find their own way out into the wider, less courtly world, and into the hands of the miscellany collectors.

Most courtiers seem to have written verses at one time or another,[1] but some were more successful and acquired contemporary reputations as courtly makers. They are the poets popular with the miscellany collectors, and the poets with whom Part II of this discussion is specifically concerned. They are the writers who made poetry flourish at court,

> to geue enterteinment to Princes, Ladies of honour, Gentlewomen and Gentlemen, and by his many moodes of skill, to serue the many humors of men thither haunting and resorting, some by way of solace, some of serious aduise, and in matters aswell profitable as pleasant and honest. (2)

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1. The Arundel-Harington MS preserves poems apparently written by Leicester and his brother (nos. 289, 290); MS Lansdowne 104 f.193 B.M. preserves a poem by Burghley.

2. Puttenham, p.299.

Chapter Four

"Most Peereles Poëtresse"

The Lyrics of QUEEN ELIZABETH I

"... yourself being alreadie, of any that I know in our time, the most excellent Poet"

George Puttenham to Queen Elizabeth.

Most peereles Prince, most peereless Poëtresse,
The true Pandora of all heauenly graces,
Diuine Elisa, sacred Emperesse:
Liue she for euer, and her royall P'laces
Be fild with praises of diuinest wits,
That her eternize with their heauenlie writs.

Spenser: The Teares of the Muses

When Professor Leicester Bradner collected together The Poems of Queen Elizabeth I,[1] he commented in his introduction that "No excuses are needed for attempting to throw more light on anything, however minor, connected with that most extraordinary woman",[2] to which Mr. R. Southall, in a review, retorted that her poems revealed "nothing of the extraordinary woman whose existence one must presume against the evidence of the poems, in order to agree with Mr. Bradner".[3] Southall's dissatisfaction with the Queen's poetry results from the difficulty of

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1. Providence, 1964 [Hereafter Bradner].
2. p.xi.
3. RES, n.s.xvi (1965) p.413.

finding enough of it to form a clear impression of her as a poet. Bradner found six poems of undoubted authorship (only three of which are longer than three or four lines), ten doubtful poems, and six verse translations. If one excludes the verse translations (which seem to be exercises, closely following the originals, and so fall into a different category from the courtly lyrics) and the poems that are almost certainly not the Queen's (which include the great majority of the poems in the "doubtful" section), one is left with five English poems of reasonable length, a Latin epigram and a few short pieces. One is a youthful effort (written on a wall at Woodstock, c.1554-5), and I believe that closer examination will exclude three of the longer poems, while another, known only by a fragment when Bradner made his collection, has since turned up. This leaves only four poems of any length which can with some certainty be ascribed to the Queen.

It seems to me that this is the main reason her poetry reveals little of her "extraordinary" character, and it is doubtful whether many poets would leave much of an impression with so few poems to their credit. However, in spite of Southall's strictures, I believe that at least two of these poems confirm the impression of Elizabeth's personality derived from her letters and contemporary accounts of her, and fit in with one's expectations of the sort of poetry she would probably write. Interestingly, these two poems are the best attested in her canon.

Her most famous poem, and the one most certainly hers, is "The

doubt of future foes". It exists in seven manuscripts and two printed texts, all attributed to her. Two of these texts were not known to Bradner, so I have collated them with the others.[1] The number of contemporary texts preserved indicates that this poem was well-known at the time, and that the date of 1569-70 suggested in MS Egerton 2642 is probably correct, for Mary Queen of Scots took refuge in England in the second half of 1568, and the Northern Rebellion lasted from the end of 1569 until February 1570, when Lord Hunsdon defeated Dacre's forces. The poem's immediate occasion would have been obvious to any Elizabethan - in The Arte of English Poesie (1589) it is described thus:

> And this was the occasion: our Soueraigne Lady perceiuing how by the Sc.Q. residence within this Realme at so great libertie and ease (as were skarce meete for so great and daungerous a prysoner) bred secret factions among her people, and made many of the nobilitie incline to fauour her partie: some of them desirous of innouation in the state: others aspiring to greater fortunes by her libertie and life. The Queene our soueraigne Lady to declare that she was nothing ignorant of those secret practizes, though she had long with great wisdome and pacience dissembled it, writeth this ditty most sweet and sententious, not hiding from all such aspiring minds the daunger of their ambition and disloyaltie: which afterward fell out most truly by th' exemplary chastisement of sundry persons, who in fauour of the sayd Sc.Q. declining from her Maiestie, sought to interrupt the quiet of the Realme by many euill and vndutiful practizes. (2)

The poem was thus no mere evaporation of Her Majesty's thoughts in a sonnet - it was a deliberate statement of policy, a public pronouncement

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1. See Volume 2, p. 37.

2. Puttenham, p.247.

of her fearlessness and determination to deal with the situation. At least one collector (who may have been Sir John Harington)[1] saw it in just this light, and passed a copy on to a friend in a letter saying:

> Good Madam, Herewith I commit a precious jewel, not for your ear, but your eye; and doubt not but you will rejoyce to wear it even in your heart: It is of her Highness own enditing, and doth witness, how much her wisdom and great learning doth outweigh even the perils of state, and how little all worldly dangers do work any change in her mynde. My Lady Wiloughby did covertly get it on her Majesties tablet, and had much hazard in so doing; for the Queen did find out the thief, and chid for spreading evil bruit of her writing such toyes, when other matters did so occupy her employment at this time; and was fearful of being thought too lightly of for so doing. But marvel not, good Madam, her Highness doth frame herself to all occasions, to all times, and all things, both in business and pastime, as may witness this her sonnet. (2)

One can appreciate the Queen's concern (real or assumed) that she should not be seen to spend her time writing toys when a rebellion was brewing in the north, but the way in which her subjects hailed this toy as an expression of her courage and steadfastness makes one wonder whether she had not written the poem with just such a response in mind.

The contemporary comments made about the poem contribute to a better understanding of the Queen's intention in writing it. The author of The Arte of English Poesie quotes the whole poem as an example of "Exargasia or The Gorgious" - a figure intended to:

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1. See Hughey, vol.ii, p.388.
2. Nugae Antiquae, ed. H. Harington, vol.i (1769) p.58.

> polish our speech & as it were attire it with copious & pleasant amplifications and much varietie of sentences all running vpon one point & to one intent: so as I doubt whether I may terme it a figure, or rather a masse of many figuratiue speaches, applied to the bewtifying of our tale or argument... (1)

Professor Bradner has drawn attention to the way in which Elizabeth has maintained this figure with imagery drawn from the elemental forces of nature such as tides, the weather, crops, ships seeking harbour.[2] The homely yet forceful imagery, and the vigorous stateliness of the language, leave the reader with a distinctive impression of the Queen's personality. The emphasis placed on "wit", "reason", "wisdom", "worthy wights"; the tone of a firm but solicitous parent who knows best:

"Which should not be if reason ruled, or wisdom weaved the web"

and the calm control of the situation from the outset to its forgone conclusion:

"And fruitless all their grafted guile, as shortly you shall see"

would all, I think, have made the poem recognizable as the Queen's to an Elizabethan reader who came upon it unascribed, quite apart from the obvious clues in phrases such as "and subjects' faith doth ebb" and "Our realm brooks not seditious sects".

It has recently been suggested that even the "rusty sword" in line 15 would have been seen as alluding to Elizabeth, and might even refer to

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1. Puttenham, p.247.
2. p.xiii

an actual rusty sword displayed by the Queen as a symbol of peace, and of power which does not have to be wielded. Certainly, Sir John Harington, writing about the Queen's perturbation of mind after the Essex Rebellion in 1601, describes her as thrusting "her rusty sword at times into the arras in great rage", and Spenser's Mercilla in Book V of The Faerie Queene has a sword rusted through long rest.[1]

Whether the rusty sword had a real or merely a symbolic association with the Queen (perhaps as a result of "The doubt of future foes"), it harmonises with the ceremonial quality of the poem, the sense of a royal pronouncement.

The other poem which is almost certainly by Elizabeth was lost until ~~a year ago~~ recently, and known only from a fragment quoted by Puttenham and included by Bradner. I was fortunate enough to come across a text of it among a group of poems on the first three leaves of MS Petyt 538 volume 10 in the Inner Temple Library. The poem is ascribed in the margin "Per Reginam. Walter Rawley." but both the text and the ascription have been scored through. On the verso of the same sheet is a text, also unknown to Bradner, of "The doubt of future foes" again ascribed in the margin "Per Reginam".

The mention of "Walter Rawley" in the poem's ascription makes clear the occasion for the Queen's poem - it was an answer to Ralegh's poem

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1. See William Nelson, "Queen Elizabeth, Spenser's Mercilla, and a Rusty Sword", Renaissance News, xviii, (1965) p.113.

bewailing the loss of his love, and declaring that fortune would never alter him. Ralegh's poem was also lost and known only from fragments in Puttenham until ten years ago, when Dr. Walter Oakeshott found an unattributed text of the whole poem in a manuscript formerly No.3602 of the Phillipps Collection. I have since come across another unascribed but slightly better text in MS Z 3.5.21 in Marsh's Library, Dublin.[1]

The text of the Queen's answer, as it is preserved in the Petyt MS, has been published in The Times Literary Supplement.[2] It appears in places to be corrupt, and a portion of the poem seems to be missing after line 15, indicated in the manuscript by a line. If one were to suppose that the text lacked three lines, the poem would then be of the same form and length as Ralegh's.

Puttenham evidently knew the poem, for in discussing the figure "Sententia or the Sage Sayer" he wrote:

> And that which our soueraigne Lady wrate in defiance of fortune.
>
> Neuer thinke you fortune can beare the sway
> Where vertues force, can cause her to obay. (3)

and again as an example of "Erotema or the Questioner":

> And as a great Princesse aunswered her Seruitour, who distrusting in her fauours toward him, praised his owne constancie in these verses.
>
> No fortune base or frayle can alter me:
>
> To whome she in this figure repeting his words:

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1. A text and variants is given in Volume 2, p. 197.
2. L.G. Black, "A lost poem by Queen Elizabeth I", May 23rd, 1968, p.535. A modernized text is given in Volume 2, p. 40.
3. Puttenham, p.236.

No fortune base or frayle can alter thee.
And can so blind a witch so conquere mee? (1)

Ralegh's poem, according to Puttenham, was "written by Sir Walter Raleigh of his greatest mistresse".[2]

The two poems seem to have circulated together at some stage, for they were printed, anonymously and somewhat altered and enlarged, as a popular broadside in the mid seventeenth century, with the titles "The lover's complaint for the loss of his love" and "The Ladies comfortable and pleasant answer".[3] By this stage, however, all trace of an association with either Ralegh or the Queen has disappeared.

It was a favourite theme of Elizabeth's that she would not let herself be altered by fortune - her motto was Semper Eadem and she laid particular emphasis on her constancy.[4] As she comments in her poem:

But never think fortune can bear the sway,
If virtue watch and will her not obey.

Puttenham, it will be remembered, characterized the poem as being a defiance of fortune, and one can recognize the royal hauteur of:

No fortune base, thou sayest, shall alter thee,
And may so blind a witch so conquer me?

The letter in Nugae Antiquae pointed out "how little all worldly dangers do work any change in her mynde", and even as a young Princess her thoughts ran on fortune and its vicissitudes - for example in her poem

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1. Puttenham, p.212.
2. Ibid., p.198.
3. Oakeshott, The Queen and the Poet (1960) p.217.
4. E.C. Wilson, Englands Eliza (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1939) p.79.

written on a wall at Woodstock.[1]

The poem in the Petyt MS also seems to have her tone of voice: surely no one else would have addressed the suave and rather arrogant Ralegh as "silly pug" even though the Elizabethans used the word "pug" as a term of general endearment, without any of its modern overtones of a lapdog.[2] The poem is rather one of personal reassurance than the royal pronouncements of "The doubt of future foes", but Elizabeth still preserves a fit distance between subject and Queen. She addresses Ralegh with something of the tone of a mother comforting a child, or an Old Testament prophet his people:

> Pull up thy heart, suppress thy brackish tears,
> Torment thee not, but put away thy fears.

and she makes the characteristically arch (and quite false) claim that she "ne'er gave wise man blow".

In fact the complaint and answer situation where the Queen reassured an unhappy "servant" of hers was fairly common at Elizabeth's court. In 1573, for example, Sir Christopher Hatton fell dangerously ill, and the Queen was most solicitous. This gave other courtiers their cue, and Edward Dyer, out of favour at the time, was advised by his friends to feign illness, whereupon the Queen was told that he would surely die if she did not forgive him and take him back to her favour. Elizabeth sent

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1. See Bradner, p.3.
2. See OED: the use of pug as a lapdog is mid 18th century.

him "a very comfortable message" and he was soon well again.[1] Ralegh's poem and the Queen's answer amount to a more poetic version of the same situation.

There is, I think, a not dissimilar quality about the Latin epigram perhaps written by the Queen to the German humanist poet Paul Melissus.[2] Melissus, a great admirer of Elizabeth, addressed a poem to her asking if he might be her slave; the Queen's answer turns the conceit in much the same way as she rallies Ralegh's spirits in her answer to his poem. Why, she asks, should a free-born man wish to be a slave? Melissus is such a prince of poets that were he a slave, his poetry would free him.

Professor Bradner regards this epigram as doubtful,[3] on the grounds that it is unlikely the Queen would herself have answered the many poems addressed to her by admirers. Melissus, however, had many connections with the English court,[4] and it seems to me that something of Elizabeth's distinctive manner might be detected in the poem, in spite of its phrasing of formal Latin compliment.

Three other poems of some length have ascriptions to Elizabeth; two - "When I was fair and young" and "Now leave and let me rest" - were

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1. See Sargent, p.28.
2. See J.E. Phillips, "Elizabeth I as a Latin Poet", Renaissance News, xvi (1963) p.289.
3. Bradner, p.78.
4. See Phillips's article for a discussion of these.

placed by Bradner in the Doubtful group, and one - "I grieve and dare not show my discontent" - attributed to the Queen in three manuscripts, was reluctantly accepted as hers. Bradner has written of this last poem:

> Unless this poem was intentionally written for political effect I cannot believe that the Queen would ever have committed to writing personal feelings of this kind, particularly as they show her in a light which would not have pleased her. Someone else, however, might have written the poem and circulated it, either as an expression of the Queen's probable feelings or for some kind of political propaganda. (1)

It seems to me that Bradner is correct in suggesting that the poem is not the Queen's. Two of the texts (in MS Stowe 962 and MS Ashmole 781) describe it as being written "upon Monsieur's departure", but they were both apparently copied well into the seventeenth century, after the Queen's death.[2] The third (MS Tanner 76), which is simply subscribed "Eliz.Regina", occurs among a group of poems by Essex or persons associated with him, in a collection of papers all relating to Essex and copied c.1600-02,[3] which may suggest that the poem was written by Essex in the person of the Queen.

A similar situation exists in the case of "When I was fair and young" (also connected with Anjou's departure, according to MS Rawl.Poet. 85) which has two ascriptions to the Queen and one to the Earl of

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1. Bradner, p.xiii.
2. The British Museum and Bodleian Catalogues describe both as belonging to the reigns of James I and Charles I.
3. See the Tanner Catalogue in the Bodleian.

Oxford.[1] Bradner regards this poem as Doubtful, and it has been pointed out above[2] that the text ascribed to Lord Oxford occurs in MS Folger V.a.89, which may have been kept by a family related to Oxford's.

It would not, I think, be improbable to suggest that Anjou's departure might have been considered an appropriate occasion for poetic comment among the various factions of Elizabeth's court, particularly leading courtiers like the Earls of Oxford and Essex. Both poems are certainly associated with the Queen, but their "ascriptions" to her may be merely indications that the poems were about her, or written in her persona. Or they could, of course, simply have been taken uncritically as the Queen's work by the miscellany collectors. Once again the problem is one of trying to decide when a name written at the end of a poem should be considered an ascription. Some of the poems in Brittons Bowre of Delights, for example, have printed at the end the name of the person referred to in the poem - usually a court lady identified by an acrostic.

That poems could be written by other poets in the person of the ruler seems suggested by a note in Sir Stephen Powle's Commonplace Book (MS Tanner 169, f.43) referring to "A passionate Sonnett made by the Kinge of Scots uppon difficulties ariseing to crosse his proceedinge in love & marriage with his most worthie to be esteemed Queene." Powle

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1. Discussed below, with Lord Oxford's poems, p. 202.

2. P.60.

comments on this, "Geauen me by Mr Britton who had been (as he sayde) in Scotland with the Kinges Maiesty, but I rather thinke they weare made by him in the person of the kinge." James may not have objected to Breton's poem, but one wonders what Elizabeth would have thought of the poems written by courtiers and circulated in her name - unless, as Bradner suggests, it was in some way deliberate policy.

"I grieve and dare not show my discontent" is really a standard courtly lyric, with its origins in Petrarch:[1] the lover is forced to hide his love but seeks either satisfaction or death; his plight is, of course, one of fire or ice. The rhythmic subtlety, and the way the imagery is handled and developed, in, for example:

> My care is like my shadow in the sun,
> Follows me flying, flies when I pursue it,
> Stands and lies by me, doth what I have done.
> His too familiar care doth make me rue it.

is unmatched in the Queen's extant writings, but courtly lyricists such as Essex or Oxford would have been capable of it. The Queen's style is more characteristic of the poetry of the 1570s, what Bradner describes as "the rough hewn, vigorous moralistic style of the middle of the sixteenth century, the style of Richard Edwards, Nicholas Grimald, Jasper Heywood."[2] Her phrasing is often awkward and inverted; for example:

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1. Sonnet 102 according to E.C. Wilson, England's Eliza (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1939) p.263.

2. p.xiii.

"The dazzled eyes with pride, which great ambition blinds"

"My rusty sword through rest shall first his edge employ"

and this tendency to invert is seen even in the verse translations made towards the end of her life, where she keeps so closely to the word order of her originals that the effect is often not one of English at all:

> Therefore if plaguey wills there be that noiful are unsound,
> Arising tempest great and dimly marks the mind,
> Best shall it be give them repulse and down throw flat to ground;
> So to our selves we breed an air clear, a light and breathe full pure.
> And if this may not be, yet let our labour at least be this,
> That by all means that possible make we may,
> Turning from us and changing all that breedeth us offence,
> We make them serve our turn and help us the best. (1)

"Now leave and let me rest" is more likely to be the Queen's than "I grieve and dare not show my discontent" and "When I was fair and young" - it is more old-fashioned in style, with something of the regularity and moralistic note of the poetry of the 1570s:

> And wisdom warneth me,
> That pleasure asketh pain.

There is, however, nothing in the poem to suggest why the Queen should have written this rather dull farewell to pleasure - it has none of her characteristic attitudes, and I find it difficult to believe that she would have written in this way. The ascription of the poem to her is in one manuscript only, and there it is a later addition.[2] I agree with

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1. Bradner, p.52: from her translation of Petrarch, done in 1598. I have modernised the accidentals.

2. MS Harl.7392 f.50: "Regina" has been added after a deleted ascription.

Bradner that the appearance of the poem unascribed in the Arundel Harington Manuscript tells against its being by the Queen; Harington would probably have known if it was the Queen's, for he was very close to her, and had copies ascribed to her of "The doubt of future foes" and one of her verse translations.

The Queen may have written more than has been preserved; Puttenham praised her as:

> the Queene our soueraigne lady, whose learned, delicate noble Muse, easily surmounteth all the rest that haue written before her time or since, for sense, sweetnesse and subtillitie, be it in Ode, Elegie, Epigram, or any other kinde of poeme Heroick or Lyricke, wherein it shall please her Maiestie to employ her penne, euen by as much oddes as her owne excellent estate and degree exceedeth all the rest of her most humble vassals. (1)

This could, of course, be merely Puttenham's way of paying courtly compliments, a more elaborate way of saying that whatever Her Majesty chose to write would be the finest of its kind, but it would not be surprising if Elizabeth, with her conception of what was to be expected from a Renaissance Prince, had tried her hand at a wider range of genres than her literary remains indicate. Apart from her characteristic changes in word order, her original poems show her as a not unaccomplished stylist, and she rises at times to a gnomic aptness of phrase, as in her description of Mary Queen of Scots as "The daughter of debate", or of fortune as "so blind a witch". Sententiousness was apparently a quality

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1. Puttenham, p.63.

Elizabethans admired greatly in a poem; the miscellany collectors often placed little marks in the margins of their miscellanies against some of the choicer "sentences", and it will be remembered that Puttenham described "The doubt of future foes" as "this ditty most sweet and sententious". "Sentences" were in fact one of the ways in which a poet might amplify or ornament a theme, as Puttenham makes clear in his comments about "Exargasia or The Gorgious" ("The last and principall figure of our poeticall Ornament.").

The basic problem about the Queen's poetry is the same as that for other Elizabethan courtly poets - the lack of certainty over her canon. For the disputed poems such as "I grieve and dare not show my discontent", "When I was fair and young" and "Now leave and let me rest" one is left with trying to decide whether they are the Queen's through style and content and other subjective criteria. And with so few poems certainly hers there is not a large enough body of verse for one to be able to reach a fair assessment of her style and characteristics as a poet.

There is, on the other hand, a large body of letters by her that have been preserved, and from these one can deduce characteristics that do, I suggest (in the absence of any other information) give one some impression of her characteristics as an author: her style is on the whole diffuse, and rather guarded in sentiment. As Mr. G.B. Harrison describes it in his edition of the letters:

> The Queen wrote to command, to exhort, to censure, to persuade, and sometimes to prevaricate: but she had no familiar confidant, man or woman. It was this loneliness

> which gave her strength but prevented her from opening
> her heart to anyone. (1)

Mr. Harrison goes on to remark on the Queen's high standard of what was expected from a King, shown in her letters to James VI of Scotland and Henry IV of France, and her annoyance with Mary Queen of Scots for not behaving as a Queen should. This, it seems to me, is the main difference as a poet between Elizabeth and her courtier-servants. Elizabeth was really the true subject of courtly poetry, (another theme glanced at in the Latin poem to Melissus) the Great Mistress of all the court poets,

> The voices of our days the trumpets of her fame,
> And all posterities as Echoes to the same. (2)

Her own poems would thus tend to be royal pronouncements of a rather more hieratical nature than the average courtly lyric, preserving her dignity as Queen - as has been suggested in the discussion of the two poems certainly hers. One would expect something of an "official" style not unlike the "official" formal representation of her in her portraits.[3] Her poetic persona would, I think, keep closer to the royal "We" than the lyric "I", or even the less personal "I" of the courtly poet. This is the major criticism of the three disputed poems - they show her in a light in which it is very difficult to believe she would have seen herself, or at least admitted publicly in a courtly lyric. One only has to compare the letters Elizabeth wrote to Anjou with the poems supposedly showing her reaction to his departure to see the difference.

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1. The Letters of Queen Elizabeth (1935) p.xiv.
2. Sir Arthur Gorges's poem to the Queen, no.47 in Sandison.
3. See R. Strong, The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I. (Oxford 1963).

Chapter Five

"Our First Orpheus"

The Lyrics of SIR EDWARD DYER

> ... Being the first (in our language) I haue encountered, that repurified Poetrie from Arts pedantisme, & that instructed it to speake courtly. Our Patron, our first Orpheus or quintessence of inuention he is ...
>
> Thomas Nashe

Sir Edward Dyer is probably better known today for his friendship with Sir Philip Sidney and his career at court than for his poetic achievements, in spite of the contemporary acclaim he received, which suggests that Elizabethans thought highly of his poems. The problem is that so few poems attributed to him have survived, and these do not seem to justify his being placed among the leading poets of his time.

He was, as has been noted above, a good deal older than most of the other courtier poets with whom his name is usually linked, for he came to court as a young Somersetshire gentleman in the early years of Elizabeth's reign. As Leicester's private secretary he was associated with the favoured new nobility, and as Sidney's friend he was in the forefront of the New Poetry. Nashe seems to have regarded him as "the first (in our language) ... that repurified Poetrie from Arts pedantisme, & that instructed it to speake courtly."[1]

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1. Haue With You to Saffron-Walden (1596) in Works, ed. R.B. McKerrow (Repr. Oxford 1966) iii, p.77.

Like most courtier poets of his time, Dyer made no attempt to preserve his poems, and those which modern editors would ascribe to him have survived through being copied into manuscript miscellanies, or through having found their way into one of the printed miscellanies of the time. One cannot even be sure that such a poem appearing in print or manuscript under Dyer's name is in fact by him - often the attribution is added only in one or two texts, and at times poems known to be by other poets appear under Dyer's name. When Professor R.M. Sargent edited Dyer's lyrics in 1935,[1] he included thirteen poems and some fragments from The Arte of English Poesie, but as his reviewers were quick to point out, he did not consult MS Harl.7392, which has more poems attributed to Dyer than any other single source, and includes the full texts of the poems quoted in The Arte. The attribution to Dyer of the elegy on Sidney "Silence augmenteth grief" was also questioned.[2] As Professor Sargent's edition has recently been reprinted unrevised,[3] a full reappraisal of the Dyer canon would not be out of place here.

The mention of MS Harl.7392 brings out the first important point; the main sources for Dyer's lyrics are the group of poetic miscellanies under discussion here. Of the poems listed (with their sources) in

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1. At the Court of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford 1935)
2. See H.E. Rollins in MLN li (1936) p.57, and Alice Walker in RES xii (1936) p.461.
3. As The Life and Lyrics of Sir Edward Dyer (Oxford 1968)

Volume 2,[1] "He that his mirth" and "Prometheus" are undoubtedly Dyer's: the former has five attributions and is acknowledged by Dyer at the end (line 155, "Die ere thou let his name be known"); "Prometheus" has six attributions and was answered by Sidney, "I much prefer thy Satyr, dearest Dyer".[2] Of the other poems, "Amarillis" is attributed to Dyer in three of its four texts and referred to by Gabriel Harvey as Dyer's.[3] "I would it were not" has three attributions but these are in three related texts, and so should perhaps not be considered as three independent testimonies; part of the poem was, however, quoted as Dyer's by Sir John Harington.[4] Similarly, "As rare to hear" has two ascriptions to Dyer in related texts; "Divide my times" and "The man whose thoughts", on the other hand, each have two attributions in texts from different traditions.[5] "Fain would I" has one attribution to Dyer and one to "W.R." (which could be seen as referring to Ralegh) although the text ascribed to Dyer is the fullest and best.

The remaining six poems each have one attribution to Dyer, and some of these are doubtful. "Amidst the fairest" was attributed to the Earl of Essex and Lord Mountjoy before the compiler (John Lilliat) settled

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1. Table 1, page 43.
2. "A satyr once did run away for dread": Ringler, p.145 (CS16)
3. See Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia, ed. G.C. Moore Smith (1923) p.231.
4. Orlando Furioso (1591) notes to Book 16 [I4v]
5. See texts and groupings of variants in Volume 2, pp. 46 ff.

for Dyer. Lilliat's other attribution to Dyer, "The lowest trees" is ascribed to Ralegh in another text dated 1618. Lilliat has dated some of the texts in MS Rawl.Poet.148, most of which he appears to have copied in the late 1590s, so that his attributions are probably rather later than those in MSS Harl.7392, Rawl.Poet.85 and Folger V.a.89, and may be suspect. "Fancy Farewell" exists only in two rather different texts - perhaps neither is complete and to the text in MS Harl.7392 should be added the opening stanza from MS Harl.6910. Dyer's best-known poem, "My mind to me a kingdom is" has only one ascription to him, and may not be his at all.[1]

There are other poems which have at one time or another been attributed to Dyer: MS Rawl.Poet.85 gives him a sonnet by Spenser (M8); Englands Helicon gives him four poems by Lodge. "Whereas the heart at tennis play" has two (related) attributions to Lord Oxford, and one to Dyer.[2] "Silence augmenteth grief" has no definite attributions, and is perhaps Greville's.[3] In addition, three of the extracts quoted in The Arte of English Poesie come from a single poem, "But this and then no more", of which one fragment is ascribed to Gorges and two to Dyer, though other texts of the poem attribute it to Gorges.[4] There are also several poems which critics have from time to time annexed for Dyer from

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1. See below, p. 160.
2. See below under Lord Oxford's lyrics, p. 192.
3. See the discussion of this poem below, p. 157.
4. See below under Gorges, p. 240.

the large number of unattributed lyrics in the miscellanies - on no other grounds than style, or personal impression.

This, then, is Dyer's canon, and it seems destined to remain in this rather fluid state until more information turns up. What does emerge is that Dyer's poems were in circulation among the compilers of miscellanies in the 1580s and 1590s. Some poems may even have circulated together, as can be seen from the grouping of poems in the sources.[1] The grouping shows that not only was "He that his mirth" one of Dyer's most popular poems (in spite of its length): it also appears as the opening poem in two miscellanies (MS Harl. 7392 and MS Cambridge Dd5.75). In three manuscripts it appears together with Dyer's other long poem, "Amarillis".

The only poem of Dyer's that can be dated with any accuracy is "The man whose thoughts" which was sung to the Queen at Woodstock in September 1575, as "The Song in the Oak".[2] Otherwise there are only the dates of publication of poems which found their way into print. There is an indication, however, that some of Dyer's poems were written at the time of Sidney's experimental literary group at Leicester House in the late 1570s and early 1580s. It was probably at this time that Dyer wrote "Prometheus" and Sidney his answer, for the two seem to have circulated together in the 1580s. In fact one might suggest that the

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1. See Volume 2, Table 2, pp. 44-5.

2. See Sargent, p.31 ff.

whole group of Dyer's poems on folios 6-8 of MS Rawl.Poet.85 dates from this period. It appears next to a group of Sidney's poems, and includes a sonnet "O more than most fair" ascribed to Dyer but really the 8th sonnet of Spenser's Amoretti. Spenser joined the Sidney circle in 1579 for a short time, and these poems may well have been written at this period.[1]

Spenser's letters to Harvey mention Sidney and Dyer as writing poems at this time, but little mention is made of Fulke Greville - along with Dyer, Sidney's closest friend. It is interesting to note, though, that Greville also wrote a poem beginning "More than most fair" (Caelica iii) and he closely imitated Dyer's "He that his mirth" in "Who Grace for Zenith had" (Caelica lxxxiii): two poems that might have been written together in rivalry. Professor Bullough feels that some of the poems in Caelica may date from as early as 1577 and the Leicester House circle.[2]

The popularity of Dyer's poems in the 1580s is indicated further by the fact that when the Jesuit missionary Robert Southwell came to provide for the beleaguered English Catholics a spiritual poetry which borrowed freely from the most popular courtly poetry of the time, two of

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1. The variant forms of Spenser's sonnet are discussed in some detail by Professor Cummings, "Spenser's Amoretti VIII: New MS Versions", Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, iv (1964) p.125.

2. Poems and Dramas of Fulke Greville, ed. Bullough (1939) i, p.38.

the poems he adapted were "He that his mirth" and "My mind to me".[1] Southwell wrote his poems between his landing in England in 1586 and his arrest in 1592.[2] "He that his mirth" was still being imitated in the seventeenth century.[3]

Apart from "Alas my heart" which has no manuscript source, most of Dyer's verse seems to have been in manuscript circulation before the 1590s. This is, after all, what one would expect: Dyer was fifty by the time The Phoenix Nest appeared in 1593, and one may wonder whether he would have continued writing courtly lyrics much after Sidney's death.[4] Certainly the poems preserved only in the late texts are the most suspect: the earlier the text, the better it seems to be, particularly MS Harl.7392 which has apparently no wrong attributions involving Dyer[5] and good texts, providing the copy texts for most of the edited versions in Volume 2. It has, for example, better, fuller texts of "Fain would I" and "Fancy farewell" than other sources, and the only complete text of "Before I die".

A study of the variant readings given with the texts in Volume 2

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1. See The Poems of Robert Southwell, ed. J.H.McDonald and N.P.Brown (Oxford 1967) pp.36 and 67.

2. Ibid., p.xxiii.

3. See, for example, "Murrayis Dyare", an imitation by James Murray, in MS Cambridge Kk 5.30 f.6.

4. Harington, writing in 1591, describes "I would it were not" as being written by Dyer "in his younger dayes" - see the notes on Book 16 of Orlando Furioso, [I4v].

5. See below, p.160 for discussion of the ascription of "My mind to me" to "BALL."

gives an indication of the relationships of the different sources. From these it appears that in a substantial number of cases ("Prometheus", "As rare to hear", "I would it were not", "The man whose thoughts", "Divide my times") the texts preserved in MSS Harl.7392, Rawl.Poet.85 and Folger V.a.89 are closely connected. These manuscripts preserve most of the Dyer ascriptions and usually form a different tradition to the texts in sources such as MSS Harl.6910, Cambridge Dd5.75 and the printed miscellanies. There is an interesting correlation here with the fact that MSS Harl.7392, Rawl.Poet.85 and Folger V.a.89 seem to have been compiled in the 1580s, whereas MS Harl.6910 and the printed texts seem to belong to the 1590s or later. I feel that the textual tradition preserved in the earlier manuscripts is closer to what Dyer wrote; it is, after all, these manuscripts on which one must rely for attribution of almost the whole Dyer canon.

Like most courtly lyrics, almost all Dyer's poems are about love. He writes in the tradition and even in the forms of the authors of Tottel's Miscellany and The Paradise of Dainty Devices. His language is clear and courtly, it moves with an ease that is remarkably untouched today, and modernises very easily. As Nashe emphasised, he wrote pure court English, and his vocabulary is as sober and restrained as his choice of poetic forms. The Petrarchan conventions, the rhetorical patternings are there, but underneath one can, I think, catch a tone or quality which is Dyer's own, his distinctive voice. It may be that Dyer has his own way of using the conventions which gives his poems a certain similarity

or kinship, and with this in mind an examination of the conventional expressions in his poems will show whether a consistent picture is built up.

"Prometheus" is Dyer's only surviving sonnet. Its awkward inversions give it the air of being something of a literary experiment, as one might expect, assuming that it was written together with Sidney's answer. Dyer's use of the sonnet form is straightforward: each of the three quatrains has its own completeness, and is built up with subordinate clauses until the main clause comes at the end of the sentence. This has the effect of holding back the action of the poem while the descriptive details are filled in. The final couplet then finishes the poem neatly. Sidney's answer, on the other hand, is more involved in structure: and the comparison shows Dyer's habit of using his form in a rather regular way, with end-stopped lines and stanzas that have a certain completeness in themselves.

The force and cruelty of the image of the satyr who burnt his lips is a common feature: Dyer in other poems sees himself as Prometheus with his heart being gnawed, as Icarus flung from the sky. The violence of love's effect on him, the cruelty of "the touch, the sting, the torment of desire" is a frequent theme in Dyer's poetry. In "Amarillis", for instance, love severs the hitherto indissoluble friendship of Coridon and Caramell.[1]

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1. Cf. Sidney's Strephon and Klaius "who lived in those dayes famous for that both loving one faire maide, they yet remained constant friends ..." (New Arcadia, ed. Feuillerat, Cambridge 1912, i, p.162).

"Fancy" and "desire" seem to be the two forces that drive men to self-destruction, like the fly in the flame. Desire is the fire that burnt the satyr's lips, the vulture that feeds on Prometheus' heart, the wings, which carry him, like Icarus, too high.[1] Fancy seems to be the lover's ability to deceive himself, to let his imagination lead him astray.[2]

Dyer is one of the unhappiest of lovers, and this seems to have been recognised by his contemporaries for Puttenham describes him as "for Elegie most sweete, solempne and of high conceit."[3] In "As rare to hear", one of the few poems in which he writes, (in dark conceits) of joy or achieved desire, he is still unhappy. Desire for Dyer is like the phoenix: it burns but is never consumed. It seems to be the impossibility of ever satisfying his desire, and the wretched state to which love has brought him, that makes the lover hate himself and despise his situations. It is as if fate is against him. "Hap" (as he usually calls his fate) is an important word in Dyer's poems. Like Coridon and Caramell, it is not his fault, but there is nothing he can do about it.

The apparent hopelessness of his cause (as in "The man whose thoughts") seems to offer a clue why Dyer can do nothing about his fate, why he cannot even hope: again and again in his poems one meets the theme that he may not, he dare not, love:

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1. See "I would it were not", lines 25-6.
2. See "Amarillis", lines 115-6.
3. Puttenham, p.63.

O happy man that dost aspire
To that which thou mayst seemly crave ... (1) [My emphasis]

The lady is apparently above his station:

But he that vaunts his heart too high
Must be content to pine and die. (1)

Once this is realised there is a new significance in Dyer's describing himself as Icarus or Prometheus. The repeated idea that he is trying to climb too high, that he cannot even have hope, suggests very strongly that the lady in many of Dyer's poems is the Queen. Dyer was a favourite at court in the early part of Elizabeth's reign, and was then superseded (though he never married, as many of the Queen's favourites did). If it is assumed that he was at one time actually (or perhaps merely poetically) in love with the Queen, it would make much of his poetry clearer. An important factor seems to be his silence - he does not tell the lady of his love. He watches but does not speak, pretends to be happy and she does not notice that he is pretending.[2]

In "Alas my heart" Coridon's wound comes through his eyes, and the special importance of the eyes becomes apparent when Dyer talks, as he frequently does, of being unable to look at the sun:

And still I loth even to behold the light
That shines without all pleasure to mine eyes (3)

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1. See "I would it were not".
2. See "Fain would I".
3. See "Divide my times".

He is blinded and so seeks darkness and solitariness, and retires to the woods where no light reaches him (as in "He that his mirth"). There is sometimes the suggestion that light has some moral value as well. The Elizabethans seem to have thought this, for Sir John Harington commented in the notes to Book 8 of his Orlando Furioso[1] "these impediments that disturb men in their good course are all but like owls or batts driuen away with the sunne shine: for the light of vnderstanding and the shining of true worthines, or (as M.Dyer in an excellent verse of his termeth it) the light that shines in worthiness, dissolueth and disperseth these dustie impediments ..." Harington is referring here to line 88 of "He that his mirth".

The suggestion of a moral allegory in Dyer's verse leads on to the question of "Amarillis". There are certain resemblances in the Amarillis story with the Arcadia: Coridon and Caramell are not unlike Pyrocles and Musidorus, or even Strephon and Klaius. Amarillis may inspire admiration, but she also seeks glory. She almost breaks the friendship of her two lovers, and urges them on to their destruction:

> Now to the one she would give ear,
> Then put the other off;

She seems to use her beauty's power deliberately:

> Good and sure their friendship was,
> Till Amarillis fine
> Had the power, perhaps the will, [my emphasis]
> The band for to untwine.

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1. 1591, sig. [F3]

One almost has the impression of malice: Caramell, as a flower, has an entrée to her bed, and she delights to hear Coridon, as an owl, sing in his despair. Both are denied death and kept alive to be, in a sense, tormented. The fact that Coridon has become an owl reminds one of Harington's remarks about owls and bats. Sidney too has a comment about the owl:

> Onely the owle still warned them not to seech
> So hastily that which they would repent:
> But sawe they would, and he to deserts went. (1)

Dyer in "He that his mirth" decides to retire to the solitary wood where the screeching owl will be his clock.

The idea of the lover-poet retiring to the woods or desert seems to have been a favourite Elizabethan theme. Sidney writes of a wild Iberian poet in the Arcadia, and when the Queen visited Woodstock in 1575, she was treated to an entertainment on just this subject, which has a close connection with Dyer. Woodstock had been given into Dyer's keeping when his favour with the Queen was high, but he lost popularity and Sir Henry Lee was given the position instead. Dyer seems, however, to have spent some time at Woodstock with Lee, and may have retired there when he was out of favour. Lee had a hand in organising the Queen's entertainment in 1575, when she was told the tale of Hermetes the Hermit.[2] As Her Majesty was leaving the woods after the Tale,

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1. Ringler OA66 - p.100
2. See Sargent, p.30.

> closelie in an oke she hearde the sound both of voice
> and instrument of the excelentest now liuing

in a song of "great invention ... and yet no more than the iust fame of the deuiser doth both deserue and carrie."[1] This song was "The man whose thoughts" and the "deuiser" apparently Dyer.

The Tale, it was suggested, contained hidden matter; Lee himself seems to appear in it as Loricus, a name he was to use again when he entertained the Queen in 1592, and it has been suggested that Hermetes is Dyer.[2] The song, in fact, could well be described as "the lay and tune of his despair" - like the songs of woe which Amarillis enjoyed hearing from Coridon the owl. Mr. Sargent suggests that Coridon is also Dyer;[3] certainly he does use the name again in "Alas my heart" and there is mention of a poet called Coridon in Spenser's Colin Clouts Come Home Againe.[4]

"The man whose thoughts" brings out clearly the favourite Petrarchan theme of contradictions, which Dyer habitually expresses in terms of alliterative antitheses: sweet and sour, hope and hap, desire and disdain, which are well-suited to the balanced patterning of verse that he frequently used. He is forced to love, and to despise himself

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1. See J.W. Cunliffe's edition of the Entertainment, PMLA xxvi (1911) p.92.
2. Sargent p.32, and E.K. Chambers, Sir Henry Lee (Oxford 1936) p.90.
3. Sargent p.67.
4. See Works, ed. J.C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (Oxford 1912) p.540 [hereafter Spenser]

for the way in which love destroys his integrity. Hope and hap are among the most important of these pairs; his hap is always unhappy, his hope is hopeless. They are two of the words Dyer uses most frequently.

His hope remains, like his desire, unfulfilled, and the final position he seems to have reached is one of stoicism:

> Yet this poor gain I reap for my reward:
> I know hereby to harden and prepare
> A ready mind for all assaults of care. (1)

This stoicism is the only way in which he can regain his equanimity, and make up for his blighted youth and promise. Fortune is against him and he should not be tempted to rise too high. This is the point of view expressed most forcibly in "My mind to me", if the poem is Dyer's. He retires hurt, to lick his wounds and console himself spiritually, as in his farewells to love "Fancy farewell" and "Before I die". From this point of vantage one can see part of the reason for writing his poems, especially the long poems - not only are they the songs of woe, but they are also warnings:

> Give them thanks for you by them
> Are warned to take heed. (2)

It will be seen from this, I think, that the poems whose attributions to Dyer are fairly certain share a common cluster of related

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1. "Divide my times".

2. "Amarillis".

themes and attitudes: one poem echoes another in style, sentiment, even vocabulary, so that one has the feeling that these poems are all by the same author. Their common note is perhaps Dyer's individual voice, or at least his own way of handling the conventions. Lord Oxford, in contrast, handles very similar conventions with a rather different result.[1]

In the other poems, whose attribution to Dyer is uncertain, this individual note is not really apparent. "My mind to me" is the poem in the doubtful group most likely to be Dyer's - it has a turn of phrase similar to parts of "I would it were not" - for instance:

> This is our state, lo, thus we stand,
> They rise to fall, that climb too high.

It has, however, such a curious textual situation that it is discussed in detail in an appendix to this chapter. "The lowest trees" is not unlike "My mind to me" in that it consists almost entirely of commonplaces worked into verse. It could perhaps be Dyer working in a euphuistic mode; he was fond of balancing phrases in this way, but then so were many of his contemporaries. The poem was extremely popular in the seventeenth century, and it was imitated, answered, and set to music. Its single ascription to Dyer is, however, in the late and possibly suspect MS Rawl.Poet.148. "Where one would be" has a deleted ascription to Dyer - it is dull and tautological, but could possibly be one of his

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1. See below, pp. 183, 198.

early songs.

"Silence augmenteth grief" is the work of one of Sidney's close friends,[1] and both Dyer and Greville are obviously eligible. There is, however, no definite evidence by which the poem may be ascribed: Malone suggested Dyer on the grounds of metre, Lamb suggested Greville on internal evidence; Grosart and Lee, among others, preferred Greville.[2] It has turns of phrase not unlike Dyer in places, but the movement of the thought could be Greville's: it is more involved than Dyer usually is, but this may have been warranted by the occasion. Nor does the form offer much assistance: poulter's measure was a favourite with Dyer (in "Before I die" he uses it with commendable rhythmic variety) but Greville also used it in the choruses of his plays.

"Amidst the fairest" is not, I think, Dyer's - the ironic way in which the shepherd is seen, and the slightly mocking quality of the pastoral tale is unlike Dyer. It has a felicity of phrase, a polish and a sophistication that lead one to suspect that the poem belongs to the 1590s, and perhaps to an author such as the Earl of Essex. If Dyer did write it, it is probably his latest surviving poem, showing a new development of his poetic style, perhaps under the influence of the poetry being written in the 1590s. If it is his, it is, I think, one

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1. See line 8.

2. For a summary of the evidence, see Sargent, p.211 and Rollins's edition of The Phoenix Nest, p.130.

of his best poems.

The poems that can be attributed to Dyer do suggest a poetic personality, but one cannot be sure that they give an adequate sampling of the whole of Dyer's work. What is preserved does not really explain why his contemporaries praised him so highly. He seems to have been admired for expressing truths in a memorable way: Harington, for instance, quotes sententious phrases that he apparently considers well expressed.[1] But perhaps Nashe is nearest to the truth in suggesting that Dyer owes his pre-eminence to being one of the first of the Elizabethan courtiers to write easy, natural lyrics, and to create a style that later writers could draw on and improve.[2] His poetic popularity lasted well: by the end of the century Gabriel Harvey could still write of him that his "written deuises farr excell most of the sonets, and cantos in print."[3] Even in Harvey's time, however, Dyer's poems seem to have been difficult to find, and one may well share his impatient complaint, "But when shall we tast the preserued dainties of Sir Edward Dier ... ?"[4]

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1. See Orlando Furioso (1591) notes on Books 8 and 16.
2. See the remarks from Haue With You to Saffron-Walden, quoted above, p.141.
3. Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia, ed. G.C. Moore Smith (1923) p.232.
4. Ibid., p.231.

Appendix

MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS

The Literary History of a Popular Poem

Onion: ... for mine owne part I am no Gentleman borne I must confesse, but my mind to me a kingdome is truly.

Antonio: Truly a very good saying.

Onion: 'Tis somewhat stale, but that's no matter.

Antonio: O 'tis the better, such things euer are like bread, which the staler it is, the more holesome.

Ben Jonson: The Case is Altered

"My mind to me a kingdom is" is probably the best-known of all the poems with attributions to Dyer. It is the poem most often printed in anthologies and so has influenced modern assessment of Dyer's poetic style and achievement. What is not so widely known is that the poem has had a very varied textual history, a discussion of which may throw light on some of the problems to be encountered in dealing with the work of a poet like Dyer.

The poem exists today in a number of different forms: in the first place, it is preserved as a poem of eight stanzas in five manuscripts from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Secondly, it is preserved as a ballad of eleven stanzas, in several manuscript and printed versions, all apparently dating from the seventeenth century. In this form, seven of the stanzas correspond to seven of the stanzas of

the manuscript version, but they are arranged in a different order. Thirdly, in William Byrd's Psalmes, Sonets, & songs of sadnes and pietie, published in 1588, there are two songs, one of four stanzas, corresponding to the last four stanzas of the ballad version of the poem (which do not appear in the manuscript version); and a song of six stanzas, corresponding to six of the stanzas appearing in both the manuscript and the ballad versions, but in the order of the former. In one copy of Byrd's book, now in the British Museum,[1] the two stanzas missing from the six-stanza song have been added in a contemporary hand. One of these is the stanza which appears in the manuscript version but is missing from the ballad.

Finally, I am indebted to Professor W.A. Ringler for information of a manuscript in the United States, at present being studied by other scholars, in which there is a text of the poem consisting of the manuscript version but omitting the sixth and eighth stanzas (as opposed to Byrd's text, which omits the fifth and the seventh), dated 1581 and subscribed "Said to bee fyrst written by the L.Ver." Professor Ringler interprets this as referring to Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford.[2]

The ascription of the poem to Dyer occurs in only one manuscript - Rawl.Poet.85. The only other text to be subscribed (MS Harl.7392) has "BALL.", which, it has been suggested above, seems to mean "ballet" and

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1. Bassus part: press-mark Music D.101.d.

2. In a private communication.

so is probably not an ascription at all.[1] It seems to me that "the L.Ver." would be a very curious way of referring to Lord Oxford: poems of his are usually ascribed "Vere" (in MS Folger V.a.89), "Earle of Oxforde" (in MS Rawl.Poet.85) or "Lo.Ox." (in MS Harl.7392), and he would surely never be styled "the Lord Vere". Perhaps someone else (such as Lord Verulam) is intended; at all events, this last manuscript must be judged as of uncertain reliability until more is known of it.

Of the sources for the eight-stanza version of the poem, two, MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.7392 have already been described.[2] Not a great deal is known about the other manuscripts. The text in MS Petyt 538 volume 10 (in the Inner Temple Library) is in a group of poems appearing at the front of a collection of other matter, chiefly parliamentary in character and referring to the reigns of both Elizabeth and James I. On the same sheet as "My mind to me" is a copy of "The lowest trees have tops" (elsewhere ascribed to Dyer) but neither is ascribed.

There is another text in MS Add.15225, a collection of songs and poems mainly religious or moralising in character, nearly half of which have a strong Roman Catholic flavour. The collection was probably compiled about 1616, though it includes poems of earlier date.[3] The fifth MS, Sloane 2497, is a curious collection of arithmetical tables, drawings of

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1. See above, p.46.
2. See above, chapter 2.
3. See H.E. Rollins, Old English Ballads 1553-1625 (Cambridge 1920), p.xxviii.

cannon, and business documents such as receipts, some dated in the 1590s. It may have been kept by someone with a naval connection. The text of the poem in this manuscript has some unusual spellings and reverses the order of the sixth and seventh stanzas.

Textually, there seems to be a split in the manuscript tradition between the texts in MSS Harl.7392, Rawl.Poet.85 and the Petyt MS, on the one hand, and the other two manuscripts. The former are apparently related and preserve what seems to me the earlier and best text.[1] There is also a ghost that needs to be laid: in his discussion of the poem, Professor Sargent mentions a text printed by S.W. Singer in Notes and Queries[2] from a manuscript containing poems by Dyer and Oxford, and by a Robert Mills of Cambridge. Professor Sargent was unable to locate this manuscript, but he quotes variants from Singer's text.[3] It seems to me clear that the manuscript referred to is, in fact, MS Rawl.Poet.85, which, as has been noted, does have a close connection with Robert Mills of Cambridge.[4] The confusion has apparently arisen because Singer normalised and punctuated the text he published, and accepted one or other reading where the manuscript has corrections (which are frequent).

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1. See text and variants in Volume 2, p. 99.
2. Vol.i (1849) p.355.
3. Sargent, p.213.
4. See above, p.40 and below, p. 336.

In the seventeenth century a different version of "My mind to me" began to appear, as a popular broadside ballad, "To the tune of In Crete". One can date the beginning of this trend fairly accurately, for in the Registers of the Stationers Company, under the date December 14th 1624, is an entry registering the poem as an old ballad for publication as a broadsheet.[1] It appears to have sold well, for several copies of it survive, printed by various different printers. Two of these copies are in the Douce collection, in the Bodleian Library:[2] they are in black letter and have a crude block illustration. One is printed on the same sheet as "A proper new Ballad of a Dream of a Sinner, being very sore troubled with the assaults of Satan."

Two more copies of the ballad are preserved in the Pepys Collection at Cambridge, and are dated by Professor Rollins about 1624 and 1675.[3] Another, probably earlier, is in the manuscript collection of ballads from Shirburn Castle;[4] a sixth is preserved in Bodleian MS Eng.Poet.f.10, which contains verses copied between the 1620s and 1640s; and a seventh in MS Add.52585, the commonplace book of Richard Waferer and probably early seventeenth century.[5]

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1. See H.E. Rollins, An Analytical Index to the Ballad-Entries (1557–1709) in the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London (Chapel Hill, 1924).
2. Douce Black-letter Ballads, vol.2, ff.200v and 270v.
3. The Pepys Ballads (Cambridge Mass 1929) i, p.225.
4. A. Clark, The Shirburn Ballads (1907) p.113.
5. Which includes (f.74v) an answer, "A perfect discription of a disconted mynde."

The ballad omits the seventh stanza of the poem as it appears in the manuscript version,[1] and the first seven stanzas of the ballad correspond to the stanzas of the manuscript version in the order 1,4,3,6,5,8,2. The last four stanzas of the ballad follow fairly closely Byrd's text of the song "I joy not in no earthly bliss",[2] but Byrd's six-stanza text of the first part of the poem has many unique readings, though it seems to be related to the inferior texts in MSS Sloane 2497 and Add.15225. On the whole, the ballad version of the poem agrees with the texts preserved in this Sloane/Add.15225/Byrd tradition.

There is no evidence to suggest that Dyer had any connection with the last four stanzas of the ballad. Byrd does not ascribe his songs; he might conceivably have broken up one long poem and made two songs out of it (he was not averse to leaving out stanzas).[3] It is interesting to note, however, that he prints "I joy not" (song xi) some pages before "My mind to me" (song xiv).

Professor Rollins regarded the whole ballad as Dyer's;[4] Professor Sargent disagrees.[5] In my opinion there is a marked difference between the two parts of the ballad. "My mind to me" is a quiet, moderate

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1. See text and variants in Volume 2, p.104.
2. Psalmes, Sonets, & songs, sig. [D1].
3. See for example, "Farewell false love": Volume 2, p.193.
4. Pepys Ballads, p.225.
5. Sargent, p.214.

statement, with no shrillness or intensity of feeling. "I joy not" seems to introduce a tone which is foreign to the poem. The attitude of

> And laugh at those that toil in vain
> To get what must be lost again. (lines 53-4)

seems arrogant and mocking, whereas "My mind to me" is sympathetic - "I laugh not at another's loss" (line 31). "My mind to me" gives no indication of hate or aggressive ill-feeling, whereas "I joy not" reads

> I kiss not where I wish to kill,
> I feign no love where most I hate, (lines 55-6)

"I joy not" repeats in places ideas touched on in "My mind to me" - for example,

> My mind is such as may not move
> For beauty bright or force of love. (lines 47-8)

seems to have something of the idea of "No shape to feed a loving eye ..." (line 10). In the same way, "I like the plain, I climb no hill" (line 51) corresponds roughly with

> And hasty climbers soon do fall;
> I see that those which are aloft
> Mishap doth threaten most of all. (lines 14-6)

There are too similarities of form: compare "I scorn no poor, I fear no rich" (line 59) and "I fear no foe, I fawn no friend" (line 35).

This suggests that "I joy not" is a separate poem, perhaps an imitation of "My mind to me" and probably not by the same author. The poem superficially resembles "My mind to me" but the stanza form was a common one at the time. As will soon be apparent, the ideas expressed

are fairly commonplace, and they would not be difficult to imitate - in fact there is another poem of much the same sort which is probably an imitation or a parody of "My mind to me".[1] One almost feels that this is the type of poem one could add stanzas to indefinitely.

The textual situation of "My mind to me" is, then, complex, and early editors of the poem, if anything, added to the confusion. One of the first to print the poem was probably Thomas D'Urfey in his Wit and Mirth: or Pills to Purge Melancholy in 1700.[2] D'Urfey printed a rather corrupt text of six stanzas, following the order of the manuscript version but omitting the third and sixth stanzas.

A better text was printed by Moses Mendez in his Collection of the Most Esteemed Pieces of Poetry (1767).[3] This text consists of seven stanzas in the order of neither the manuscript nor the ballad versions: the order is 1,4,3,2,5,6,8 whereas the ballad order is 1,4,3,6,5,8,2. Mendez's text is repeated by Joseph Ritson in A Select Collection of English Songs (1783).[4] Ritson, however, printed eleven stanzas - seven in Mendez's order, and then the four stanzas of "I joy not".

Meanwhile, in the first edition of his Reliques of Ancient English Poetry (1765),[5] Thomas Percy had printed the ballad text of the poem

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1. "I weigh not fortune's frown nor smile", see Vol.2, p.108.
2. Vol.iv (1719) p.88.
3. In second edition (1770), p.119.
4. Vol.ii, p.81.
5. Vol.i, p.268.

from a copy in the Pepys Collection. But then he came across Byrd's text, and so in his 1767 edition he printed a different version.[1] Percy claimed to have printed Byrd's text with "improvements" from the Pepys ballad, but he actually printed seven stanzas in Mendez's order (which is not Byrd's or the normal ballad order). The last four stanzas of the ballad as he originally printed it, Percy broke off and printed as a different poem: "I joy not".[2]

The situation became clearer in the nineteenth century when John Hannah came across the poem in MS Rawl.Poet.85. In his Poems by Sir Henry Wotton, Sir Walter Raleigh and Others (1845)[3] he suggested that the poem was Dyer's and the manuscript the best text. He mentioned "I joy not", the imitation in Sylvester's Posthumi[4] and Green's poem "Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content",[5] and suggested that they were imitations of Dyer's poem, or variations on its theme.

About this time the poem was becoming a subject of discussion in the pages of the first series of Notes and Queries[6] where, as has been

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1. Vol.i, p.291.
2. P.303.
3. Note on p.lxiv. The Bodleian Library has Hannah's own copy, interleaved with MS notes: shelfmark 13 θ.132.
4. "I weigh not fortune's frown nor smile".
5. Greenes Farewell to Follie, sig. [E4] in 1617 quarto.
6. Vol.i, pp.302, 355, 489; vol.ii, p.29; vol.vi, pp.556, 615; vol.vii, p.511; vol.x, p.335.

noted, S.W. Singer printed a text of it. When A.B. Grosart came to produce his edition of The Poems of Sir Edward Dyer in 1872,[1] he was able to refer to Hannah's investigations. He did not agree with all Hannah's readings, but based his text on Singer's, which he "corrects" from Percy and the text in MS Rawl.Poet.85.

Twentieth century editors have, as a rule, followed Hannah's preference for the manuscript text. No one, however, has taken all the texts into consideration - Dyer's last editor, Professor Sargent, referred to most of the texts but did not know of the large body of Dyer's verse in MS Harl.7392.[2]

Of the popularity of "My mind to me" there should by now be no doubt. Byrd's setting of the poem probably helped to make it more widely known - there are several partial texts of the first stanza in contemporary music books of the time.[3] Further indication of popularity comes from references to the poem in works of numerous writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These writers show the range of society that knew the poem, for they include Robert Greene,[4] Thomas Deloney,[5]

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1. Miscellanies of the Fuller Worthies' Library, vol.iv, p.251.
2. Sargent, p.213.
3. MSS Egerton 2009-12, f.55v; Add.15118 f.3v; Add.17792-6 f.62; Add.29401-5 f.2; Add.36484 f.52v.
4. Greenes Farewell to Follie (1591) - in 1617 quarto, sig. [E4].
5. Iacke of Newberie (1597) - in Works, ed. F.O. Mann (Oxford 1912) p.38.

Ben Jonson,[1] Nicholas Breton,[2] George Chapman,[3] John Davies of Hereford,[4] George Wither,[5] and John Taylor, "the water poet".[6]

An interesting point emerges from these references to the poem: it is sometimes alluded to in connection with beggars and beggary. Beggars and vagabonds were a common feature of the Elizabethan scene, and it seems that some writers may have thought rather wistfully of a beggar's life, happy in its freedom from everyday cares. Yet there is also the suggestion, notably in Ben Jonson, that a beggar's contentment in the mind is a poor substitute for physical need.[7]

There is a reference to beggars in Greene's poem "Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content" which seems to be an imitation of "My mind to me", or at least a poem on the same subject. An even closer imitation of "My mind to me" occurs, as has been mentioned, among the Posthumi or Sylvesters Remaines added to the 1641 folio of Joshua

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1. Every Man out of his Humour (1600), I,i,11; and The Case is Altered (1609), I,ii,40; in Works, ed. Herford and Simpson (Oxford 1927), vol.iii.

2. The Court and Country (1618): in Hazlitt's Inedited Tracts (1868) p.191.

3. Monsieur D'olive (1606) II,ii,16, sig. [C4v].

4. Wittes Pilgrimage (c.1610), sonnet 43: in Works, ed. Grosart (1878) vol.ii, p.12.

5. Withers Motto (1621) sig. [F1v]: in Works ed. Spenser Soc, part iii (vol.xi, 1871) p.702.

6. The Praise, Antiquity, and Commodity of Beggerie, Beggars, and Begging (1621) sig. [B3v].

7. See quotation in Every Man out of his Humour, above.

Sylvester's Du Bartas.[1] This gives the impression of being a somewhat cruder poem that "My mind to me": the language is more extreme, the form used with more monotony and the ideas frequently reworkings of ideas from the other poem. A superficial resemblance to "My mind to me" is helped by similar words and formulas. Mr. Sargent, rightly in my opinion, regards the work as a parody.[2]

Sylvester may have been the author of this poem, though it appeared in his works only after his death, among poems some of which are probably by Campion, for example.[3] "I weigh not fortune's frown" was first printed in the First Set of Madrigals and Mottets (1612) by Orlando Gibbons, who set each stanza separately as a madrigal.[4]

The sentiments expressed in "My mind to me" seem to have appealed equally to the Roman Catholics of the time, and perhaps this is not surprising, considering the possible religious implications of the poem, and the idea of not allowing worldly tribulations and persecutions to disturb one's equanimity. Byrd was a Catholic, and it will be remembered that MS Add.15225 has a Catholic association. A reference to "My mind to me" occurs also in a work by the Catholic poet Robert Southwell - Saint

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1. sig. [3K5].
2. Sargent p.218.
3. "Thrice toss these oaken ashes in the air" [3I2], and "Thou art not fair for all thy red and white" [3I2v].
4. Madrigals iii-vi.

Peters Complaint (1602).[1] Southwell, it seems, knew Dyer's poetry, for in the same volume is an adaptation of "He that his mirth hath lost".[2]

With all this contemporary reference to the poem, it is hardly surprising that the first line achieved the status of a proverb, and it began to appear as such in dictionaries of proverbs from about 1640. M.P. Tilley compares it with the similar proverbs "Content (A mind content) is a kingdom (crown)"; "Content is all"; "Contentment (A Contented mind) is great riches".[3]

In fact the ideas contained in "My mind to me" seem to belong to a cluster popular at the time. Similar expressions of contentedness appear in poems by Surrey and Lord Vaux from Tottel's Miscellany[4] and The Paradise of Dainty Devices[5] - both books that Dyer probably knew. The themes are partly Classical: Surrey's poem is a translation of Martial, and similar ideas appear in Seneca's Thyestes, which Jasper Heywood translated in 1560.[6]

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1. "I dwell in graces court", sig. [G3].

2. Sig. [K1].

3. A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Ann Arbor 1950), M.792. See also Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, ed. Smith and Heseltine (2nd ed., 1948), p.425.

4. "Martiall, the thinges that do attayn": in Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1965) i, p.26.

5. "When all is doen and saied": in Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1927) p.88.

6. Jasper Heywood and his Translations of Seneca, ed. H.de Vocht, Materialen zur Kunde des Älteren Englischen Dramas, xli (Louvain 1913) p.145.

The idea of contentment as a kingdom occurs also in other works by several of Dyer's contemporaries: in Sidney's Arcadia[1] and Shakespeare's Henry VI,[2] in Nicholas Breton[3] and in Thomas Tusser's rhymed farming manual.[4] Robert Burton quotes Augustine on the subject,[5] and as late as 1674 Christopher Harvey mentions it.[6]

The basic idea seems to have become associated with a lowly station in life, often in the country, where one may lack riches (and the cares of court life) but have great riches of the mind. The extreme case from this point of view is the beggar, who may have great riches of the mind and yet go hungry. At the other extreme of society is the king, whose crown and kingdom can become a tribulation, and whose only real riches are in the mind. The idea, in fact, is the Stoic one that the wise man is the only truly royal person. There are similar themes in Horace[7] and Virgil,[8] and one might perhaps compare St. Luke's "Behold,

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1. See Works ed. Feuillerat (Cambridge 1912) vol.i, p.116.
2. II Henry VI, IV,x,16; III Henry VI, III,i,55.
3. Choice, Chance, and Change (1606) sig. [G4v].
4. Fiue Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie (1573), ed. Payne and Herrtage, English Dialect Soc. (1878) pp.205, 214.
5. The Anatomy of Melancholy (1621), ed. Jackson (Everyman 1961) vol.ii, p.160.
6. The School of the Heart, ode 4, stanza 5.
7. Quoted in C. Wordsworth's Shakespeare's Knowledge and Use of the Bible (2nd ed. 1864) p.243.
8. Quoted in Hannah's notes in his copy of Poems by Wotton etc.

the kingdom of God is within you".[1]

What Dyer seems to have achieved (if the poem is his) is the happy expression of these ideas in a form that everyone could appreciate.[2] He used one of the commonest poetic forms of the time, with no great technical originality. He balances phrases, builds up groups of antitheses and uses his final couplet to round off each stanza neatly. His stanzas have a unity, almost an independence, so there is little progression throughout the poem. He gives illustrations of the state of equilibrium he has achieved, and the form of the poem seems to reflect something of this equilibrium.

It is the completeness of each stanza in itself that makes it possible for the order of the poem to be rearranged without greatly altering the final effect. It also makes it possible for more stanzas to be written on the same model, giving other examples of the same happy state of mind. What is not so easily recaptured is the tone of moderate serenity. There are no difficulties of language or syntax, nothing to impede the smooth flow of the verse with its neatly balanced phrases. There is an elegance about the poem, a clarity of language which makes it read as smoothly and as clearly today as it did in the 1580s.

One cannot be sure that the poem is Dyer's, but it seems to me that there is a certain amount of circumstantial evidence supporting an

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1. Ch.xvii, verse 21.

2. Compare Harington's remarks about Dyer in Orlando Furioso (1591) notes to Books 8 and 16.

attribution to him. If one examines the other poems probably by Dyer (and "I would it were not as it is" is very like "My mind to me" in places), it is interesting to note that most of them are complaints: poems of sadness, even despair. In this poem alone he seems to achieve equanimity, and it is a rather stoical equanimity, a determination not to let the cares of the world disturb him.

There were reasons why Dyer, like Sidney, should have found life at court a burden. He was, for instance, continually harassed financially. A courtier's life was notoriously expensive and the positions Dyer held were never very lucrative. In 1578 he borrowed the huge sum of £3000 from the Queen to meet his debts. He may have thought that Elizabeth would not force him to repay this loan (equivalent to roughly £60,000 today) but she was adamant, and several times in later years Dyer had to beg a postponement as he was unable to pay. He managed to stave off bankruptcy until his death in 1607, but he spent his later years away from court, and at his death the Crown seized most of his estate in payment of the debt.[1]

These facts seem to add new meaning to the poem, and give some indication why Dyer may have found it necessary to seek his repose in the mind. Indeed his case seems to offer some proof of John Taylor's lines equating poets with beggars:[2]

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1. For details, see Sargent, pp.132 ff.

2. The Praise of Beggerie (1621) sig. [B3v].

Yet this is all the Guerdon he [the poet] shall have,
That begg'ry will attend him to his Graue.
He (in his owne Conceit) may haue this blisse,
And sing, My minde to me a Kingdome is.
But 'tis a Kingdome wanting forme or matter,
Or substance, like the Moonshine in the water ...

A sweet and Pleasant Sonnet, Entituled,
My Mind to me a Kindom is.

The Tune is, *In Creet*, &c.



My mind to me a Kingdom is,
such perfect joyes therein I find,
It far exceeds all earthly bliss,
the world affords, or grows by kind,
Though much I want that most men have,
Yet doth my mind forbid me crave.
Content I live, this is my stay,
I seek no more then may suffice,
I press to bear no haughty sway,
look what I lack, my mind supplys,
Lo thus I triumph like a King,
Content with that my mind doth bring,
I see how plenty surfeits oft,
and hasty climbers oft do fall,
I see how those that sit aloft,
mischap doth threaten most of all;
They get, they toil, they spend with care,
Such cares my mind could never bear.
I laugh not at anothers loss,
I grudge not at anothers gain,
No worldly waves my mind can toss,
I brook that is anothers bane,
I fear no foe, I scorn no friend,
I dread no death, I fear no end.

Some have too much, yet still they crave,
I little have, yet seek no more,
They are but poor, though much they have
and I am rich with little store:
They pour, I rich, they beg, I give,
They lack, I lend, they pine, I live.
My Wealth is health and perfect ease,
my Conscience clear, my chief defence,
I never seek by bribes to please,
nor by desert to give offence,
Lo thus I live, thus will I dye,
Would all did so as well as I.
No Princely Pomp, no wealthy store,
no force to get the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
no shape to win a Lovers eye,
To none of these I yield as thrall,
For why my mind despised all.
I joy not at an earthly bliss,
I weigh not Cræsus wealth a straw,
For care, I care not what it is,
I fear no Fortunes fatal Law,
My mind is such as may not move,
For beauty bright, or force of Love.
I wish not what I have at will,
I wander not to seek for more,
I like the plain, I climb no hill,
in greatest storm I sit on shore,
And laugh at those that toyl in vain,
To get that must be lost again.
I kiss not where I wish to kill,
I feign no love where I most hate,
I break no sleep to win my will,
I wait not at the mighties Gate,
I scorn no poor, I fear no rich,
I feel no want, nor have too much.
The Court, nor Cart, I like, nor loath,
extreams are counted worst of all,
The Golden mean betwixt them both
doth surest sit, and fears no fall;
This is my choice for why I find,
No wealth is like a quiet mind.

FINIS.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: A black letter ballad from the Douce Collection. The illustration is a common one, appearing frequently on broadside ballads of the time.

Bodleian: Douce Ballads II, fol. 270v.

A sweet and Pleasant Sonnet, Entituled,
My Mind to me a Kindom is.

The Tune is, *In Creet*, &c.



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such perfect joyes therein I find,
It far exceeds all earthly bliss,
the world affords, or grows by kind,
Though much I want that most men have,
Yet doth my mind forbid me crave.
Content I live, this is my stay,
I seek no more then may suffice,
I prize to bear no haughty sway,
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Lo thus I triumph like a King,
Content with that my mind doth bring,
I see how plenty surfeits oft,
and hasty climbers oft do fall,
I see how those that sit aloft,
mischap doth threaten most of all;
They get, they toil, they spend with care,
Such cares my mind could never bear.
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Would all did so as well as I.
No Princely Pomp, no wealthy store,
no force to get the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
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For care, I care not what it is,
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I wish not what I have at will,
I wander not to seek for more,
I like the plain, I climb no hill,
in greatest storm I sit on shore,
And laugh at those that toyl in vain,
To get that must be lost again.
I kiss not where I wish to kill,
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I break no sleep to win my will,
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I scorn no poor, I fear no rich,
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Bodleian: Douce Ballads II, fol. 270v.



MISCELLANEOUS SONGS.

SONG I.

MY mind to me a kingdom is;
Such perfect joy therein I find,
As far exceeds all earthly bliſs,
That God or Nature hath aſſign'd:
Though much I want that moſt would have,
Yet ſtill my mind forbids to crave.

Content I live, this is my ſtay;
I ſeek no more than may ſuffice:
I preſs to bear no haughty ſway;
Look what I lack my mind ſupplies.
Lo! thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: A page from Joseph Ritson's A Select Collection of English Songs, 1783, vol.2, p.81.

Bodleian Douce RR 42.

Chapter Six

"The Most Excellent Among The Rest"

The Lyrics of EDWARD DE VERE, EARL OF OXFORD

> I may not omitte the deserued commendations of many honorable and noble Lordes, and Gentlemen, in her Maiesties Courte, which in the rare deuises of Poetry, haue beene and yet are the most excellent skylfull, among whom, the right honourable Earle of Oxford may challenge to him selfe the tytle of the most excellent among the rest.
>
> Webbe's Discourse

With the figure of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, one enters the dark and tangled region of Shakespearean controversy, for Lord Oxford, scion of one of the oldest and noblest Elizabethan families, is a prime contender for the authorship of the plays of Shakespeare, should they be proved to be beyond the powers of the actor from Stratford-upon-Avon. This is in many ways unfortunate, for it has meant that interest in Lord Oxford himself has often taken second place to a wild search for Shakespearean parallels, and the erection of hypotheses on the shaky foundations of cryptograms and ciphers.[1] It has also meant that much of the research has been done by amateur historians who have often been led astray by their ignorance of the Elizabethan period.

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1. Cf. Bodleian MS Eng.Misc.c.143, f.127: an attempt to prove from ciphers that Oxford is author of works signed with "pen names" George Gascoigne, Francis Kinwelmarsh, Edmund Spenser, Samuel Daniel, William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson.

Controversy was nothing new to Lord Oxford. In his own time he seems frequently to have been involved in plots, intrigues and scandals - sometimes, one feels, unfairly, for he had many enemies. He often aligned himself in opposition to figures with whom the twentieth century has tended to sympathise - figures such as Sidney, Leicester, Burghley - and our view of him has thus been partisan. Even his biographer, Colonel B.M. Ward, who has done much to right the current picture of Lord Oxford, has also concerned himself with trying to advance theories of his own about the authorship of The Arte of English Poesie, and about Oxford's dramatic associations.[1]

Lord Oxford's poems have not been examined again since A.B. Grosart collected and edited them in 1872; J.T. Looney in his edition of 1921 merely seems to have accepted Grosart's texts and added others - such as all the songs from Lyly's plays, and all the poems in Englands Helicon signed "Ignoto".[2]

Not many more of Lord Oxford's poems are preserved than Dyer's: there are eighteen poems probably by him, and four or five more which seem to have some connection with him. Of these eighteen, eight were first published in The Paradise of Dainty Devices, which appeared in 1576, the year Oxford returned in fury from his tour of the Continent. The Paradise of Dainty Devices seems to be a miscellany of poems and songs

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1. Ward, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, (1928). [Henceforth Ward].

2. Grosart, Miscellanies of Fuller Worthies' Library, iv, (1872); Looney, The Poems of Edward de Vere, (1921).

collected by Richard Edwards, Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal, and a poet and playwright himself. Edwards died in October 1566, but his manuscript apparently found its way into the hands of the publisher Henry Disle, who had it printed some ten years later.[1] What is not certain is whether Disle added any poems to the collection himself; if not, then the poems in The Paradise must all have been written before Edwards's death - when Oxford was sixteen. Oxford was already appearing at court by this time, having been made B.A. at Cambridge in 1565, and M.A. at Oxford in 1566 (where he would have seen Edwards's play Palamon and Arcite performed before the Queen). Eight of the poems in The Paradise are ascribed "E.O." - an ascription which is usually interpreted as referring to Oxford. There seems no good reason to doubt this; Oxford signed his letters "Edwarde Oxenforde".[2]

These eight poems are, on the whole, rather old-fashioned in form and stilted in diction. They are full of alliteration:

My life, through lingering long, is lodged in lair of loathsome ways

and sometimes awkward inversion:

Help crave I must ...
... is of these griefs the ground.

and seem to belong in style with the other poems in The Paradise. There is no reason to believe they could not have been written by Oxford in his

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1. See Disle's preface, and H.E. Rollins's edition of The Paradise (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1927).
2. See Greg's English Literary Autographs (Oxford 1925) vol.i, Part I, no.xxviii.

teens: especially by a young courtier as precocious as Oxford appears to have been, with his M.A. behind him and already a figure at Court and a favourite with the Queen.

The poems do look the sort a young courtier of fifteen or sixteen might well have written: they are mostly formal complaints, rather literary in tone. They are often decked out with figures from the Classics - Paris and Priam; Venus, Juno, Pallas; Phoebe and Endymion; Gyges; Hannibal, Caesar, Pompey; Daphne and Apollo; Melpomene and the other Muses; and, of course, Cupid. Another feature is a fondness for exempla - accumulations of illustrations in support of a theme. These may be Classical allusions, or they may be examples from everyday life: hawking, gardening, hunting, bee-keeping, snaring birds or reaping the harvest. It is as if the young poet has chosen a theme and then searched for arguments to support or exemplify it, just as the rhetoricians taught that he should. And it is interesting that precisely these features are notable in the poems written by the young Lord Paget and Lord Berkeley at the ages of between nine and fourteen.[1]

Yet Lord Oxford's achievement is not unimpressive. Most of the poems in The Paradise seem to have been songs, or at least to have been collected with a view to being sung[2] (Edwards was a well-known musician, and trained the boys of the Royal Chapels), and it is in the more musical

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1. See below, chapter 12.

2. See Disle's preface: "being as they are so aptly made to be set to any song in .5. partes, or song to instrument."

of the poems that Oxford seems to be at his best. His poems have for the most part a neat patterning, and a song-like quality which suggests that they were intended for singing. Several have a pleasing use of the refrain, or an attractive modulation from a succession of longer lines to a shorter couplet (as in "The trickling tears"). At their best they have a lightness of touch, an assurance of cadence and an elegance of phrasing that is attractive.

One recognises in some of these poems a note one has heard before - in lyrics by Dyer, for instance - a note which one suspects is the voice of the courtly poetry of the 1560s, when both Dyer and Oxford may have been writing. Oxford's poem "If care or skill could conquer vain desire" is not unlike Dyer's "I would it were not as it is" in some respects. There is the same complaint of the lover who has no hope, who must keep silent and so has no chance of success, who loves above his station. As in Dyer's case, one suspects that the Lady whose social position is so much higher than the lover's, must be the Queen, particularly seeing that there were not many Ladies at court who would be of higher social status than the seventeenth Earl of Oxford. Compare Dyer's

> But he that vaunts his heart too high
> Must be content to pine and die. (1)

with Oxford's

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1. "I would it were not".

Who loves aloft, and sets his heart on high,
Deserves no pain, though he do pine and die. (1)

One wonders whether Dyer and Oxford were aware of one another's poems, or whether they were merely making use of the same "commonplace of loue" that Harington traces back to Petrarch and translates from Ariosto as:

Yet so his heart and thoughts be highly placed,
He must not mourne, no though he die disgraced. (2)

"I am not as I seem to be" is another poem that reminds one of Dyer, this time of his "Fain would I, but I dare not". The repetition of balanced paradoxes of this sort was obviously a popular courtly device. What is interesting is Oxford's attitude in contrast to Dyer's: Oxford is noticeably less melancholy than Dyer, and complains loudly at his fate: "Accursed be so foul a fate".[3] Some of the rage and impulsiveness that contemporaries commented upon in Oxford's character seems to come through into his poetry. "The trickling tears" has a violence of complaint, an intensity of protest about it:

And let her feel the power of all your might,
And let her have her most desire with speed,
And let her pine away, both day and night,
And let her moan, and none lament her need, ...

It points towards Oxford's most furious poem, "Fain would I sing".

Oxford is, on the whole, more musical than Dyer: his most

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1. "If care or skill".
2. Orlando Furioso (1591) [I2]; see also notes on Book 16, [I4v].
3. "I am not as I seem to be".

elaborately musical poem in The Paradise is the strangely moving "A Crown of Bays shall that man wear", made oddly intense and memorable by the repetition and refrains. There is a neat economy in "Daphne's Bays" being at once the poet's laurel wreath and the token of the Lady's affections: like Apollo he pursues the Lady and wins nothing but the laurel.

Much of the evocative appeal of this poem lies in the use of the colours black and tawny. Colour symbolism played an important part in the pageantry of Queen Elizabeth's court, and the significance of black and tawny can be seen from the following lines from an Elizabethan poem about colours:

> The Lover of his love forlorn,
> And quite cast off indeed,
> As one forsaken may go mourn,
> Clad all in Tawny weed.
> Whoso of Parent is bereft,
> Or wonted friend doth lack,
> For him no colour else is left
> To wear, but only Black. (1)

Oxford's poem has, of course, its share of the conventional courtly elements of scorching flames of love, tears, rending of hair and calling on the Muses to assist the Lover's complaint, but it has also a certain ceremonial ring about it, not unlike a formal dance.

The most popular of Oxford's poems in The Paradise was undoubtedly "The lively lark" - the only poem of the eight which appears in any

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1. MS Harl.7392, f.59v (T32).

other text apart from The Paradise. It has a sprightliness, a neatness of phrase and a simple elegance which are immediately appealing. It exists in three manuscript versions, probably from the 1580s, and so seems to have remained popular for some twenty years or more. It has a certain sophisticated courtliness about it, with the unexpected answer to the question of what love likes best and dislikes most:

> Desire can have no greater pain
> Than for to see another man
> That he desireth, to obtain;
> Nor greater joy can be than this,
> Than to enjoy that others miss.

This was no doubt an apt description of the amorous intrigues of the Court. The refrain added in The Paradise seems to suggest that this poem was also sung.

Desire appears to have been one of Oxford's favourite themes, and he wrote several poems about it, (e.g. "The lively lark", "When wert thou born, Desire?", "Winged with desire"). He was also fond of an allegorical treatment of this sort, (see "When wert thou born, Desire?", "Whereas the Heart at Tennis play"). The reference to Carnation involves another significant colour: with its overtones of carnality it was an obvious colour for Desire, and seems to have been a shade of pink. It was apparently a fashionable colour in the 1570s - in the Sidney accounts for 1577 are records of payments made for the purchase of carnation velvet, carnation satin, carnation lace and carnation buttons, to be made into a doublet[1] - and Sir Arthur Gorges has a poem about the colours

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1. M.St.Clare Byrne, Elizabethan Life in Town and Country (1961) p.309.

"Carnation, white and watchet".[1] Oxford may have liked colours such as pink and red: in the Whitehall Tournament of 1571 he appeared in "crimson velvet, very costly"[2] as the Red Knight, and fought alongside Lord Charles Howard (in white), Sir Henry Lee (in green) and Sir Christopher Hatton (in black).

One of the things that suggests that the poems in The Paradise were youthful experiments on Oxford's part is the fact that one of them, "Even as the wax doth melt", was later largely reworked and turned into a poem in commendation of Thomas Bedingfeld's translation of Cardanus Comforte, which was published by Oxford's command in 1573. Bedingfeld was one of the Queen's Gentlemen Pensioners, and in a prefatory letter to Oxford dated 1st January 1571/2 he says that Oxford had encouraged him to finish translating the work. This is followed by a letter from Oxford saying that although Bedingfeld had asked him not to publish the book, he has decided to do so. Oxford adds his commendatory poem, and there is also a poem and a letter from Thomas Churchyard, and a poem from George Gascoigne. Bedingfeld, it is interesting to note, was the person sent to bring Oxford back to England after his secret departure for Brussels in 1574.

"Even as the wax doth melt" is a poem about a lover who is unsuccessful in his love, who has worked assiduously to win his Lady,

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1. See Sandison p.9.
2. See Ward p.60.

only to find another reap the benefit. The phrasing is rather clumsy in places, and the poem composed almost entirely of exempla: the whole effect is rather literary. The Cardanus poem is about the great pains Bedingfeld has taken to translate a work whose benefit every reader can now reap, and is illustrated by almost exactly the same exempla used in the earlier poem. The diction, however, is smoother, less involved in syntax, and the illustrations better worked into poetic form: compare the earlier

> And he that beats the bush, the wished bird not gets,
> But such, I see, as sitteth still, and holds the fowling nets.

with the later

> For he that beats the bush the bird not gets,
> But who sits still and holdeth fast the nets.

The Cardanus poem has some neat phrases - "lordly halls" and the antithesis between gain and pain which is really the kernel of the poem. But Oxford has changed sides: whereas in the earlier poem he had taken the pain and another reaped the reward, in the later poem he is on the winning side while Bedingfeld has done all the work. The rather formal list of illustrations is perhaps better suited to a commendatory poem than a love complaint. The description of the labourer who toils and reaps, and is left with the coarse cheat while the Landlord has the manchet could appear to have an oddly Marxist ring about it today - and has apparently convinced some Russian readers that Oxford was Shakespeare[1] -

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1. See Gilbert Slater, Seven Shakespeares (1931) p.188.

though it seems unlikely (to say the least) that Oxford was protesting at the plight of the Proletariat.

One final point: Cardanus Comforte was published three years before The Paradise but it would seem that "The Labouring man" is a later reworking of "Even as the wax" rather than the other way round. This supports the thesis already discussed that the poems in The Paradise date from the 1560s. Oxford perhaps rewrote his poem as commendatory verse in 1572 or 1573.

"The lively lark" is the only poem of Oxford's in The Paradise for which there are other texts and supporting evidence of Oxford's authorship (an inscription in MS Rawl.Poet.85). With the lack of any indication to the contrary, there seems no reason to doubt that the poems are Oxford's, although there are one or two questionable readings which suggest that the texts are at some remove from the originals. "Framed in the front", for instance, has variant readings of its first line, and some poems (such as "A Crown of Bays") need rearranging to bring out their form more clearly; perhaps they were copied from musical settings. These points would be in accordance with the generally accepted theory that The Paradise is a printed version of a manuscript collection of songs.

Apart from the prefatory poem to Cardanus Comforte, the other poems that can be attributed to Lord Oxford are preserved for the most part in the same loosely related group of manuscripts and printed miscellanies that preserve most of Dyer's poetry. There are thirteen of these poems, about eight of which are probably by Oxford, and the rest seem to have

some connection with him. As in the case of Dyer, there are also various texts, some with ascriptions, in numerous manuscript and printed sources.[1] The manuscript miscellanies under discussion here are, however, the most important of Oxford's sources, for texts and ascriptions - especially MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.7392: the main sources for both Dyer and Lord Oxford.

It has been noted that "The lively lark" remained popular and so belongs with the later poems in the manuscripts. Another poem on the same theme of desire is "When wert thou born, Desire?", which has four ascriptions to Oxford, though in related texts, all from the same tradition. The poem is not unlike "The lively lark" - it has something of the same lightness of touch and simplicity of diction. The allegorical treatment is used again in "Whereas the Heart"; the question and answer device is used again in "Sitting alone upon my thought" and in the doubtful "Who taught thee first to sigh". "When wert thou born" is referred to in The Art of English Poesie, where twelve lines of it are quoted in the discussion of the figure "Antipophora or Responce":

> Edward Earl of Oxford a most noble & learned Gentleman made in this figure of responce an emblem of desire otherwise called Cupide ... (2)

In the version of the poem printed in later editions of The Garland of

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1. See Volume 2, p.119 : Table I.

2. Puttenham p.206.

Good Will (?1659) an extra stanza is added at the beginning of the poem, and another at the end, with no apparent authority.

"Whereas the Heart at Tennis plays" has a more involved allegorical treatment, quite skilfully managed. Tennis (what would today be called Real or Royal Tennis) was a very popular game among Elizabeth's courtiers, and there was a famous quarrel between Sidney and "a Peer" (generally thought to be Oxford)[1] in a tennis court, which almost led to a duel between the two. The poem uses many of the technical terms of the game, some explanation of which is necessary here.

The game is played in an indoor court, "an enclosed oblong building, having on one side and at the two ends an inner wall between which and the outer wall is a sloping roof" - the House. "In the inner wall are openings, called hazards ... and galleries."[2] Jetties were projecting parts of the building, especially an overhang, and so here probably refer to the galleries and "hazards".[3] The Chase is "the second impact on the floor (or in a gallery) of a ball which the opponent has failed or declined to return; its value is determined by the nearness of the point of impact to the end wall. A chase does not count to either player until the players have changed sides. A player wins a chase, on sides being changed, if he can cause his ball to rebound nearer the wall than

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1. Ward p.164 ff.

2. A. Forbes Sieveking: "Games", in Shakespeare's England (Oxford ~~1950~~ 1916) ii, p.461.

3. OED.

the ball did in the chase for which he is playing."[1] With its additional overtones of hunting, the term catches neatly the idea of two courtiers striving for a lady's favour.

The ingenuity with which the conceit has been worked out seems to have appealed to Elizabethan readers. The suggestion of the Lover being bandied[2] about like a tennis ball was a common theme at the time, but the poem gives one a good impression of the fate of a courtly lover among all the conflicting interests and hazards of court life. The poem has two ascriptions to Oxford (in closely related texts from the same tradition) and one to Dyer, though it seems to me more likely to belong to Oxford's vein of wit than Dyer's. The texts in MSS Rawl.Poet. 85 and Marsh Z3.5.21 agree very closely, suggesting a common immediate ancestor, and making this poem one of the rather tenuous links between these two miscellanies.

Oxford's quick temper, which is apparent in Greville's account of the Tennis Court quarrel, finds poetic expression in "Fain would I sing, but fury makes me fret" - a poem of rage and violent complaint. The Lover has been refused and abused - he rejects patience and seeks revenge, though the last couplet seems to suggest that this poetic raging has satisfied him for the moment:

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1. Forbes Sieveking, op. cit.
2. See OED: Bandy - to strike the ball to and fro.

Lo, thus in rage of ruthful mind refused,
I rest revenged of whom I am abused.

The poem appears in only one text, but it seems to me to have an authentic Oxford ring about it, reminding one of some of the poems in The Paradise of Dainty Devices.

Very similar in form to "Fain would I sing", but very different in mood, is "If women could be fair, and yet not fond". It was popular, and is preserved in seven texts, including a setting by Byrd, but has only one ascription (in MS Rawl.Poet.85). The cynicism of the poem reminds one of Oxford's treatment of his first wife and family, and of his amours among the ladies of the court. The imagery is mainly of birds (reminding one, perhaps, of Wyatt's "They flee from me") - women are like "haggards": wild hawks caught and trained to the lure, to be used in falconry. There is an economy of expression about the poem, for example in the neat scorn of:

Who would not scorn, and shake them from the fist,
And let them go, fair fools, which way they list?

or the cynicism of:

Yet for disport, we fawn and flatter both,
To pass the time when nothing else can please,
And train them to our lure with subtle oath,
Till, weary of our wills, ourselves we ease.

The poem undoubtedly expresses a common theme in the love intrigues of the court at that time. Treatment of this sort was just as much part of the game as the Lady's eternal refusal and the poet-lover's ceaseless complaint. Textually there are some interesting agreements between the

versions of the poem in MS Harl.7392 and Brittons Bowre of Delights, and between the versions in MS Rawl.Poet.85 and Byrd, which show that Byrd and Jones (the printer of the Bowre) drew their texts of the poems from regular manuscript sources with no special authority.

It is perhaps in the light of the attitude expressed in "If women could be fair" that one should see Oxford's affair with Anne Vavasour. Anne came to court as a Gentlewoman of the Bedchamber in 1580, when Oxford was estranged from his wife, and stood at the peak of one of his most successful spells as a favourite. In March 1581 a scandal broke at court, about which Sir Francis Walsingham wrote to the Earl of Huntingdon,

> On Tuesday at night Anne Vavysor was brought to bed of a son in the maidens' chamber. The E. of Oxeforde is avowed to be the father, who hath withdrawn himself with intent, as it is thought, to pass the seas. The ports are laid for him and therefore if he have any such determination it is not likely that he will escape.
>
> The gentlewoman the selfsame night she was delivered was conveyed out of the house and the next day committed to the Tower. (1)

Oxford was also imprisoned, and though released three months later, remained out of favour for some time, for he was also under suspicion regarding a Catholic plot.

It seems that Oxford was the father of the child, who became known as Edward Vere, was knighted by James I, and had a distinguished military career.[2] Ann Vavasour seems to have had some resemblance to the women

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1. Quoted in Hughey, ii p.259.

2. See Gwynneth Bowen's "Sir Edward Vere and His Mother" in the Shakespearean Authorship Review, no.15 (1966) p.4.

scorned by Oxford in "If women could be fair": by 1590 she was mistress to Sir Henry Lee, with whom she lived at Woodstock until his death,[1] and it was apparently to her that Ralegh wrote "Many desire, but few or none deserve".[2]

The significance of this from the poetic point of view appears in the poem "Sitting alone upon my thought", which was one of the most popular poems associated with Oxford. That Anne Vavasour and Oxford are the Lady and her faithless lover are apparent from the ascriptions of the manuscript texts, and from the punning on the name of Vere in lines 11-14. Just who wrote the poem, however, seems in doubt. Sir John Harington signs it "E.Veer, count d'Oxford" and heads it "The best verse that ever th'autor made". MS Rawl.Poet.85 heads it "Verses made by the earle of Oxforde [and Mrs Ann Vauesor]" and heads lines 11-20 "Ann Vauesor's eccho". MSS Harl.7392 and Folger V.a.89, on the other hand, ascribed the whole poem "A. Vauasoure" and "Vavaser" respectively. MS Marsh Z.3.5.21 offers a third possibility by heading the poem "Verses made of the Earle of Oxenforde, & Mrs Ann Vauesor": however the Marsh text is very closely related, textually, to MS Rawl.Poet.85 - it also heads lines 11-20 "Ann Vauesor", and it is possible that "made of the Earle of Oxenforde" may mean "made by". Miss Hughey feels that Oxford was the author, and writes of "the ironic mockery of the poem,

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1. See E.K. Chambers, Sir Henry Lee (Oxford 1936) p.150.
2. See Volume 2, p.204.

which reverses the role of the suffering Petrarchan lover and skilfully presents the author as scorning himself for his pride and unfaithfulness in love."[1]

There are, as will appear below, other indications that Anne Vavasour may have written poetry herself, but it is perhaps more likely that in this instance the echo section was put into her mouth. If Oxford wrote this section of the poem, it may support his claim to the authorship of "When I was fair and young", generally thought to be by the Queen, but, as was noted above, ascribed in MS Folger V.a.89 to Oxford. Oxford may well have been in the habit of writing poems purporting to come from various court ladies; on the whole, he seems the most likely author of "Sitting alone".

Whatever the solution to the problem of authorship, the poem obviously refers to the Oxford-Vavasour affair, which would probably account for some of its appeal — though not all, perhaps, if one takes into consideration Sir John Harington's judgement that it is Oxford's best poem. It has other qualities which would also have appealed to Elizabethan readers: the evocative pastoral setting with its wild lonely shore, its ancient wood, its rocks and caves and mysteriously veiled figures. The echo was also a popular conceit: Sidney wrote an echo poem in the Arcadia,[2] and James Reshoulde, a Cambridge undergraduate

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1. Hughey, ii, p.261.

2. OA 31: see Ringler p.62.

in the 1580s, tried his hand at one which is preserved in MS Rawl.Poet. 85;[1] there is another, anonymous, in MS Marsh Z3.5.21.[2]

That Anne Vavasour may have been something of a poet herself is suggested also by the ascription "Vavaser" to the text in MS Folger V.a.89 of "Though I seem strange, sweet friend" - another poem popular with Elizabethan collectors. A text in MS Rawl.Poet.85 follows immediately after a group of five poems, all with ascriptions to or associations with Lord Oxford,[3] and a text in MS Harl.6910 appears together with a poem from the same group ("When wert thou born"). MS Harl.6910 ascribes the poem "qd.La.B. to N.", however; and a shortened text (lacking four stanzas) in MS Harl.7392 is subscribed "Ball." - perhaps meaning "ballet" and suggesting a song.[4] At all events, the speaker is a lady, and the poem gives one an insight into the lady's situation in the amours of the court:

> One hath my hand, another hath my glove,
> But he my heart whom most I seem to hate.

The poem is not unlike another of Oxford's, "Winged with desire, I seek to mount on high". There is an interesting echo of the lady's poem in the closing couplet of Oxford's:

> Till then, sweet friend, abide these storms with me,
> Which shall in joy of either fortunes be.

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1. W5: see Volume 2, p. 372.
2. W6: see Volume 2, p. 371v.
3. See Volume 2, p. 120 : Table II.
4. See above, p. 46.

If the lady's poem was written by Anne Vavasour, it seems not unlikely that it was written to Oxford; and Oxford may have addressed "Winged with desire" to her. Or perhaps one should suspect that "Though I seem strange" is another example of Oxford writing a poem from the lady's point of view.

"Winged with desire" takes up once again Oxford's favourite theme - desire. The lover seems to have been successful in his suit: the lady has responded favourably, but the circumstances are dangerous and they have to dissemble. This was standard court procedure: not only Oxford, but Leicester, Ralegh, Southampton and other leading courtiers had their secret affairs discovered, and earned the Queen's rage. In these circumstances, the conventional paradoxical complaint of the courtly lover bewailing the shortness of his pleasure and the greatness of his pain takes on new meaning; it is the conditions of life at court, not the hard heart of his lady, that cause his distress. There is a neatness of expression and a depth of feeling in Oxford's poem that convey well the position of such illicit lovers:

> I seld resort where I would settle most,
> My sliding times too soon with her are spent.

Behind both "Winged with desire" and "Though I seem strange" one senses a real situation, alluded to in such a way that the people concerned would understand the real meaning, while in the eyes of the rest of the court the poem could pass for a merely poetic situation.

Once again, it is interesting to compare Oxford with Dyer - "I

would it were not as it is", for example:

> For lo, my tired shoulders bear
> Desire's weary beating wings,
> And at my feet a clog I wear,
> Tied on with self-disdaining strings:
> My wings to mount aloft make haste,
> My clog doth sink me down as fast.

Oxford is more economical:

> Winged with desire, I seek to mount on high,
> Clogged with mishap, yet am I kept full low ...

Dyer's poem is noticeably more self-indulgent; Oxford is a much more resilient lover, though his suit has been successful while Dyer's has not.

The poems by Lord Oxford preserved in the manuscript miscellanies seem to come from the 1570s and 1580s, when Oxford was a leading figure at court, and when he became involved with Anne Vavasour. There are other poems in these sources, Oxford's claim to which is disputed, and which are discussed below. There remains, however, the charming lyric "What cunning can express", printed in The Phoenix Nest (1593) and reprinted in Englands Helicon (1600), with ascriptions to Oxford in both sources, as possible evidence of a development of Oxford's lyrical talents. The pastoral detail and the skilful handling of phrase and cadence is here well suited to the lover's praise of his mistress. The evocativeness of the red and white colouring, the lightness of touch, the grace with which Oxford handles his form, the felicity of the fourth and last stanzas especially, all exemplify much of what one has come to expect from the best Elizabethan lyrics - the songs of Campion or Ben

Jonson, for instance. One can see how far Oxford has come from the rather awkward and literary poulter's measure of some of his early poems in The Paradise of Dainty Devices.

Of the other poems to be discussed in relation to Oxford's canon, four may be dismissed at the outset: "What plague is greater than the grief of mind", "Love is a discord and a strange divorce", and "Doth sorrow fret they soul?" appeared with Oxford's signature in Englands Parnassus (1600) and Grosart thought they were Oxford's. However, as Crawford pointed out,[1] they are really extracts from a group of five poems added to the 1591 surreptitious edition of Astrophel and Stella, where they are ascribed to "Content". From other poems in the group, it is fairly certain that "Content" is Thomas Campion, and the poems are accepted as Campion's by his editors.[2] The fourth poem, "Faction that ever dwells" also appears in the surreptitious Astrophel and Stella, where it is ascribed "E.O." It is, however, Greville's for it appears as poem XXIX of his sonnet sequence Caelica.[3]

For the remaining poems the evidence is less conclusive. The six-line stanza "Were I a king, I could command content" presents more of a problem: it is preserved in four manuscripts and one printed text, and the late text in the Dr. Farmer Chetham MS is headed "By the Earl of

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1. See his edition of Englands Parnassus (Oxford 1913) p.392.
2. See Works ed. P. Vivian (Oxford 1909) p.li, and ed. W.R. Davis (New York 1967) p.3.
3. See Bullough's edition, i, p.88.

Oxforde". What appears to be the best text, however, occurs, unascribed, in MS Add.22583, written at the foot of a page in a manuscript which seems to be the writings of William Gager,[1] some time student of Christ Church, Oxford. A text closely related to Gager's was set to music by John Mundy in 1594, while the other sources preserve texts that are less good. There is thus a strong probability that the poem is Gager's; certainly the readings in MS Add.22583 could all be authorial.

The question asked by the poem was answered by several different writers: the Dr. Farmer Chetham MS has three answers that Grosart printed and others that he did not, and MS Harl.6910 has another. One answer appearing in the Chetham MS ascribed to Sidney, appears also in MS Folger V.a.89, following immediately after "Were I a king", as if the two stanzas together made one poem, and assigned "Vere". It is therefore possible that Oxford wrote this answer: Sidney's claim is discounted by Professor Ringler.[2] Of the four answers given, three each take one alternative offered in the poem (kingdom, cottage or grave) and one rejects them all. A stanza of this sort obviously offered different opportunities for answer poems that Elizabethans were fond of writing.

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1. Gager edited the Oxford Exequiae lamenting Sidney's death; he was a Latin poet of some note - see Tucker Brook in SP xxix (1932) p.160 and R.H. Bowers in SP xlvi (1949) p.141.

2. Ringler, p.352.

"When I was fair and young", also ascribed to Oxford in MS Folger V.a.89, has ascriptions to the Queen in MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.7392. It is certainly about the Queen - according to MS Rawl.Poet.85, it was associated with the Anjou marriage proposals of 1581-2. It has been pointed out above that the Queen seems unlikely to have written such a poem about herself,[1] whereas Oxford, it seems, may well have written poems purporting to come from court ladies. In style the poem could well be Oxford's - the ironic situation would probably have appealed to him - and it is mainly on the basis of its style that one would reject it from the Queen's canon. A final point about the disputed poems ascribed to Oxford in MS Folger V.a.89: if the association of the manuscript with the Cornwallis family outlined above[2] is correct, then the ascriptions to Oxford may well carry more weight, for the de Veres and the Cornwallises were related.

"What is Desire, which doth approve" has no real connection with Oxford except similarity of style and subject matter, and a certain amount of circumstantial evidence. It resembles "When wert thou born, Desire?" in theme and treatment, and exists in two manuscript copies, with few variants. In MS Rawl.Poet.85 it appears as one of a group of six poems, four of which are ascribed to Oxford[3] and a fifth is "Though

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1. See p. 134.
2. See p. 62.
3. See Volume 2, p. 120 : Table II.

I seem strange", discussed above in connection with Anne Vavasour. The second text, in MS Harl.7392, is ascribed "EWPH." which might be interpreted as standing for "Euphues" and hence John Lyly. Lyly was Oxford's private secretary,[1] and though he writes in a prefatory letter to Thomas Watson's Hekatompathia (1582)

> And seeing you haue vsed mee so friendly, as to make me acquainted with your passions, I will shortly make you pryuie to mine, which I woulde be loth the printer shoulde see ...

apart from the songs in his plays, none of his "passions" has apparently survived, unless this poem turns out to be one of them.

There is little clear indication of how close the relationship was between an Elizabethan patron and the poets under his patronage. In Lord Oxford's case, the situation is complicated by the fact that he was both poet and patron, and presumably would take an interest in the works of other writers, especially if they were living as his "servants" - as Lyly and, for a time, Thomas Churchyard apparently did.[2] Perhaps Oxford suggested themes and ways to treat them, and he may even have worked out a first version himself. Or he might have adapted, altered to his liking, a poem shown him by someone else. Oxford, like Sidney, does appear to have encouraged the writers of his group in various literary projects - Anthony Munday, for instance.[3] Another possibility

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1. Ward, p.264 and G.K. Hunter, John Lyly (1962) p.47.
2. Ward, pp.28, 301.
3. See G.R. Hayes, The Library, 4th ser. vi (1926) p.57.

is that the manuscript ascriptions to Oxford are merely erroneous: that the compilers of the manuscript miscellanies managed to obtain texts which they knew originated from Oxford's household, and assumed that Oxford himself was the author.

Churchyard is relevant here because among the poems in MS Harl. 7392 ascribed to Oxford is a shortened version of a long allegorical poem "In Peascod time", printed in A pleasaunte Laborinth called Churchyardes Chance (1580). Churchyard claimed the contents of his book as "some of mine own labors and studies"[1] and there seems no good reason to doubt this: the rather old-fashioned form and treatment, the fourteeners and the dream-allegory, are very typical of Churchyard. The version in Churchyardes Chance is a good text, from which the copy of the poem in Englands Helicon, assigned to "Ignoto", was probably copied; another text, unascribed and rather corrupt, is in MS Rawl.Poet.85. The version in MS Harl.7392 has some readings agreeing with the text in MS Rawl.Poet.85, but is much shorter and has a different ending. It could perhaps be a rough draft or early version by Oxford, or an adaptation.

Another poem existing in two versions, one ascribed to Lord Oxford, is the sonnet "Who taught thee first to sigh, alas my heart?" One version appears, ascribed to Lord Oxford, in the group of Oxford's poems in MS Rawl.Poet.85,[2] and, with a few variants, in MS Harl.7392, subscribed

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1. Dedication, sig. [a4v].

2. See Volume 2, p.120 : Table II.

"Ball." (meaning perhaps "ballet").[1] The other version, differing considerably, appears as the last poem in The Tears of Fancie. Or, Loue Disdained (1593). This work is described on the last page as being by T.W. - identified by the entry in the Stationers Register (11th August 1593) as Thomas Watson, author of the Hekatompathia (which he had dedicated to Lord Oxford). Watson, however, was dead before 1593, and several of the poems in The Tears of Fancie are adaptations of works by Gascoigne, Breton, Spenser and others.[2] Recent investigations of the Stationers Registers have shown that the appearance of Watson's name against the entry of The Tears of Fancie was forged by John Payne Collier,[3] and so T.W.'s identity remains obscure. Again it is not easy to determine whether one of the versions of "Who taught thee" is an adaptation or reworking of the other, and what part Lord Oxford had in this, if any.

Lord Oxford's poems from the miscellanies thus present a textual problem very similar to Dyer's. Dyer is, in fact, the courtly poet most like Oxford: the two appear to have been the leading poets at court in the early years of Elizabeth's reign. They treated similar themes in similar ways, and so it is perhaps not surprising that one sometimes cannot be sure which of the two wrote a poem like "Whereas the Heart" or

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1. See above, p. 46.

2. See Grosart's edition of Breton's Works (1879) i, p.lxvii, and Janet Scott, "The Sources of Watson's Tears of Fancie" in MLR xxi (1926) pp.303, 435.

3. See F. Dickey, "The Old Man at Work: Forgeries in the Stationers' Registers" in Shakespeare Quarterly xi (1960) p.39.

even "My mind to me".

On the whole, the texts in MSS Harl.7392, Rawl.Poet.85 and Folger V.a.89 are fairly good and provide copy texts, except where there is reason to believe them inferior (as in "Were I a king" and "In Peascod time"). Probably few are close to Oxford's originals: MS Harl.7392 is sometimes good, sometimes less good; MS Rawl.Poet.85 is at times close to MS Marsh Z3.5.21 (except for "The lively lark" where there are different traditions); MS Folger V.a.89 is usually good. Brittons Bowre of Delights has two texts related to texts in MSS Harl.7392 and Rawl.Poet. 85, and The Arte of English Poesie has one similarly related. Generally, however, the texts break down differently ~~from~~ for each poem.

For all the uncertainty surrounding some of the poems associated with Lord Oxford, there are sufficient satisfactorily ascribed to him to give some idea of his achievement, and some indication of his favourite themes and manner of treating them. Grosart did not know of the Oxford poems in MS Harl.7392, otherwise he gathered together most of the poems that are today considered Oxford's. There seems no reason for including Looney's additions to the Oxford canon: apart from the relationship between Oxford and Lyly, there is nothing to connect Oxford with the songs in Lyly's plays, and the only "Ignoto" poem in Englands Helicon with any connection with Oxford is Churchyard's "In Peascod time".[1]

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1. Other "Ignoto" poems can be assigned to authors such as Barnfield, Lodge and Ralegh: see Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1935).

Oxford's lyrics are like Dyer's in form: his early poems are in poulter's measure, fourteeners or six-line pentameter stanzas; his later poems make greater use of quatrains and more lyrical metres. He had a fondness for lightly allegorical treatment of a theme, and for illustrative exempla drawn from both the classics and common daily pursuits. At his best there is a clarity of thought and a simplicity of diction characteristic of the best courtly poems of the time. As Mr. J.W. Saunders has pointed out,[1] this is one of the main achievements of the courtiers - their use of what Puttenham called "the vsual speach of the Court", as compared with the abuses and pedantries, the affectations and literariness of many of the professional writers. It is to courtiers such as Sidney and Dyer, Oxford and Ralegh, that one should look for most of what is best in the poetry of the first part of Elizabeth's reign.

Oxford seems to have been, along with Dyer and some of the lesser-known courtiers, among the earliest of the second "crew of Courtly makers" that Puttenham mentions. He was apparently writing verses in his teens in the 1560s, and continued perhaps until about 1590 (again rather like Dyer). Viewed in this light, his achievement is not inconsiderable. His talent seems to have been particularly well-suited to the composition of attractive lyrics which give every indication of having been composed to be sung. Although one would not today place Oxford before poets such

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1. "The Stigma of Print", Essays in Criticism i (1951) p.154.

as Sidney and Ralegh as Puttenham and Webbe do (whose praise may, however, be social as much as critical), Oxford does have a claim to being one of the "most excellent among the rest" of the minor courtier poets in the first half of Elizabeth's reign.

Chapter Seven

"The Sommers Nightingale"

The Early Lyrics of SIR WALTER RALEGH

To thee that art the sommers Nightingale,
Thy soueraine Goddesses most deare delight ...

Edmund Spenser to Sir Walter Ralegh

For dittie and amorous Ode I finde Sir Walter Rawleyghs vayne most loftie, insolent, and passionate.

The Arte of English Poesie

With the exception of Sidney, few of the courtier poets whose work is preserved in the group of manuscripts under consideration has exerted the same hold on the imagination of posterity as Sir Walter Ralegh. Courtier, soldier, explorer, scientist, patron, writer of prose and verse, his position in the age is central - he gathers together in one complex personality many of the characteristics that appear significantly Elizabethan. Certainly he is the very pattern of a courtly poet in the Elizabethan sense: a leading courtier and royal favourite who wrote lyrics for a small courtly audience, and made little apparent attempt to preserve his poems once their immediate occasion had passed.

Ralegh, according to Aubrey, "was sometimes a poet: not often"[1] -

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1. Quoted by Philip Edwards in Sir Walter Ralegh (1953), p.53.

which is what differentiates the courtier poet from the professional writer. But this is not to say that he paid little attention to his poetry; as his last editor, Miss Agnes Latham,[1] has put it, "To such a man poetry is perhaps not the chief end of life; but it is as natural as breathing."[2] Ralegh in fact stands out among the other courtier poets for the individual ring many of his poems have. To quote Miss Latham again:

> Ralegh's verses were a personal appeal, a part of that strange charm with which he won the Queen's favour, a spiritual adornment, a manifestation of riches and beauty, like his pale satins and the pearl eardrops he wore in his ears. (3)

Not only is Ralegh a pattern for his age; he is also pre-eminent among courtly poets in the complexity of the textual situation which faces his editors. Miss Latham's edition gathers up most of the lyrics which can reasonably be ascribed to him, and lists the different texts of each poem, and this collection, with some corrections and additions made by Dr. W. Oakeshott[4] and Professor P. Lefranc,[5] remains the basis of any study of Ralegh's verse. But it is really only a beginning:

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1. The Poems of Sir Walter Ralegh, (Muses Library, 1951) [henceforth referred to as Latham].
2. Latham p.xiv.
3. Latham p.xxiv.
4. The Queen and the Poet (1960) [henceforth Oakeshott].
5. Sir Walter Ralegh Ecrivain (Paris, 1968) [henceforth Lefranc].

the canon remains very uncertain (though Professor Lefranc has clarified certain points) and authoritative texts of the lyrics have still in most cases to be established.

Ralegh's share in the manuscript miscellanies under consideration here is not large. Ten poems that occur in these sources have some claim to be his: they are listed in Volume 2 (p.180) and their relation to the miscellanies can be seen from the accompanying table, which shows also the scarcity of ascriptions - a major problem in the case of Ralegh's poems.

These ten poems make up an important part of Ralegh's canon, and their textual situations are therefore discussed here in some detail. Some idea of the problems involved will be gained from comparing the chronological arrangements of Ralegh's canon proposed in the three most recent studies by Miss Latham, Dr. Oakeshott and Professor Lefranc.[1]

It is interesting to see how these arrangements differ from one another, especially since both Oakeshott and Lefranc accept, for the most part, Miss Latham's texts and give little indication that they have examined afresh the textual situation of each poem. Lefranc's arrangement, for instance, seems to be based mainly on internal evidence and a study of style and technique, and while such a study is a valuable part of establishing Ralegh's canon, it ought surely to be invoked only after all external evidence has been exhausted.

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1. See Volume 2, p. 182 (Table II).

One is faced once again with the central concern of the present discussion: detailed examination of the manuscripts involved. Miss Latham in her textual introduction[1] has shown very clearly the difficulties that arise in dealing with manuscript sources such as commonplace books and personal miscellanies, and though she mentioned all the sources for Ralegh's poems, she made no detailed study of the manuscripts to try to clarify the texts, dating and attributions. Both Oakeshott and Lefranc comment on the problems of dealing with manuscripts, but neither has attempted a more detailed study of the Ralegh manuscripts. It seems to me that an attempt to fit Ralegh's lyrics into a neat chronological pattern without first exhausting the possible evidence about dates that the manuscripts might be able to provide may result in an inaccurate view of the situation.

It is curious that both Oakeshott and Lefranc pay almost no attention to the manuscript sources and yet they do give considerable weight to the printed miscellanies such as Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591), The Phoenix Nest (1593) and Englands Helicon (1600). Yet all the evidence that has been examined so far in this discussion suggests that these printed miscellanies must be regarded as essentially collections of poems already in manuscript circulation, which were acquired and printed by enterprising publishers. They must surely therefore be given no greater weight than the manuscript miscellanies

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1. Latham pp.87-90.

preserving texts in circulation at the same time, especially since texts of certain poems in the manuscripts sometimes show close links with texts in the printed miscellanies, thus indicating a common ultimate source. The courtly compilers of manuscript miscellanies would obviously be in a better position to acquire good manuscript texts than the average printer.

It has already been suggested that of these miscellanies MS Harl.7392 and MS Folger V.a.89 preserve poems in circulation in the early and middle 1580s, MS Rawl.Poet.85 in the middle and late 1580s and MS Cambridge Dd.5.75 beginning in the early 1580s and extending to the early 17th century. While more exact dating has still to be determined, there is very little evidence to show that MSS Harl.7392, Folger V.a.89 and Rawl. Poet.85 were not largely complete before the beginning of the 1590s. If these dates are provisionally accepted, it would mean that these manuscripts preserve texts earlier in date than those in the printed miscellanies which Ralegh's commentators have until now tended to favour.

From the list of Ralegh's poems it soon becomes apparent that MS Harl.7392, which may be one of the earliest manuscript sources, has a little Ralegh-Gorges group of its own, about a third of the way through the manuscript (ff.36-7): it consists of "Sweet are the thoughts", "Would I were changed into that golden shower", "Calling to mind" and "Farewell false love", all signed "RA."[1] "Would I were changed into that

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1. Cf. poems by Dyer signed DY., and by Sidney signed SYD.

golden shower" has since been claimed for Gorges,[1] but the other three remain in Ralegh's canon. "Farewell false love" and "Calling to mind" appear also (but not together) in MSS Folger V.a.89 and Rawl.Poet.85.

The significance of this appears when one considers Professor Lefranc's suggestion that "Farewell false love" was written by Ralegh in three successive stages: first a poem of three stanzas in answer to a poem by Sir Thomas Heneage and represented by a text printed by Bertram Dobell in 1901 from a manuscript now lost. This text is ascribed "Mr Rawleigh", and Lefranc dates it before January 1584/5, when Ralegh was knighted. The next stage was a fourth stanza added to the poem, and represented by the four stanza version printed in Byrd's Psalmes, Sonets, & songs (1588). Finally, Lefranc sees a fifth stanza added to the poem after the summer of 1592 - a stanza much more sombre and abrupt.[2]

Yet an examination of the manuscripts reveals that this view of the poem has very little evidence to support it: in the first place, the MSS Harl.7392, Folger V.a.89 and Rawl.Poet.85 (which, it has been suggested, preserve texts in circulation in the middle and late 1580s) are all of the five-stanza form of the poem. The texts in MS Harl.7392 and Folger V.a.89 show some fairly close textual relationship and have ascriptions to Ralegh: they seem to me to preserve good texts. The text in MS Rawl.Poet.85 shows some agreement with the later texts in

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1. See below, in the discussion of Gorges' poems.

2. Lefranc, p.78-80.

Le Prince d'Amour and The Garland of Good Will, while the texts in Byrd, the Harington MS and Dobell's MS show some relationship with one another.[1]

Secondly, it is difficult to agree with Lefranc that the text printed by Dobell lacking two stanzas should be regarded as the earliest version of the poem. Dobell's texts of the poems by Ralegh and Heneage are worth examining in more detail.[2] The differentiation between "Sir Thomas" and "Mr Rawleigh" would seem to indicate that the text of Ralegh's poem was written before the author was knighted;[3] what is, I think, questionable is which poem came first, Ralegh's or Heneage's. Ralegh's poem stands very well by itself, but I find it difficult to believe that Heneage's would do so - it has a rather obvious ingenuity about it, deliberately contradicting each of Ralegh's assertions while at the same time keeping as close as possible to Ralegh's words. Heneage's poem does admittedly come before Ralegh's in Dobell's MS, but if (as seems likely) the manuscript had some personal connection with Heneage himself, there is no reason why Heneage's answer should not have been entered first, and then, as an afterthought, Ralegh's poem added - to show, perhaps, how cleverly Heneage had answered it. That Ralegh's

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1. See the text and variants in Volume 2, p. 193.
2. They are reprinted in Volume 2, p. 207.
3. Though A.L. Rowse, among others, has shown that a knight could be referred to as "Master" - see his Shakespeare's Sonnets (1964) p.xi.

poem should come first is also suggested in the Arundel Harington MS where immediately after the text of Ralegh's poem, Sir John Harington left a space for a poem, the first line of which he entered as "Welcome true love, the lanterne of my lyghte" but the rest of the poem was never copied out. Miss Hughey interprets this to mean that Harington knew of Heneage's poem and tried unsuccessfully to obtain a copy of it.[1] It also suggests that Harington thought of Heneage's poem as being an answer to Ralegh's.

A comparison of the variant readings of Dobell's text with those in the other texts of the poem does not, in my opinion, produce any evidence that Dobell's version is earlier than the others. It is certainly not true to claim, as Lefranc does,[2] that the reading in line 1 of Dobell's text "thou oracle of lies" is not to be found anywhere else; "thou oracle" is in fact found in three MSS: Harl.7392, Folger V.a.89 and Rawl. Poet.85, as well as in Le Prince d'Amour. This is not to deny the earliness of the reading "thou oracle"; it surely confirms that the manuscripts preserve good and early texts, but it also, I think, casts doubt on the theory of successive revisions. The fact that Dobell's text of Ralegh's poem has only three stanzas does not necessarily indicate that Ralegh originally wrote only three stanzas: stanzas could and did easily drop out of poems in manuscript circulation, or Heneage

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1. Hughey, ii, p.386.
2. "A Miscellany of Ralegh Material", Notes and Queries ccii (1957) p.25.

could merely have chosen to answer three stanzas and so quoted only the relevant three stanzas of Ralegh's poem.

Lefranc's suggestion of a fourth stanza being added to Ralegh's poem in a second state is not, I think, any more convincing. The fact that the version of the poem printed by Byrd is one of four stanzas is very easily explained by the different form of the fifth stanza of the poem. Byrd often omitted stanzas of poems he set to music[1] and in this case the last stanza is sufficiently different in form from the other four for it to be omitted quite easily from the song as not being quite so suited to the music. There may also have been the very mundane reason of space: four stanzas fit very neatly on the page of Byrd's book [sig.E4] but there is not room for a fifth. It is true that two other manuscript texts have only four stanzas: one of these, which Lefranc discovered in the Public Record Office,[2] is identical to Byrd's text except for spelling and punctuation and the reading "raging cloud" for "ranging cloud" in line 16. Miss Hughey has however pointed out that "raging" is the reading of the Bassus part of Byrd's text,[3] and one can thus assume that the P.R.O. text was copied from Byrd and so has no textual significance. The other four-stanza version appears in

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1. See, e.g., "My mind to me", discussed above, p.164.
2. Notes and Queries, ccii (1957) p.25.
3. Hughey, ii, p.385.

the Arundel Harington MS and shows some signs of relationship with Byrd's text, though it must obviously be considered an independent witness.

It seems to me that without more convincing proof of the existence of successive revisions of the text, one must conclude that Ralegh first wrote the poem as one of five stanzas, as it is preserved in the manuscript miscellanies. The texts of other courtly lyrics in these miscellanies can often be shown to be good, whereas Byrd's texts are frequently very corrupt and Dobell's MS (preserving five pieces by Heneage and one by Ralegh among a mass of miscellaneous material) is of unknown reliability. What Professor Lefranc has shown from Dobell's text is that the poem was in circulation before 1585, and one should, I think, accept this as evidence in support of an early dating of the manuscript miscellanies.

Apart from the single text of "Sweet are the thoughts" which is unanimously placed among Ralegh's earliest poems, the other poem of the group in MS Harl.7392 which appears like "Farewell false love" in the early manuscript sources is "Calling to mind". This was one of Ralegh's most popular lyrics and has been preserved in at least eighteen texts with many variant readings and eight ascriptions to Ralegh. The inclusion of the poem in MSS Harl.7392 and Folger V.a.89 suggests that it was in circulation at the same time as "Farewell false love", and Puttenham quoted from it in The Arte of English Poesie, published in 1589 but perhaps written earlier.[1] Oakeshott and Lefranc both date it

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1. Puttenham p.xliv.

before 1587, and if an early date is accepted for MSS Harl.7392 and Folger V.a.89, this would argue a date of the early or middle 1580s.

"Calling to mind" is one of the poems in the celebrated "Ralegh-Gorges group" in The Phoenix Nest (1593): this comprises sixteen consecutive poems, six of which have ascriptions elsewhere to Ralegh.[1] The group was first pointed out by H.H. Hudson,[2] who suggested that it perhaps contained other poems by Ralegh . Since then two of the poems elsewhere ascribed to Ralegh ("Her face, her tongue, her wit" and "Would I were changed into that golden shower") have been shown fairly conclusively to be the work of Sir Arthur Gorges.[3]

In the discussion of Gorges' work in the next chapter it is pointed out that Ralegh and Gorges were cousins, and seem to have maintained a literary relationship close enough for the compilers of Elizabethan miscellanies to have confused poems of theirs which appear to have been in circulation together: attention has already been drawn to the text of Gorges' "Would I were changed into that golden shower" ascribed to Ralegh in the middle of a group of Ralegh's poems in MS Harl.7392, and "A secret murder hath been done of late" (another of The Phoenix Nest group) appears in MS Rawl.Poet.85 ascribed apparently to "Goss:" (which one might see as a corruption of "Gorges") and has been claimed by

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1. See Volume 2, p.183 (Table III).
2. "Notes on the Ralegh Canon", MLN xlvi (1931) p.386.
3. See below, under Gorges.

Professor Lefranc for Ralegh.

It is not easy to sort out the works of Ralegh from those of Gorges (compare, for example, Ralegh's "Calling to mind" with its companion piece in MS Harl.7392 and The Phoenix Nest, Gorges' "Would I were changed into that golden shower"); the two poets imitated the same models and borrowed from one another, and may even have collaborated in writing the very popular correlative lyric "Her face, her tongue, her wit".[1] But it seems to me that Egerton 3165, "The Vanytyes of Sir Arthur Gorges Youthe", is a vital piece of evidence for deciding the claims of Ralegh and Gorges to disputed lyrics. The whole case for the authority of this manuscript derives from its being a collection of Gorges' poems made for Gorges himself with his approval and under his supervision.[2] Gorges' continuing interest in his poems (shown by his revisions and alterations) and the inclusion of his later occasional poems written in the early seventeenth century seem to suggest that this manuscript has a certain completeness. If Gorges was prepared to take the unusual step of gathering together for his own benefit 111 of his poems and to describe them as "his vannetyes and toyes of yowth", would he, one wonders, have omitted any of his work, especially poems already in manuscript circulation and perhaps known as his? To suggest, as Lefranc does, that

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1. See the discussion of Gorges below.

2. See Miss Sandison's edition of Gorges's Poems, (Oxford 1953), p.xxxiv.

> peut-être renonça-t-il à y faire entrer quelques-uns de ses poèmes les moins réussis à ses yeux, surtout s'il savait pouvoir les retrouver aisément dans une anthologie comme The Phoenix Nest (1)

seems to me to imply that courtly poets regarded printed miscellanies like The Phoenix Nest in a light for which it is very difficult to find any evidence. What little evidence there is, such as Breton's strictures about Brittons Bowre of Delights,[2] and the covering up of ascriptions to Ralegh in Englands Helicon with cancel slips reading "Ignoto", seems to point the other way.

Indeed Lefranc seems to imply that Ralegh allowed some of his poems to find their way into print in The Phoenix Nest deliberately.[3] I find it very difficult to accept that The Phoenix Nest had any approved status: at least six of the poems in The Phoenix Nest group were in manuscript circulation almost certainly before the 1590s, and Ralegh would have little control over their getting into the hands of a printer in 1592 or 1593 - nor, one feels, would this have concerned him much, unless his name was mentioned (as it was later in Englands Helicon). The texts in The Phoenix Nest are sometimes quite closely related to those in MS Rawl. Poet.85 (for example "Calling to mind" and "Those eyes that hold") which seems to indicate that the compiler of the printed miscellany drew his material from regular manuscript sources, just as one would have expected,

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1. Lefranc p.95.
2. See the discussion of Breton below, p.259.
3. Lefranc p.97.

and this suggestion is supported by the grouping together of "Calling to mind" and Gorges' "Would I were changed into that golden shower" in both MS Harl.7392 and The Phoenix Nest.

The Phoenix Nest certainly seems not to have any approved status regarding Gorges' poems: in collating the texts of "Would I were changed into that golden shower" and "Her face, her tongue, her wit" with Gorges' own versions in MS Egerton 3165, the texts in The Phoenix Nest show a relationship with and a similar general level of accuracy as texts in manuscripts such as Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.7392 - at some distance from the Egerton texts. The text of Ralegh's "Like to a hermit poor" in The Phoenix Nest, on the other hand, descends from a different tradition from that in MS Rawl.Poet.85, which seems to me to have the better text.

For the other poems in The Phoenix Nest group, there is little real evidence on which to make attributions, and to suggest, as Lefranc does, that the first two-thirds of the group are by Ralegh and the rest by Gorges is altogether too neat a settlement. "Like truthless dreams, so are my joys expired" is quoted in "The 21th: and last booke of the Ocean to Scinthia" and is certainly Ralegh's: "Prais'd be Diana's fair and harmless light" has a cancelled ascription to Ralegh in Englands Helicon.

"Like to a hermit poor" is probably still to be seen as Ralegh's: it exists in two forms - as a sonnet in six texts, all of which belong apparently to the 1580s and 1590s, but none of which is ascribed; and rearranged as a song of three six-line stanzas, the final couplet of the

sonnet acting as a refrain to each stanza, in seven texts, all dating from the mid seventeenth century except for a partial text set to music by Alfonso Ferrabosco by 1609. One text of the song version, printed in 1644 in a pamphlet headed "To day a man, To morrow none: Or, Sir Walter Rawleighs Farewell to his Lady, The night before hee was beheaded: Together with his advice concerning Her, and her Sonne", provides the only ascription to Ralegh.

The sonnet version of "Like to a hermit poor" appears along with "Her face, her tongue, her wit" in Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591) which has Breton's name on the title page and contains a good number of Breton's poems, but includes also work by other poets, such as two poems by Lord Oxford.[1] Occurring also in the Bowre is another poem in The Phoenix Nest group, "Those eyes that hold the hand of every heart". Lefranc connects this poem with another earlier in The Phoenix Nest group, "Those eyes which set my fancy on a fire", suggesting that Ralegh wrote the latter and Gorges the former.[2] There is, however, no evidence to support either attribution, and "Those eyes that hold the hand of every heart" may be the work of neither Ralegh nor Gorges, but Breton, for it occurs in the Cosens MS (Add.34064) as well as the Bowre.[3]

The authorship of this poem thus takes on some importance, for if it can

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1. See below, in the discussion of Breton's poems.
2. Lefranc p.95.
3. See under Breton, below.

be shown to be Breton's, the authority of the "Ralegh-Gorges group" in The Phoenix Nest comes under some suspicion; if, on the other hand, it can be shown to be the work of either Gorges or Ralegh, this brings in question the status of the Cosens MS, thought until now to preserve a corpus of Breton's poems. Stylistically, any of the poets could have written the poem - they were all fond of the correlative devices that are its basis. One is thus left with the circumstantial evidence of neighbourhood and grouping, and I feel that Breton has the strongest claim on this basis. The claim of Gorges (Lefranc's candidate) is certainly the weakest according to this evidence; I feel very doubtful whether poems not included among his "vannetyes and toyes" in MS Egerton 3165 can be regarded as his without very clear evidence.

Of Ralegh's remaining poems to be discussed here, little need be said. Since Professor Lefranc's book went to press, more information has come to light about one of Ralegh's poems: it was known to Miss Latham only from two fragments quoted in The Arte of English Poesie and ascribed to Ralegh (Latham, nos. VI & VII), but in 1960 Dr. Oakeshott published a text of the poem from a manuscript formerly No.3602 of the Phillipps Collection.[1] In that text a metrical deficiency in the first stanza and a note by Oldys against the third stanza led Oakeshott into thinking that the poem was one of only three stanzas, beginning at the

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1. Oakeshott, p.154.

third stanza with the lines quoted by Puttenham and referred to by Oakeshott and Lefranc as "In vain my eyes, in vain you waste your tears". In 1968, however, I was able to draw attention to another text of the poem, in MS Marsh Z3.5.21, which shows clearly that the poem is one of five stanzas, including the first two that Oakeshott omitted, but which can be seen in the photograph of the Phillipps MS text, printed in The Queen and the Poet (plate viii). The poem thus really begins "Fortune hath taken thee away, my love". This recovery of the full text of Ralegh's poem was confirmed by my discovery shortly afterwards of an answer to Ralegh's poem by the Queen herself, in the same form and length as Ralegh's. That the answer is addressed to Ralegh is vouched for by the text of the Queen's poem, which is headed "Per Reginam | Walter Rawleigh".[1]

The texts of "Fortune hath taken thee away, my love" provide an example of a problem associated with almost all Ralegh's lyrics - the difficulty of reaching an authoritative text. An editor is faced with several texts of a poem, sometimes differing quite widely in variants, yet usually each with a certain consistency. Where there are only two or three texts of a poem, it is extraordinarily difficult to decide which, if any, is nearest the author's original. Most of Ralegh's earlier lyrics, like "Fortune hath taken thee away, my love", "Many desire, but few or none deserve" and "Calling to mind", show a rhetorical patterning which differs from text to text in such a way that the variants give the

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1. See "A Lost Poem by Queen Elizabeth I" in TLS, 23rd May 1968, p.535.

impression of alternatives rather than corruptions, and an editor's final choice of a text will depend on which rhetorical pattern he chooses. Thus in "Fortune hath taken thee away, my love", one has to decide between the readings in the third stanza:

1.9) In vain you eyes you eyes do waste your tears (Marsh)
. . . . my . . . in vain ye . . . . . (Phillipps)
. . . . mine . . in vain you . . . . . (Puttenham)

1.10) In vain you sighs do smoke forth my despairs (Marsh)
. . . . my sights, the . . . of . . . . . (Phillipps)
. . . . my sighs, the smokes of . . . . . (Puttenham)

Puttenham may be quoting from memory and probably from a text closer to the Phillipps MS than to the Marsh MS, so an editor has to decide whether Ralegh would tend to prefer the formation of the stanza with the repeated emphasis on "you" (in line with the "you" constructions in the rest of the stanza), or whether to move from the more natural "my" construction in the first two lines of the stanza to "you" in the last two lines, thus rather changing the pattern. What I have preferred is to keep closely to the copy text unless I have good reason to think it corrupt at a particular point. Thus I would prefer "in vain you" in line 9 to "you eyes do", while keeping the Marsh readings elsewhere, for I think that "in vain" is a phrase more likely to be repeated than "you eyes", especially since Puttenham was using the phrase to illustrate that very figure of repetition ("Anaphora").

There is, however, the danger of producing a text made up out of a patchwork of "best readings" picked from the various texts and conflated - a text which might, taken as a whole, have little actual connection with

what Ralegh wrote. Even in a poem so formal and stylised as "Many desire, but few or none deserve", the texts do not agree over the relevant imagery for each stanza. Should it, in line 8, be "flowers" or "branch", "leaves" or "flowers"? And should line 14 read "corn" or "grass"?

This, too, is one of the problems concerning the poem that each of Ralegh's latest commentators has placed latest of the group of poems under discussion here - the Walsingham ballad "As you came from the holy land". That the poem is later than the other more conventionally courtly lyrics seems obvious from its maturer style and its echoes of "The 21th: and last booke of the Ocean to Scinthia". Its position near the end of MS Rawl.Poet.85 suggests that it was in circulation at the start of the 1590s, though I am doubtful whether this manuscript preserves texts coming into circulation as late as the date of 1593-4 suggested by Lefranc. The four texts of the poem divide rather satisfactorily into two groups, MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Huntington HM 198 preserving what seems to me the better textual tradition. Where these two differ, however, one is left once again with the problem of editorial choice - in this case largely one of deciding how closely Ralegh kept to his attractive metre. Professor F.W. Sternfeld regards the Huntington text as the better from the point of view of both poetic excellence and suitability for singing;[1]

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1. See "Ophelia's Version of the Walsingham Song" in Music and Letters xlv (1964) p.108.

I prefer MS Rawl.Poet.85 in places, although one may have become conditioned to this version of the poem through Miss Latham's printing of it. It is,however, the only text attributed to Ralegh and so an editor would perhaps be justified in giving it extra weight for that reason.

Some of the early poems, like "Calling to mind", and "Like to a hermit poor" achieved wide popularity in the seventeenth century, no doubt partaking of Ralegh's personal legend, which had such a hold on that age. "Fortune hath taken thee away, my love" and the Queen's answer found their way into popular print, enlarged and altered, as broadside ballads, and "As you came from the holy land", with its roots in a ballad, also found its way back to the popular tradition,[1] though none of these kept an association with Ralegh's name.

Ralegh's early poems preserved in the miscellanies are mostly typical courtly lyrics, showing the contemporary interest in marked rhetorical patterning and the courtier's plain, simple diction. Some, like "Fortune hath taken thee away, my love" and the poems to Lady Leighton("Lady farewell") and Anne Vavasour ("Many desire"), were almost certainly occasioned by actual courtly situations, now obscure. Yet even these situations, which obviously had some personal significance for him, show Ralegh conscious of the decorum of the courtly lyric, with its

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1. There are texts in The Garland of Good Will and Percy's Ballad MSS.

rather ritualistic form of expression and its echoes of Continental models. The poem to Lady Leighton has, for a moment, a passing strain of what was later to become the authentic Ralegh music:

> The wind of woe hath torn my tree of trust,
> Care quenched the coals which did my fancy warm,
> All, all my help lies buried in the dust ...

a music that sounds more consistently in "As you came from the holy land". On the whole, however, the early poems are more a sign of Ralegh's apprenticeship, his ability to handle forms and figures, and the polishing of his "solid axiomatical vein"[1] so that he can produce, for example, the closing couplets that clinch so neatly many of the poems:

> Yet when I saw myself to you was true,
> I loved myself, because myself loved you.
>
> False love, desire and beauty frail, adieu,
> Dead is the root from whence such fancies grew.
>
> And at my gate despair shall linger still,
> To let in death when love and fortune will.

Ralegh's early poems, in fact, are excellent examples of Elizabethan courtly lyrics, and show very well the truth of Mr. Edwards' remarks,

> [Ralegh] was not, of course, a poet in the dedicated sense like the English Romantics, nor was he a man for whom poetry was the only means of expressing his imagination; he was a poet because his age encouraged him, as a courtier and gentleman, to write verse, because the circles in which he moved provided an attentive audience with a sensibility like his own, and because his own genius continually found occasions needing the comment of poetry, which his talents could most ably supply. (2)

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1. Oldys, quoted by Philip Edwards in Sir Walter Ralegh (1953) p.75.

2. Ibid. p.53.

Chapter Eight

"Sad Alcyon"

The Lyrics of SIR ARTHUR GORGES

And there is sad Alcyon bent to mourne,
Though fit to frame an euerlasting dittie,
Whose gentle spright for Daphnes death doth tourn
Sweet layes of loue to endlesse plaints of pittie.
Ah pensiue boy pursue that braue conceipt
In thy sweet Eglantine of Meriflure,
Lift vp thy notes vnto their wonted height,
That may thy Muse and mates to mirth allure.

Spenser: Colin Clout

Of the courtier poets whose work appears in the manuscript miscellanies, Sir Arthur Gorges has had little attention from scholars. Thirty years ago he was little more than a name and a reputation; then the British Museum acquired as MS Egerton 3165 a rather elegant manuscript miscellany entitled "The Vanytyes of Sir Arthur Gorges Youthe". Miss Helen Sandison began work on the manuscript immediately after the Second World War, and in 1953 her edition of Gorges's poems[1] brought that poet into the public eye for the first time in over three centuries, thus lending some substance to his friend Spenser's claim that Gorges was "fit to frame an euerlasting dittie".[2]

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1. The Poems of Sir Arthur Gorges (Oxford 1953); hereafter Sandison.
2. Spenser p.540 line 385.

Gorges's lost "Vannetyes and Toyes" turned out to comprise 111 poems, of which only about a dozen are preserved in other texts, and most of these without any indication of their authorship. That so sizeable a body of verse would have disappeared with almost no trace at all, had Gorges not decided to gather together the "Vanytyes" of his youth (or had this volume not survived) is a sobering thought, and one wonders how many poems by Dyer, Lord Oxford, Lord Derby, Ralegh and the other courtiers have vanished for good, quite apart from those that might lie unascribed in the miscellanies.

Eight of Gorges's "Vanytyes" appear in the miscellanies under discussion here: there are six in MS Cambridge Dd5.75, four in MS Harl. 7392 and two in MS Rawl.Poet.85.[1] Only one has an ascription to Gorges - "GOR" in MS Harl.7392 - and a quotation from the same poem in The Arte of English Poesie is attributed to "Maister Gorge".[2] But two of the poems have ascriptions to Ralegh.[3]

Ralegh and Gorges may well have been interested in one another's poetry: Gorges seems to echo Ralegh in many places - he gives the impression of being an imitative poet rather than a strongly original one, as Ralegh was at his best. Ralegh wrote a dedicatory sonnet to Gorges's translation of Lucan,[4] and the two sometimes wrote about the

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1. See Table in Volume 2, p. 210.
2. Puttenham p.227.
3. See Table in Volume 2, p. 210.
4. "Had Lucan hid the truth to please the time": Latham p.54.

same subjects[1] and translated Desportes. It seems probable that their works may at times have circulated together in manuscript. The appearance of "Would I were changed into that golden shower" as one of a group of four poems ascribed to Ralegh on ff.36-7 of MS Harl.7392 was noted in the preceding chapter. Gorges's poem is in the same metre and stanzaic form as two of Ralegh's and its general similarity to the other three poems makes it not surprising that the compiler of the manuscript took them all to be Ralegh's. They were all, in fact, considered to be Ralegh's until "Would I were changed" turned up among Gorges's "Vanytyes" in the Egerton MS. Also noted in the preceding chapter is the appearance of two poems probably by Gorges in the conjectural Ralegh group in The Phoenix Nest, which, as Miss Sandison has pointed out, should really be considered a conjectural Ralegh-Gorges group.[2]

The exact nature of the poetic relationship between Ralegh and Gorges is difficult to determine. They certainly seem to have collaborated in some way over the prose treatises that were published as the work of Gorges during the early seventeenth century, when Ralegh was languishing in the Tower.[3] The poems in the Egerton MS are full of echoes of Ralegh;[4] especially puzzling is "Our long sweet summer's day

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1. Compare Ralegh's "My body in the walls captived" (Latham p.24) and Gorges's "The prison sweet that captive holds my mind" (Sandison, no.87)

2. Sandison, p.xxxvi .

3. Ibid., p.xxvi .

4. Ibid., p.xli .

of youthful years", an exquisite sonnet added as the penultimate poem in Egerton collection.[1] It reads like a patchwork of phrases from Ralegh's work, so imbued with the spirit and style of "The 21th and last booke of the Ocean to Scinthia" that if one came across it in isolation, one would take it at once to be Ralegh's. I am not wholly convinced that it is by Gorges, although I appreciate the weight of Miss Sandison's arguments that it should be regarded as his.[2]

This raises the central problem in deciding the Gorges canon - the authority claimed by Miss Sandison for the Egerton MS. The evidence that the poems in this manuscript are by Gorges depends on the two titles;[3] the fact that the manuscript seems to have been copied for Gorges himself, with additions and corrections in his own hand, and the fact that he has ascribed one poem to Churchyard (and deleted it from the miscellany),[4] thus apparently claiming all the rest as his own. There is also the corroboration from MS Harl.7392 and, less consistently, from The Arte of English Poesie, that one poem at least ("But this and then no more") is by Gorges. To place against this evidence there are only the ascriptions of three poems, one given once to Sidney, and the other two to Ralegh. The theory that the poems in the Egerton MS are all by Gorges thus carries

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1. Sandison, poem no.110 .
2. Ibid., p.xlii .
3. "The Vanytyes of Sir Arthur Gorges Youthe" (f.1) and "Sir Arthur Gorges his vannetyes and toyes of yowth" (f.1v).
4. See Sandison p.xxxiv .

a good deal of weight, especially as the other miscellanies are known in some cases to be wrong in their ascriptions. The ascriptions of "The gentle season" and "Would I were changed" are, I believe, just such errors. "Would I were changed" could easily be thought to be Ralegh's, occuring as it does in a group of Ralegh's poems, and the ascription of "The gentle season" in MS Harl.7392 to Sidney seems to have been added in a different ink as an after-thought. Further, for these two poems, Miss Sandison has assembled a fairly convincing body of internal evidence in support of an ascription to Gorges.[1]

The status of "Her face, her tongue, her wit" and "Our long sweet summer's day" is not so certain. The latter occurs among a group of miscellaneous later poems at the end of the Egerton MS, and so really stands outside the main body of poems in that manuscript.[2] "Her face, her tongue, her wit" presents some curious textual variants which may indicate that the poem circulated in more than one form, and the possibility that Ralegh had a hand in it at some stage cannot be ruled out.

There remains, however, one further form of evidence which Miss Sandison has not exploited to the full, and which seems to me to lend further strength to her already strong case. If for the disputed poems it could be shown that the texts preserved in the Egerton MS have the greatest textual authority - that they appear to be nearer the author's

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1. Sandison p.xxxviii.

2. Sandison, nos.101-111: see p.227.

originals - that would, I think, clinch the matter in Gorges's favour. To this end, a textual examination of three of the disputed poems ("Would I were changed", "The gentle season" and "Her face, her tongue, her wit") are given in Volume Two.[1]

For "Would I were changed" the evidence is not conclusive. Few of the variants are fully significant, but none of the readings in the Egerton MS could not be the originals. The text in MS Harl.7392 has fewest type-1 variants of the remaining texts, and that in MS Rawl.Poet. 85 the most numerous; MS Rawl.Poet.85 and The Phoenix Nest share a confusion in line 14. The four texts are, on the whole, fairly close, but the Egerton text could be seen on purely textual grounds as the best.

"The gentle season" has some more significant evidence: the texts in the Egerton MS and MS Cambridge Dd5.75 are good, differing substantially from the other three texts (for the better) in the fourth stanza. Once again, the readings in the Egerton text could all be authorial.

This confirms the textual importance of MS Cambridge Dd5.75, with its six Gorges texts. It has been noted above that Gorges and its compiler would have been contemporaries at Oxford, and Miss Sandison has traced other links between Gorges and the families of the Pagets, Careys and Berkeleys, with whom the manuscript is associated.[2] None of the Gorges texts in the miscellany is ascribed, but Miss Sandison has shown

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1. Pages 211 ff.

2. Sandison, p.xxxvii.

that with the curious exception of "Her face, her tongue, her wit" (to be considered below), they are mostly good texts, probably culled from sources close to the poet.

What is particularly interesting about the miscellany is that in two cases at least, the texts in MS Cambridge Dd5.75 seem to preserve an earlier version of the poems than the one Gorges finally decided on. In the Egerton texts of "A hapless man of late" and "Come, gentle herdman, sit with me" Gorges has himself made certain corrections to the versions that the scribe copied; and the texts in MS Cambridge Dd5.75 tend at these points to agree with the Egerton readings before they were altered. In "Come, gentle herdman", for instance, the text in MS Cambridge Dd5.75 agrees in six places with Egerton readings before alteration. Most of these early readings appear (with other variants) in the text of the poem preserved in Davison's A Poetical Rapsody (1602) which also has some other points of agreement with the Cambridge MS text.[1] A setting of the first half of the poem to music in MS Add.15117 (probably of the 1630s), on the other hand, follows the Egerton text quite closely.[2]

This seems to me striking as an example of a courtly writer revising the text of a poem of his after it has come into manuscript circulation. There is, of course, no reason why an Elizabethan courtier should have regarded a lyric of his as final (although few seem to have had much concern

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1. See Sandison no.98 and p.223; and H.E. Rollins's edition of the Rapsody (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1931), poem 10 and vol.ii p.111.
2. Rollins, op. cit., ii, p.111.

for the fate of their poems once the occasions that called them forth had passed). Lord Oxford on at least one occasion remade an earlier poem of his into something rather different;[1] Ralegh used part of his poem "Nature that washed her hands in milk" again as his epitaph "Even such is time ...",[2] and incorporated some of his unfinished 22nd book "of the Oceans love to Scinthia ... entreatinge of Sorrow" in what appears to be a first draft of his Petition to Queen Anne.[3] Gorges reworked part of "Henceforth I will not set my love"[4] into his eclogue "Come, gentle herdman", and rewrote a love poem[5] as an elegy on Prince Henry.[6] As Miss Lathan writes of Ralegh, "There was nothing irrevocable to him about anything he had written. He never took such pains to make it just so that he could not, on another occasion, make it over again otherwise."[7]

The evidence that Gorges revised his poems after they had come into circulation does, I think, have some bearing on the curious textual state of many courtly lyrics preserved only or mainly in manuscript: a theory

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1. See above, p.187 : "Even as the wax" was made into the commendatory sonnet to Cardanus Comfort.
2. See Latham, poems XX and L.
3. Ibid., poems XXV and XXXVII.
4. Sandison poem 94.
5. Ibid, poem 84.
6. Ibid, poem 107.
7. Latham, p.xxxiii.

of occasional revision by the author would help explain many otherwise puzzling variants. Professor L.A.D. Cummings has applied this theory rather ingeniously to Spenser's sonnet "More than most fair" which occurs in four manuscript versions, all differing to some considerable extent, and all probably earlier than the first printed version in the Amoretti of 1595. Cummings suggests that each of these texts might represent a stage in Spenser's progressive revision of the poem, and he arranges them in a possible chronological order.[1] Although the article amounts to an interesting theory rather than a proven case, it does, I think, act as a corrective to the conventional interpretation of the textual variants of courtly poems. One should perhaps be more wary of trying to decide, in editing a poem, which single reading among a number of variants is the author's original, as there may be more than one reading which is original in the sense of being authorial. Many variants found in the miscellany texts can be shown fairly conclusively to be corruptions; others are more surprising, and sometimes read like alternative readings, leaving one wondering how such a "corruption" could have arisen. One should perhaps make more allowance for a courtly writer's revisions than editors have tended to do until now, although with no very sure method of dating manuscript texts and practically no

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1. "Spenser's Amoretti VIII: New Manuscript Versions" in Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, iv (1964) p.125. See also the general comments about authorial revision in J. Thorpe's "The Aesthetics of Textual Criticism", PMLA lxxx (1965) p.465.

autograph texts, it would usually be almost impossible to prove that revision had taken place, even though it might be suspected.

All this has a bearing on "Her face, her tongue, her wit" because this poem, one of the most popular collector's items among all the lyrics of the period, seems to have been in circulation in at least two different versions, and has a large number of variant readings. Miss Sandison has suggested that "Circulation of different trial-sheets ... could account for variations in copies that are obviously not far from the source."[1] The poem is ascribed to "W.R." in Le Prince d'Amour (which has some other attributions to Ralegh) and to "Raley" in MS Harl. 7392, where the ascription seems to be an addition, in different ink. Neither Miss Sandison nor Miss Latham rule out the possibility of some form of collaboration between Ralegh and Gorges.[2]

Probably the best-known example of the device of Correlatio, the poem was set to music, and was popular among collectors of trick poems such as those in Wits Recreations (1641) and Wits Interpreter (1655). Its great popularity and its emphasis on formal correlation seem to have laid it particularly open to corruption, slight differences in text being perhaps ignored as long as the correlation was preserved. Basically, there seem to have been at least two versions of the poem in circulation, the better being that of the texts more closely related to the Egerton MS.[3]

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1. Sandison p.210.
2. Sandison p.209 and Latham p.160.
3. See the texts and variants to Volume 2, p. 217.

This poem provides the one instance where the text in MS Cambridge Dd5.75 preserves a version differing radically from that in the Egerton MS. It is almost as if Stanford knew that the poem was one of six stanzas, but was only able to obtain a satisfactory text of the first three stanzas: his version of the last three stanzas bears scarcely any relation to the Egerton (or any other) version. There is, in fact, a version of the first three stanzas only, preserved in three other related texts, and agreeing in places with MS Cambridge Dd.5.75. Curiously enough, all the other Gorges texts in the Cambridge MS are close to those in the Egerton MS, and the Cambridge text of "Her face, her tongue, her wit" is on the same page as a good text of Gorges's "I saw of late a lady wear a shoe".

The poem's textual situation is thus very complex, and the suggested stemma in Volume Two[1] only indicates very generally the way in which the texts group themselves, and their relative distance from the Egerton text. It makes, for instance, no allowance for revisions, which might account for certain variants.

Ralegh was not the only poet with whom Gorges has been confused: the attribution of "The gentle season" to Sidney in MS Harl.7392 has already been noted. Puttenham, on the other hand, confused Gorges with Dyer: in four quotations from the poem "But this and then no more", which he uses as illustrations of figures in The Arte of English Poesie,

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1. Volume 2, p. 221.

he twice attributes the poem to Dyer, once ascribes it to Gorges, and once gives it merely to "a louer";[1] MS Harl.7392, however, attributes the poem to Gorges, and it appears in the Egerton MS. One can see how Puttenham's confusion may have arisen if one compares the poem with Dyer's very similar poem "Before I die, fair dame", from which Puttenham also quotes.[2] One might note in passing that Puttenham seems to have been quoting from memory in some of his quotations from Gorges's poems.[3]

Puttenham, like Spenser, comments on Gorges's "sweetness". Gorges used his poetic figures in the proper manner, so that Puttenham could use a single poem of his to illustrate four different figures, praising his "vehement, swift and passionate" use of "the Heaping figure", and the "Apostrophe" of the closing couplet. The latter has a sententiousness that the compiler of MS Harl.7392 seems to have admired also - he gives it prominence by writing it in capital letters.

The poems by Gorges which found their way into the manuscript miscellanies are almost a cross-section of his work: the courtly patterning of "A hapless man" and "Her face, her tongue, her wit"; the bright colours of "I saw of late" and "How durst a silly painter"; the rather abstract discursiveness of "But this and then no more"; the neatly translated "Would I were changed" with its tell-tale departures

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1. Puttenham, pp. 211, 227, 236, 237.
2. Ibid., p.169.
3. Ibid., pp. 227, 236.

from Ronsard's original; the sweetly pastoral eclogue "Come, gentle herdman"; and "The gentle season" with its lightness of touch and felicity of phrase characteristic of Gorges at his best. One feels it must have been poems like "The gentle season" which lead Spenser to praise Gorges as Alcyon,

> That wont full merrilie to pipe and daunce,
> And fill with pleasure euery wood and plaine ... (1)

who turned "Sweet layes of loue to endlesse plaints of pittie".[2]

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1. Daphnaïda: Spenser, p.529, lines 55-6.

2. Colin Clout: Ibid, p.540, line 387.

Chapter Nine

"Our English Petrarke"

The Lyrics of SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

For he could pipe and daunce, and caroll sweet,
Emongst the shepheards in their shearing feast;
As somers larke that with her song doth greet
The dawning day forth comming from the East.
And layes of loue he also could compose.
Thrise happie she, whom he to praise did chose.

Spenser: Astrophel

In court he liu'd, not like a Carpet Knight,
Whose glory is in garments, and his tongue:
If men but knew, the halfe that he did write,
Enoughe to tyre, a memory so young.

Whetstone: Sir Phillip Sidney

For most of the courtier poets examined up to now the textual evidence has been sparse; in the case of Sir Philip Sidney there is a great deal of information available. Not only is Sidney the most popular of all the poets whose works appear in the manuscripts under consideration (nearly 50 poems appearing in one or other of the manuscript miscellanies can be attributed to him), but his works have recently been edited with exemplary detail by Professor William Ringler,[1] so that subsequent scholars have a sound textual basis from which to study his poems.

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1. The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. W.A. Ringler, Jr. (Oxford 1962). [Henceforth referred to as Ringler]

In Sidney's case not only are there a large number of good, fairly complete manuscript collections of his work, but also printed versions published with the authority of his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, and his close friend Fulke Greville. This means that one is in possession of the main textual evidence that is lacking in the case of, say, Dyer, Ralegh or Lord Oxford - authoritative texts close to the author's originals, whose descent from those originals can be determined with some degree of certainty. And Sidney's works are extensive enough to provide the detailed textual information necessary for one to arrive at a reliable stemma. Professor Ringler's textual investigations thus provide a framework of major texts into which one can try to fit the minor texts appearing in the miscellanies under discussion here. Sidney therefore yields an opportunity for testing against independent evidence the theories put forward up to now about the manuscript circulation of courtly poems.

The texts of poems by Sidney in the miscellanies[1] are almost exclusively lyrics from the Old Arcadia or Certain Sonnets, or songs from Astrophil and Stella. None of the miscellanies has a whole corpus of consecutive Sidney texts (like those preserved in the major Sidney sources) but, as can be seen from Table II, there are often minor groupings of Sidney texts suggesting that the poems reached the compilers of the miscellanies either singly or in small groups not necessarily

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1. See Table I in Volume 2, p. 223.

subdivisions of Sidney's original grouping.[1] Thus while Sidney's works circulated among the compilers of the major sources in their proper groups and correct order, certain poems seem to have become detached from their parent bodies and to have entered a wider circulation, perhaps in loose sheets.

The relationship between the texts of individual poems preserved in the miscellanies and the texts of the main Sidney sources as discussed by Ringler is examined in detail in Volume 2. The object of this has been to try to trace evidence in the miscellany texts of a descent from one of the branches of the stemmata drawn up by Ringler.

The miscellany texts of poems from the Old Arcadia and songs from Astrophil and Stella show considerable variation, as one might expect. This supports the suggestion already made that the miscellanies are by no means textually homogeneous and that one ought really to draw up an individual stemma for each poem. With short lyrics, however, there is seldom enough textual information available to make this possible, so one is left with seeking out significant agreements in variation in the hope that a pattern of some sort will emerge.

The texts of poems from the Old Arcadia show little conclusive evidence of close relationship with Professor Ringler's stemma, although miscellany texts of some poems (OA41, OA51) show a relationship with texts

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1. See MS Rawl.Poet.85 ff.8v-9v where texts of CS16, OA51, PP2, CS3 appear, in that order, all ascribed to Sidney. Cf., on the other hand, ff.55-6 where CS8-11 appear in their proper order. See Volume 2, Table II (p.225) for other groupings.

descending from early stages of Sidney's revised transcript (T1/T2), and others (OA3) with texts descending from Sidney's later revisions (T3/T4). Similarly, there is some indication of a relationship between the miscellany texts of songs from Astrophil and Stella and the lost transcript that Ringler calls Z - the source of Harington's text and of the unauthorized quarto Q1.[1]

In the Certain Sonnets texts, on the other hand, considerable evidence of a fairly constant pattern emerges. It should be remembered that the collection represents a gathering together by Sidney of "Certein lowse Sonnettes and songes"[2] - miscellaneous poems written at various times, some of which found their way into manuscript circulation in the usual courtly way.

The most consistent relationship to emerge is that between texts in MSS Rawl.Poet.85, Harl.7392, Folger V.a.89 and The Arbor of amorous Deuises, which (as Ringler points out)[3] must have shared a common ancestor. The key miscellany source of Certain Sonnets texts is, however, MS Marsh Z3.5.21; Ringler places this text on his stemma as a substantive source descending from Sidney's own papers. The Marsh texts show some relationship with, on the one hand, the Clifford MS (Folger H.b.1, olim 4009.03 - a major Sidney MS source), and on the other, texts in the

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1. Ringler, curiously, calls the MS texts descendants of O or X or Y (but not Z) - p.453. See Volume 2 for evidence.
2. See Bodl. MS e museo 37.
3. Ringler, p.425.

miscellanies MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.7392. It has already been pointed out above that "Hand B" in the Marsh MS (which copied out all the Sidney texts, consecutively, on ff. 17v-19v) has also copied several texts which are very close indeed to those in MS Rawl.Poet.85,[1] suggesting that Finnet and "Hand B" were on the same circuit of transmission. The Marsh texts can, I think, be seen as witnesses of an intermediate stage between the major manuscript texts of Certain Sonnets (especially the Clifford MS) and the minor miscellany texts.[2]

The other minor text of a poem from Certain Sonnets to which Ringler gives prominence as a substantive source is the Bannister text of CS30 - Add.MS 28253 f.3. Ringler gives weight to this text because he believes that Sidney personally gave Bannister the text in 1584[3] - yet, as he points out, it contains at least eight errors.[4] Add.MS 28253 is a composite volume containing at the beginning (ff.1-13) a number of sheets which were at one time loose and folded separately (like a letter), and each has been inscribed on the back with a description of its contents. These sheets are apparently a little collection made by Edward Bannister of Putney between 1583 and 1602 (each sheet is dated). The description on the back of f.3 reads:

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1. See discussion of this MS above, p. 66.
2. See Volume 2 for textual support for this, pp. 222 ff.
3. Ringler pp.lxvi, 425.
4. Ringler p.555.

1584
Ringe owte yor bells lett moureninge shewes be spredde
for love ys dedd // A dyttye mad by Sr phillip sydnye
gevene me att puttenye // In surrye
Decembris Xo Anno 1584.

and, at the foot of the sheet: "Sr phillyppe Sydnye".

Ringler interprets this to mean that Sidney himself gave the poem to Bannister, but I can see no proof of this. It seems to me that the inscription at the foot of the sheet could quite well indicate the author of the poem, and not necessarily the donor, as Ringler suggests.[1] F.2v of the same manuscript has the inscription "a songe made abowt ye comynge of ye monstre into England written owte by wyllm walloke Decembris xiiijo Anno 1583", and f.5 has Campion's "Harke all youe ladies that doe sleepe" described as "1591. A fantasye of Sr phillyp Sydnye written owt of his Astrophell & Stella. / owte of Mr Waterers booke. /" This suggests that had Sidney himself given Bannister the text, Bannister would probably have indicated this rather more clearly. It also shows that Bannister was not entirely familiar with Sidney's work, and that he obtained at least one other text of what he thought was a poem of Sidney's through some other person ("Mr Waterer", who also gave him the text copied on f.6.).

Another interesting piece of evidence about the texts of CS30 is that Bannister's text agrees in five places with the text in MS Harl.7392, suggesting very strongly that the two descend from a common ancestor.

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1. Ringler p.555.

This seems to me to reduce the standing of Bannister's text to the same level as the other miscellany texts - which would explain the high percentage of error that Ringler finds in it.

Ringler also gives prominence to the Sidney texts in the Arundel Harington MS, and it seems clear that Sir John Harington had, for instance, access to manuscript copies of both the Old Arcadia and Astrophil and Stella,[1] from which he copied certain texts into his miscellany and quoted extracts in his translation of Orlando Furioso. One of the texts that Harington copied (that of AS1) provides, as Ringler has pointed out,[2] the only clear contemporary statement identifying Stella with Lady Rich. Some of Harington's texts (OA51, CS3, CS30, ASx) show agreements with texts in other miscellanies, so that the Arundel Harington MS provides (like MS Marsh Z3.5.21) another tenuous link between the main Sidney sources and the texts in the miscellanies.

Though the evidence that has been considered above is not very strong, it is, I think, strong enough to suggest, at least in the case of certain poems from Certain Sonnets, a line of descent from Sidney's originals through the major manuscript collections to the miscellany texts. Where there is the possibility of descent from other transcripts, such as those Ringler suggests belonged to the Countess of Pembroke or to Fulke Greville, the miscellany texts seem, as far as one can tell, to descend

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1. Hughey, ii p.76 and Ringler p.553.
2. Ringler p.436.

from Sidney's own copies rather than through these transcripts, which would suggest that the compilers of the miscellanies seem not to have obtained their texts from sources close to the Countess of Pembroke (as Abraham Fraunce did, for instance),[1] but rather, like Harington, from sources originating at the poet himself.

An interesting point to emerge from a study of the miscellany texts is ~~the way in which~~ that texts from the Old Arcadia, Certain Sonnets and songs from Astrophil and Stella are mixed together. Ringler has suggested that most of these poems were written between 1577 and 1581 - those in Certain Sonnets being written "during the years that Sidney was composing, but at intervals when he had tired of working on, his Old Arcadia."[2] Professor Ringler also points out that three poems, one of which became OA73, another ASv and a third which was not incorporated into any larger work (OP5) all appear to have been written at the same time and refer to Philisides and his love for Mira.[3] Mr. N.L. Rudenstine, who sees Certain Sonnets as "the kind of poetry Sidney was inclined to write informally or privately - outside the strict confines of the pastoral-heroic romance",[4] regards some of the poems in the Old Arcadia as "anomalies in the book as a whole" and more like those of Certain Sonnets.[5]

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1. Ringler, p.562.
2. Ibid., p.422.
3. Ibid., pp.418, 484, 496.
4. Sidney's Poetic Development (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1967) p.113.
5. Ibid., p.119.

Two of these "anomalies" (OA38, OA51) are preserved in texts in the miscellanies.

One therefore begins to suspect that during the years 1577 to 1581, Sidney wrote numerous poems, some of which he used in the Old Arcadia, a few he used in 1582 as songs in Astrophil and Stella, and most of the remainder he gathered together in Certain Sonnets. In the meantime a good many of these poems may have found their way individually or in small groups into the hands of manuscript collectors, without very much regard for the different works in which Sidney had later placed them. Thus one should not be surprised (as Mr. J.P. Cutts is) to find some of Sidney's lyrics - even those "which one can hardly conceive of having an existence or popularity outside The Arcadia"[1] - preserved in miscellany texts, divorced from their context. From the point of view of the miscellany texts, Sidney becomes another courtly lyrist whose poems circulated separately, probably on loose sheets like Bannister's text of CS30,[2] so that Sidney's greater literary ambitions and achievements are obscured.

The selection from Sidney's works preserved in the miscellanies is not a bad one, if one excepts major gaps such as the sonnets from Astrophil and Stella and the Psalms: a third of the texts preserved are sonnets, and most of the rest are songs. Poems with strong rhetorical patterning

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1. J.P. Cutts, "Dametas' Song in Sidney's Arcadia", Renaissance News xi (1958) p.183.

2. Mr. Rudenstine sees Certain Sonnets as a collection probably kept in a loose-leaf notebook: op. cit. p.113.

(like the Correlatio of OA60, the blason OA62, the 'linking verses' of OA45) were popular, as were some of the poems in quantitative metre (especially in the undergraduate miscellany MS Rawl.Poet.85, where Finnet and his friends were inspired to try their own hand at writing in quantitative metres). Popular too were poems based on striking conceits (CS15, CS22, OA17, OA22) and metrical tours de force like OA41 and OA71. The poems that appear to have been most popular with the miscellany collectors are the sonnets OA51 (with only two rhymes) and CS16 (with its companion sonnet by Dyer) and the three songs CS3 (with its correlative framework of the four elements) and the elaborately patterned CS23 and CS30.

Although the miscellanies do contain texts of some of Sidney's best and most highly praised lyrics (such as OA3, OA45, OA71, CS30, ASviii) one cannot, of course, see the miscellany collectors as having made in any sense a careful selection from Sidney's work - rather one must see them as eager for any Sidney text that came their way, especially, it would seem, for sonnets and songs. It seems clear, for instance, that none of the sonnets from Astrophil and Stella reached Finnet when he was collecting the poems in MS Rawl.Poet.85, for he was obviously a keen admirer of Sidney's (he has 24 poems by him) and a keen collector of sonnets, and it seems inconceivable that he would not have copied out any sonnets from Sidney's great cycle had they come his way.[1]

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1. This was first pointed out by Mary Bowen in MIN x (1895) p.236.

It seems clear too that if the only Sidney texts now extant were those preserved in the miscellanies - as is the case with most of the other courtier poets we have been examining - not only would the texts preserved be fairly corrupt, but a large percentage of Sidney's work would not have been preserved at all, and some of it, though preserved would be unattributed.[1]

Sidney probably wrote more than most courtier poets, but even so, by comparison a great deal of what Dyer, Ralegh, Lord Oxford, Lord Derby and the others wrote has almost certainly not been preserved, some must still lie unclaimed and the texts of those poems that have been preserved are very likely to be full of corruptions.

One wonders whether the other courtier poets, if they could see what changelings posterity considered them to have begotten, would have sympathised with Daniel, who complained of Newman's surreptitious quarto (which printed for the first time some of Daniel's sonnets as well as Sidney's Astrophil and Stella) that his secrets had been "bewraide to the world uncorrected ..." Sidney, according to Daniel, though abused in the same way, came out of it a good deal better: "But this wrong was not onely doone to mee, but to him whose unmatchable lines have indured the like misfortune; Ignorance sparing not to commit sacriledge upon so holy reliques. Yet Astrophel flying with the wings of his own fame, a higher

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1. This was just the situation pointed out in the case of Gorges, above.

pitch then the gross-sighted can discerne, hath registred his owne name in the annals of eternitie, and cannot be disgraced, howsoever disguised."[1] How far, one wonders, would the other courtiers have felt themselves disgraced, rather than merely disguised?

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1. Dedication to Daniel's Delia (1592), quoted in Ringler p.543.

Chapter Ten

"Waters Of One Spring"

The Scattered Lyrics of NICHOLAS BRETON

They are all waters of one spring:
but they runne through many kinds
of earth, whereof they giue a
kinde of tang in their taste.

Breton: "on the gathering together
of certain odde pieces of
poetry".

Nicholas Breton is one of the few links between the courtly poets whose work forms the bulk of the select group of manuscripts, and the world of the Elizabethan professional writers; for Breton is the only poet whose poems can be identified in any number in these miscellanies, who sought also to make a living by publishing his work. Even Breton, however, seems to have preserved a distinction between poems written for manuscript circulation and poems to be published with his authority; many of the poems ascribed to him in manuscripts were never printed, and others that are preserved in manuscript texts were printed in miscellanies whose authority seems to be in doubt.

This appears to indicate that at some stage in his life Breton (who liked in his printed works to emphasize his status as a gentleman) was accepted as a courtly poet writing for a select audience who read poems circulated in manuscript rather than printed books. He was apparently

highly regarded in these circles, for poems of his appear in miscellanies intermingled with those of writers such as Sidney, Dyer, Ralegh and Lord Oxford, and it will be remembered that he appears among the courtly makers listed in The Arte of English Poesie.

It is possible that Breton owed his appearance in these circles to his stepfather, the poet George Gascoigne, also listed in The Arte but (curiously) not represented in the manuscript miscellanies. Breton's early verse is very much in the style of Gascoigne, Whetstone, Googe, Turbervile and the printed poetry of the 1560s and 1570s. He published some volumes of verses in the late 1570s and early 1580s,[1] and then does not seem to have published anything else until 1590, when his prose tale Don Frederigo was printed. It was followed by The Pilgrimage to Paradise (1592), the first of Breton's volumes of religious verse which became his main preoccupation in the 1590s.

There is thus a break in his publications during the middle and late 1580s, and I should like to suggest that in these years Breton wrote most of the lyrics preserved in the manuscript and printed miscellanies. He may have been moving in courtly circles, perhaps those associated with the Countess of Pembroke, who was certainly his patroness in 1592.[2]

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1. See the discussion of Breton's canon in Jean Robertson's Poems by Nicholas Breton (Liverpool 1952). [Henceforth referred to as Robertson].

2. Breton's three published works dedicated to the Countess are The Pilgrimage to Paradise (1592); Auspicante Iehoua (1597); The Rauisht Soule, and the Blessed Weeper (1601).

This would help explain why lyrics of his are found among those of Sidney and Dyer in sources like MS Rawl.Poet.85 (dating from the late 1580s). It is surely these unprinted lyrics rather than his early printed verses which led Puttenham to include Breton in the list of courtly makers in The Arte of English Poesie.[1]

Breton's scattered lyrics have to be gathered together from a variety of sources, mainly manuscript and printed miscellanies. The chief problem they pose is one of attribution; the evidence that Breton wrote them comes from various ascriptions, and particularly MS Rawl.Poet. 85, which has seven poems attributed to him. All seven poems, together with seven others of MS Rawl.Poet.85, are among poems preserved in MS Add.34064 in the British Museum, probably the most important of all Breton's manuscript sources.

MS Add.34064 is sometimes known as the Cosens MS because it was at one time in the possession of F.W. Cosens who lent it to Grosart when the latter was preparing his edition of Breton's works. It is in three parts: ff.1-26v and 41-54v are in a single Elizabethan hand and comprise 51 poems, most of which are apparently by Breton, though none is ascribed. Ff.27-40v contain nineteen items, including eight poems by Sidney, four extracts from Spenser's minor poems and a copy of the libel on Baeshe, written, it would seem, in a much later hand. Professor Ringler suggests

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1. Puttenham, p.61; Miss Robertson (p.xxv) suggests that Puttenham was thinking of Breton's two early volumes of printed verse.

that the Sidney poems in this section are copied from printed sources (such as the 1593 Arcadia),[1] and Professor Cummings is of the opinion that Cosens himself copied out these nineteen poems in a blank section of the manuscript, mainly from printed sources which in places he improved or misread,[2] though Mr. P.M. Buck thought the hand in this section could be dated around 1600.[3] Whatever the status of this section of the manuscript (and one must, I think, be rather suspicious of it) it does not affect the Breton poems which have every appearance of authentic Elizabethan texts. The third section of the manuscript, ff.55-60v, is in yet another hand, apparently mid seventeenth century, for a poem on f.56v is headed "An elegie upon the death of my deare sister M:W: who died of a feavour the 7th of Ianuary An: Do: 1653 Anno Aet: 18". From an acrostic poem on f.59, the sister's name was Margaret Wiseman.

The section of the manuscript that is of interest in a study of Breton is thus ff.1-26v and 41-54v: on f.1 appears the inscription "And In the Grand - 1596 Anthonie Babingtonn: of Warringtonn: Roger Wright me possidett ex dono Henrici fratrie meo." in an Elizabethan hand. I have not been able to trace an Anthony Babington having any connection with the town of Warrington in Lancashire, but the chances are that he

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1. Ringler p.555.
2. Cummings p.67.
3. See his description of the MS in MLN xxii (1907) p.41.

belonged to the ancient Northern family of Babington, and was perhaps a kinsman of the Anthony Babington of Dethick, Derbyshire, who was executed in 1586 for his part in the conspiracy named after him.

The poems in the Elizabethan section of the Cosens MS are linked with Breton not only because some of them appear in MS Rawl.Poet.85 ascribed to him, but also because a good number of them appear in the printed miscellany Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591). For this work the printer Richard Jones appears to have been responsible; he seems to have made a speciality of miscellanies, for he printed A Handful of Pleasant Delights (?1566) and A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions (1578), and he printed Breton's early works A smale handfull of fragrant Flowers (1575) and A Floorish vpon Fancie (1577). In his preface to the Bowre, Jones writes:

> Gentlemen: I present you here, in the Authours absence, with sundrie fine Deuices, and rare conceytes, in English verse.

The suggestion that all the poems in the miscellany were his work seems to have angered Breton, for the next year he complained of the Bowre in the preface to his The Pilgrimage to Paradise:

> I protest it was donne altogether without my consent or knowledge, & many thinges of other mens mingled with a few of mine, for except Amoris Lachrimae: an epitaphe vpon Sir Phillip Sydney, and one or two other toies, which I know not how he vnhappily came by, I haue no part with any of them:

It seems, however, that Breton may have been overstating his case, perhaps because he had quarrelled with Jones, or possibly merely to give

the impression of a quarrel in order to stimulate sales. Of the 56 poems in the Bowre, two are probably by Lord Oxford, one by Gorges and one perhaps by Ralegh, while twenty-five also appear in the Cosens MS and are very likely to be Breton's. Professor Rollins suggested that:

> Nicholas Breton himself unquestionably wrote most of the poems, although his animus against Jones made him acknowledge the authorship of [Amoris Lachrimae] and "one or two other toys" only. The similarity in diction, subject-matter, and technique of the majority of the 56 poems is very noticeable. (1)

Jones was undeterred. In 1594[2] he published The Arbor of amorous Deuises "Wherein young Gentlemen may reade many pleasant fancies and fine deuises: And thereon meditate diuers sweete Conceites, to Court the loue of faire Ladies and Gentlewomen. By N.B. Gent ..." This time, however, he admitted that the poems were not only Breton's:

> this pleasant Arbor for Gentleman, beeing many mens workes excellent Poets, and most, not the meanest in estate and degree: (3)

The book comprises forty-four poems, the last ten of which are straight reprints of items 11-20 of the Bowre. Jones apparently intended the Arbor to be fuller but the poems he intended publishing were printed first by R.S. in The Phoenix Nest (1593), for Jones comments in his preface:

> had not the Phenix preuented me of some of the best stuffe she furnisht her nest with of late: this Arbor had bin somewhat the more handsomer trimmed vp, beside a larger scope for gentlemen to recreate them selues.

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1. See Rollins's edition of the Bowre (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1933) p.xviii.
2. See Rollins's edition of the Arbor (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1936) p.xi for evidence of this date.
3. See Jones's preface.

It may have been to pad out the new miscellany that Jones reprinted the items from the Bowre. At all events, his two miscellanies seem to have been a success, for he brought out second editions of them both in 1597, still with Breton's name on the title pages. By the 1590s, then, Breton's reputation as a leading poet seems to have been great enough for his name to be used for added sales appeal. His work remained a source for anthologists for the whole decade: The Phoenix Nest (1593) ascribes five poems to him, and Englands Helicon (1600) seven.

The manuscript and printed miscellanies preserve a number of poems with ascriptions to Breton, but there are roughly seventy that can reasonably be considered his, pending more positive attributions. For most of these one is really dependent on the Bowre, for if one could assume that most of the poems in that miscellany are Breton's, one would be in a good position to suggest the same about the poems in the Cosens MS. Certainly I suspect that most of the poems in both the manuscript and the Bowre come from the same pen.

There seems to be some quite close relationship between these two sources, and to give a clearer impression of this, Volume 2 lists the contents of the Cosens MS in the order in which they occur, together with the order in which texts of the poems appear in the Bowre, the Arbor, MS Rawl.Poet.85 and Englands Helicon. Where there is more than one text of a poem, some rough indication has been given of the closeness of the texts.[1]

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1. See Volume 2, Table : p. 238.

The late Mr. John Crow suggested to me that this situation indicates that the scribe of the Cosens MS was copying his texts from the Bowre and perhaps another Breton printed text no longer extant.[1] It seems to me that this is only one possible interpretation: some of the manuscript texts are in fact better than those in the Bowre.[2] I suggest, rather, that both the scribe of the Cosens MS and Jones, printer of the Bowre, drew their texts from the same sources, and that these sources were manuscript. Both compilers could have had access to a manuscript corpus of Breton's poems, some of which also found their way into the hands of the compilers of MSS Rawl.Poet.85, Harl.6910 and Englands Helicon. On the whole, the poems in MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.6910 are different from those in the Bowre, though they too show some signs of grouping.

The Cosens MS, like most miscellanies, has a certain structure of its own: it opens, appropriately, with a poem in celebration of the Queen[3] (which does not to my knowledge appear in any Elizabethan printed text), and has on f.20 two poems about truth (one of which has a text in the Bowre and the other not). The manuscript has two texts of "Go muse unto the bower" - on ff.3v and 26; the first is very close to the Bowre text of this poem, and the second has rather more variants. There is no reason to suppose that any of the poems in the manuscript are not by Breton

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1. Such as "the pain of pleasur" perhaps - see Robertson p. cxxxviii.
2. See below.
3. C.f. MS Rawl.Poet.85 which opens with a poem thought to be by the Queen.

with the single exception of "From the heavens there hath descended" on f.4v, which is ascribed "Eward Spencer" - the only poem in the manuscript to be ascribed.

Where more than one text of a poem exists, one can to a certain extent test the hypothesis outlined above by examining the evidence of textual relationships: to this end comparative texts of certain of the poems are given in Volume 2 in the hope that a study of their textual variants will throw some light on the status of the main textual sources.

It will have been noted from the list of poems in the Cosens MS that several texts in both the manuscript and the Bowre are very closely related - for example "Poets come all", "Perfection peerless" and "Pour down, poor eyes". Another is "On a hill there grows a flower"[1] where there are no variants in the two texts except that the manuscript adds an extra stanza not in the printed text; this would be unlikely to happen if the scribe of the manuscript was merely copying from the Bowre. The text of the same poem preserved in Englands Helicon, on the other hand, might well have been taken from the Bowre. Several poems in Englands Helicon are ascribed "Out of M.Morleyes Madrigals" or "Out of M.Birds set songs", and even in one case "These three ditties were taken out of Maister John Dowlands books of tableture for the Lute, the Authours names not there set downe, & therefore left to their owners". Englands Helicon,

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1. See text in Volume 2, p. 242.

furthermore, was intended as a pastoral anthology and to further this end the editor was not above altering a poem to make it more pastoral in tone.[1] Its texts have therefore perhaps not the same authority as those from other sources.

The Englands Helicon text of "Sweet Phillis, if a silly swain"[2] was apparently taken from that printed in the Bowre - probably in this case from the 1597 reprint. The text of this poem in the Cosens MS is superior to that in the Bowre in several places; again difficult to understand if the scribe of the manuscript was copying from the Bowre.

Where there are also texts in other manuscripts, these are usually some distance from those in the Cosens MS and the Bowre. Of the texts of "The air with sweet my senses doth delight",[3] those in the Cosens MS and the Bowre are related on the one hand, and those in MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.6910 related on the other. A better example is "Pause awhile my silly muse",[4] preserved in only two texts; that in the Cosens MS lacks a stanza and is apparently inferior in several places to that in MS Rawl. Poet.85. A similar pattern emerges from "Those eyes that hold the hand of every heart"[5] where the texts in MS Rawl.Poet.85 and The Phoenix Nest are related and superior to the related texts in the Cosens MS and the Bowre.

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1. See Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1935) ii, p.63.
2. See text in Volume 2, p. 244.
3. See Volume 2, p. 258.
4. See Volume 2, p. 269.
5. See Volume 2, p. 241.

Sometimes, however, the text of a poem in MS Rawl.Poet.85 agrees more closely with the text in the Cosens MS than with the texts of the same poem in other manuscripts: in the case of "Sitting late with sorrow sleeping",[1] the text in MS Rawl.Poet.85 is more closely related to the text in the Cosens MS than to the text in MS Harl.6910.

The texts of "Fair in a morn, oh fairest morn"[2] show little indication of any grouping at all, though the texts in MS Rawl.Poet.85 and the Cosens MS are probably slightly better than the others, and certainly more complete. It may be that a poem of this sort, full of verbal devices, was liable to editorial or scribal meddling to increase or modify the patterning - for example in the apparent confusion of "though/but/yet" alternative constructions in the second part of the poem.

Breton's most popular poem was undoubtedly "In the merry month of May",[3] and here there are three very clearly defined textual groups: the texts in MS Rawl.Poet.85 and the Cosens MS are related and better than the others, including the earliest printed version in The Honorable Entertainement... which suggests that the poem may already have been written before it was used to entertain the Queen. The chief force for textual erosion in this poem (and probably in others of Breton's) is almost certainly music: it was set by several musicians, such as Michael East and John Wilson, and many of the texts are preserved in songbooks.

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1. See Volume 2, p. 246.
2. See Volume 2, p. 252.
3. See Volume 2, p. 249.

It provides a good example of how a poem becomes altered when set to music.

The poem in the Cosens MS with the most curious textual situation is "Some men will say there is a kind of muse".[1] This appears in three other manuscripts as a poem of seven stanzas; in the Cosens MS, however, it consists of eleven stanzas, the last five of which correspond to a separate poem in the Bowre beginning "Who can delight in such a woeful sound". Three of these extra stanzas also appear as part of a long poem ascribed to Breton in The Phoenix Nest, beginning "Come, younglings, come, that seem to make such moan". It seems that what were originally two separate poems, "Some men will say" and "Come, younglings, come", have become at some stage confused, and that the text in the Bowre may represent stanzas of the two poems which have beoome separated from their parent bodies and amalgamated. A problem, however, is the status of the opening stanza of the Bowre text, which appears in the Cosens MS but not in any of the other texts. It may be that the stanza really belongs to "Some men will say", in which case the manuscript texts of this would be incomplete. "Some men will say" and "Come, younglings, come" deal in the same form with similar objects and stanzas of either could become confused without really breaking the sense. It is also possible that the Bowre text may represent an early draft of a poem Breton later rewrote as the much more passionate and dramatic "Come, younglings, come". One is reduced once again to trying to reach a decision on the basis of style and personal impression.

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1. See Volume 2, p. 261.

What this textual confusion does support is a deduction which has perhaps been emerging from the various textual collations - that the texts in the Cosens MS and the Bowre are not necessarily good texts; on the whole they are no better than the average manuscript text. The Bowre texts especially are often corrupt, and the collection has, in my opinion, all the signs of a printer's anthology of courtly or near-courtly verse, compiled from manuscript texts in circulation, and so having no greater authority than other manuscript texts: it certainly does not seem to be an authorised collection of Breton's lyrics, though a good number of the poems in it are probably Breton's. In the case of poems not by Breton, the Bowre texts are related quite closely to other manuscript texts: to the texts in MS Harl.7392 of Gorges's "Her face, her tongue, her wit" and Lord Oxford's "If women could be fair and yet not fond"; and to the texts in MSS Harl.7392 and Rawl.Poet.85 of Oxford's "When wert thou born, Desire?". This suggests that Jones was able to draw on the same sort of sources as the compilers of the manuscript miscellanies. His printing was not perfect, however, and many unique readings could merely be printer's errors.[1]

From the group of lyrics in the Bowre and the Cosens MS, one can, I think, obtain a clear enough impression of a single poetic personality to be fairly sure that they are all the work of one poet and probably Breton. Professor Rollins's list of Breton's stylistic attributes holds good for

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1. Cf. the very carefully printed The Phoenix Nest.

most of the group:

> the use of favourite words like "angels", "bower", "dainty", "favor", "feature", "heavenly", "heavens", "saint", "sweet", the dependence on abstractions (often arranged in pairs) like "Virtue and Honour", "Love and Beauty", "Wit and Will", the continual feminine rimes like "bereft me: left me". (1)

One might add to this the smoothness and regularity of metre, the clear, simple diction, the fondness for trochaic metres and alternating short and long lines, giving an overall impression of lines of short, quick-moving words and a song-like flow.[2]

There is also a frequent use of devices such as parenthesis ("Fair in a morn, oh fair morn") and correlation ("The air with sweet my senses doth delight"), and lines beginning "Oh ..." and "Never ...". There is a uniformity too about the subject matter, especially in the pastoral poems with their delight in spring, their lists of common country animals, birds, and flowers, and their stock characters of Phillis and Coridon. There are several dream poems and frequent mention of the muses and the four elements.

Some of the poems are sententious ("Time is but short, and short the course of time"), and others strike an elegiac note, often one of love melancholy ("Come, younglings, come"). At one end of the spectrum are poems of specific sensuous evocation of the country ("The pretty turtle dove" and "In time of yore") and at the other the almost mystical abstraction of a poem like "All my senses stand amazed".

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1. Rollins's edition of the Bowre, p.xviii.

2. E.g. "When fate decreeth"; "Wit whither will you"; "Oh eyes leave off your weeping".

The difficulty comes with trying to define the limits of the group: Breton's chief characteristics as a poet are clear, but they form an uncertain basis for trying to decide which poems are by Breton and which are not. Is one, for example, to include all the poems in the Bowre which cannot be attributed to anyone else, (even those not in the Cosens MS)? And then what of the poems in the Arbor?

Apart from the uncertainty of his canon, Breton's position in the literary history of the 1580s and 1590s is central, if one takes into consideration the number of lyrics he seems to have written, and his popularity with his contemporaries. His pastoral poems stand up well to comparison with the other pastorals collected together in that celebration of the pastoral mode, Englands Helicon. At his best Breton has the lightness of touch and neatness of form and conceit of a minor Sidney; he resembles Sidney quite closely at times (for example in the latter's songs from Astrophil and Stella) and the compilers of manuscript miscellanies often confused his poems with those of Sidney.

There seems little indication of when he wrote most of these scattered lyrics, although those appearing in the Bowre were obviously written by 1591, and those in MS Rawl.Poet.85 perhaps before 1590. By 1592 Breton was publishing religious verse and from this date his printed works are chiefly religious or satirical. This seems to point to the middle and late 1580s as the time when Breton was writing his courtly and pastoral poems, even though some of these did not find their way into print until the 1590s (or 1600 in the case of Englands Helicon). The date

of 1596 on the flyleaf of the Cosens MS seems at least to indicate a date by which the manuscript was in existence, even if it has no direct relation with the date of the miscellany's compilation.

It may be, as Miss Tappan suggested,[1] that Breton was basically a religious poet, but particularly susceptible to current literary movements - that he wrote "Drab" verse in the 1570s; pastoral in the late 1580s and early 1590s; and satire when that came to be in vogue in the early seventeenth century. On the other hand, it seems to have been a common Elizabethan view that writing courtly and amorous verse was all very well for a young gentleman at one of the Universities or Inns of Court, or even for a young man wishing to make an impression in courtly or near-courtly circles. There came a time, however, when he would be expected to engage in more serious literary activity (such as moral or religious verse, or translation of the classics). This would seem to apply especially to the would-be professionals such as Gascoigne, Googe, Turbervile, who tended to publish (with excuses) one volume of what Miss Tappan called "vers de société" and then moved on to other genres, usually those which could more easily be defended from Puritan strictures against literature, or those which publishers preferred. It may be that Breton, who was married in January 1593 and had recently gained the patronage of the Countess of Pembroke, felt obliged to turn his hand to something more serious and "worthwhile" than his previous rather

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1. See "The Poetry of Nicholas Breton" in PMLA xiii (1898) p.300.

frivolous pursuits.

At all events, the Countess of Pembroke seems to have been impressed with his ability: one of the commendatory poems to The Pilgrimage to Paradise ends:

> Poets fly higher than such petty climers,
> Let this suffice, that Breton is a Poet,
> Shee saide it, we subscribe it, his bookes shew it.

Chapter Eleven

"So Speciall A Piller Of Nobilitie"

The Lyrics of FERDINANDO STANLEY, EARL OF DERBY

He whilest he liued was the noblest swaine,
That euer piped in an oaten quill:
Both did he other, which could pipe, maintaine,
And eke could pipe himselfe with passing skill.

Spenser: Colin Clout

In the list of singing shepherds at Cynthia's court in Spenser's Colin Clouts Come Home Againe (1595) occurs the passage:

> There also is (ah no, he is not now)
> But since I said he is, he quite is gone,
> Amyntas quite is gone and lies full low,
> Hauing his Amaryllis left to mone.
> Helpe, O ye shepheards helpe ye all in this,
> Helpe Amaryllis this her losse to mourne:
> Her losse is yours, your losse Amyntas is,
> Amyntas floure of shepheards pride forlorne:
> He whilest he liued was the noblest swaine,
> That euer piped in an oaten quill:
> Both did he other, which could pipe, maintaine,
> And eke could pipe himselfe with passing skill. (1)

In the subsequent discussion of the "Nymphs" in Cynthia's "retinew", Colin Clout gives some further information about Amaryllis:

> No lesse praisworthie are the sisters three,
> The honor of the noble familie:
> Of which I meanest boast my selfe to be,
> And most that vnto them I am so nie.
> Phyllis, Charillis, and sweet Amaryllis ... (2)

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1. See Spenser p.540, lines 432-442.

2. Ibid., p.541, lines 536-540.

From this it is apparent that Phyllis, Charillis and Amaryllis are ~~the~~ three daughters of Spenser's distant kinsman, Sir John Spencer of Althorpe: respectively ~~Anne, Lady Compton and Mounteagle; Elizabeth, Lady Carey~~ Elizabeth, Lady Carey; Anne, Lady Compton and Mounteagle; and Alice, Lady Derby.[1] Amyntas is therefore Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange and fifth Earl of Derby, who had died in April 1594.[2]

Lord Derby seems to have been born about 1559, for he matriculated at St. John's College, Oxford, aged twelve, in 1572, and seems to have been appearing at court two years later. During the 1580s he was his father's deputy as Lieutenant of Lancashire and Cheshire and in 1589 he was summoned to Parliament as Lord Strange. On his father's death in September 1593 he succeeded to the Earldom of Derby and the Sovereignty of the Isle of Man, only to die suddenly seven months later.

His mother, Margaret, daughter of the Earl of Cumberland, was considered by some the legal heir presumptive to the throne, for she was the granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister Mary. She was at one time regarded with some suspicion by Queen Elizabeth, and had, according to Camden, "a womanish curiosity" about the future and a reputation for "consulting with wizards".[3]

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1. They were all patrons, and Spenser dedicated one of his Complaints to each of them. More information about Lady Carey is given below, pp. 319 ff.

2. Biographical details are taken from the DNB, the Complete Peerage, and the Stanley Papers, ed. Chetham Society, vols. xxix and xxxi, 1853.

3. See the Complete Peerage, iv, p.211.

Catholic plotters planning to supplant the Queen seem to have considered Lord Derby as a claimant to the throne who would be sympathetic to their cause, but when the Jesuit Hesketh approached him, Derby would have nothing to do with the conspiracy, and informed the authorities. Hesketh was executed, and it was shortly after this that Derby fell ill and died. An effigy stuck with pins was found in his room, and there were rumours that he had been bewitched, or poisoned in revenge.[1]

Lord Derby's literary relationships are important but rather obscure, and it is, I think, worthwhile examining them here in some detail before proceeding to discuss Derby as a courtly poet. The Stanleys were not unlike the Careys in that they were powerful governing families, allied in blood to the Crown, who seem to have been generous patrons of letters. There are, in fact, several links between them (as will appear) the chief being that Ferdinando Stanley and Sir George Carey each married one of the Spencer sisters, and both families seem to have patronised writers such as Spenser and Nashe.

Derby and Carey have both been linked with the Earl of Northumberland in the so-called "School of Night",[2] for in dedicating his Σκὶα νυκτὸς. The Shadow of Night (1594) to Mathew Roydon, George Chapman wrote:

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1. There is a horrible description of his death in John Stow's The Annales of England - p.1275 in the 1601 edition.

2. See M.C. Bradbrook, The School of Night (Cambridge 1936) p.8.

> But I stay this spleene when I remember my good Mat. how ioyfully oftentimes you reported vnto me, that most ingenious Darbie, deepe searching Northumberland, and skill-imbracing heire of Hunsdon had most profitably entertained learning in themselues, to the vitall warmth of freezing science, & to the admirable luster of their true Nobilitie, whose high deseruing vertues may cause me hereafter strike that fire out of darknesse, which the brightest Day shall enuie for beautie. (1)

Though Northumberland and the mathematician Thomas Harriot were almost certainly involved in researches of some kind, there is little further evidence to link Derby and Sir George Carey (the "skill-imbracing heire of Hunsdon") with the group, except that Nashe dedicated his Terrors of the Night (1594) to Elizabeth Carey, Sir George's daughter. There has, however, been the suggestion that Lord Derby is in some way associated with his namesake King Ferdinand in Loves Labours Lost.[2] The connection between the play and the "School of Night" is still a matter of controversy[3] but Shakespeare does seem to have known of Chapman's poem (perhaps in manuscript)[4] and may glance at certain literary relationships in his play.

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1. Sig. [A2v]

2. See Janet Spens, "Notes on Loves Labours Lost", RES vii (1931) p.333.

3. See Frances Yates, A Study of Loves Labours Lost (Cambridge 1936); E.A. Strathmann, Sir Walter Ralegh, (New York 1951) p.262 ff.; R. David, Loves Labours Lost, New Arden edition, (1951) p.xlix ff.; J. Dover Wilson, Loves Labours Lost, New Cambridge edition, (1962) p.xi ff.

4. See Bradbrook, op. cit., p.127. There is, for example, a manuscript text of Chapman's poem in MS Harl.6910 f.75, following texts of Spenser's Complaints. The MS is however difficult to date, and may be later than the printed texts - see above, p.73.

Derby and Carey both played an important part in the growth of the Elizabethan theatre. At the age of seventeen, Lord Derby licensed a troupe of actors,[1] and by the 1590s Lord Strange's Men, with Edward Alleyn in the lead were acting plays by Marlowe (such as The Jew of Malta and The Massacre at Paris) and Shakespeare (Titus Andronicus and I Henry VI) at the Rose.[2] After Lord Derby's death in 1594, the troupe was for a time patronised by his widow[3] before passing to Henry Carey, first Lord Hunsdon, (and later to his son Sir George) becoming the Lord Chamberlain's Men, with Shakespeare as their principal playwright. Lord Derby was not the only member of his family with an interest in the theatre, for his younger brother William Stanley, who succeeded him as sixth Earl, also had a troupe of actors, and is, like his father-in-law the Earl of Oxford, a "claimant" for the authorship of the plays of Shakespeare.[4]

Lord Derby was praised extravagantly by several writers as being "the verie Paterne of right Nobilitie",[5] including Sir John Harington[6]

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1. See B.M. Ward, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, (1928) p.323.

2. See P. Alexander, Shakespeare (Oxford 1964) p.73 ff. and E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford 1923) ii, p.118 ff.

3. Like her sister Lady Carey, Lady Derby was a patron in her own right: she later married Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, and for her Milton wrote Arcades.

4. See Ward, op. cit., p.315 ff., and A. Lefranc, Sous le masque de William Shakespeare (Paris 1919) 2 vols.

5. Spenser, in dedicating The Teares of the Muses to Lady Strange.

6. See the notes to Book 32 of Orlando Furioso (1591) [Z4v].

and Richard Robinson.[1] Aspiring poets are urged by William Covell to mourn his death as "a true worthie obiect of euerlasting mourning for the Sacred Muses".[2] It is however with Thomas Nashe that Derby seems particularly to have been associated, though somewhat obscurely. Nashe dedicated The Choise of Valentines, "To the right Honorable the Lord S." in a sonnet beginning,

> Pardon sweete flower of matchless Poetrie,
> And fairest bud the red rose euer bare ... (3)

This seems to me to refer to Lord Strange, who descending from the Stanleys on his father's side and the Cliffords on his mother's, was certainly a "bud" of the red rose of Lancaster.[4] A more positive identification is to be found in Nashe's Pierce Penilesse His Supplication to the Diuell (1592), worth quoting in some detail:

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1. See "Verses pend vpon the Etimologie of the name of the right honorable, Fardinando, Lord Strange" in A Golden Mirrour (1589), ed. T. Corser, Chetham Soc. xxiii (1851) p.15.

2. Polimanteia (1595) [Q2]. See also M.G. and H.P.'s Epicedium in Obitum Illustrissimi Herois Henrici Comitis Derbeiensis (Oxford, 1593), and Robert Greene's dedication in Ciceronis Amor. Tullies Loue (1589).

3. See Nashe's Works, ed. McKerrow (reprinted Oxford 1966) vol.iii, p.403.

4. See the Stanleys and the Cliffords in the DNB and Complete Peerage, especially John, ninth Lord Clifford, a leader of the Lancastrians in 1460 (Lord Derby's great-great-great-grandfather).

> But from general fame, let me digres to my priuate experience, and with a toong vnworthy to name a name of such worthines, affectionatelie emblason to the eies that woonder, the matchlesse image of Honor, and magnificent rewarder of vertue, Ioues Eagle-borne Ganimed, thrice noble Amyntas ....
> ... none but Desert should sit in Fames grace, none but Hector be remembered in the chronicles of Prowesse, none but thou, most curteous Amyntas, be the second misticall argument of the knight of the Red-crosse.
> Oh decus atque aeui gloria summa tui.
> And heere (heauenlie Spencer) I am most highlie to accuse thee of forgetfulnes, that in that honourable catalogue of our English Heroes, which insueth the conclusion of thy famous Farie Queene, thou wouldst let so speciall a piller of Nobilitie passe vnsaluted ... (1)

Nashe goes on to suggest that Spenser intended "Amyntas" to be a dedicatee of the second part of The Faerie Queene, and prints his own laudatory sonnet,

> being wholie intended to the reuerence of this renouned Lord (to whom I owe all the vtmoste powers of my loue and dutie) ... (2)

That Amyntas is Lord Derby seems clear, for not only does Spenser use the name for him, but "Ioues Eagle-borne Ganimed" refers apparently to the Stanley crest of an eagle carrying off a child.[3] Derby could certainly be described as "thrice noble" for he held the titles of Lord Strange of Knockin, Lord Mohun of Dunster and Lord Stanley, as well as the Earldom of Derby and the Lordship of the Isle of Man.[4] By the time Spenser came

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1. Works, ed. cit. vol.i, p.243.
2. Ibid, p.244.
3. See Complete Peerage, iv, p.205.
4. Ibid., p.212.

to have the second part of The Faerie Queene printed, Derby was dead, and it was left to Colin Clout to make amends to his memory.

Lord Derby's influence on the literature of the period is thus well-documented, but Spenser's praise of him as a poet (and probably Nashe's description of Lord S. as "sweete flower of matchless Poetrie") has usually surprised literary historians, for no poetry of his could be discovered. He is, however, mentioned in the preface of Bel-vedere or the Garden of the Muses (1600) among the "noble personnages" from whose "poems and workes ... extant" the editor has chosen his quotations[1] - none of which are, unfortunately, assigned to their authors.

Then in 1780 a poem ascribed to "Ferdinando, Earl of Derby" was printed in Grose's Antiquarian Repertory;[2] it had appeared in a manuscript belonging to Dr. Johnson's friend and biographer Sir John Hawkins, whose valuable library was apparently destroyed by fire five years later.[3] The poem is given in Volume 2, p.275, though Hawkins gave no indication of the contents of the manuscript or of a possible date. It may perhaps be unfinished, or incomplete.

Since then, what appear to be two more of Lord Derby's poems have turned up in single texts in two of the manuscript miscellanies under

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1. The preface is lacking in the Bodleian copy (Douce B.51) and was omitted in the 1610 edition (Malone 401), but has been reprinted in Brydges' Censura Literaria, iii (1807) p.32.

2. Vol.iii, p.134.

3. See DNB.

consideration here. The first, "My mistress in her breast doth wear", in MS Rawl.Poet.85 f.76v, has been crossed out and part of the ascription worn away. I agree, however, with Professor Cummings's suggestion that Finnet apparently wrote "L: Strange".[1] A shortened version of this poem appears in Timothy Kendall's Flowers of epigrammes, out of sundrie most singular authors selected (1577), with the heading "Translated out of an Italian writer".[2] Kendall's work, as the title indicates, is a collection of "flowers" plucked from the best authors, and includes items by Surrey, Grimald, Elyot and Turberville.[3] Kendall matriculated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, in 1572[4] - the same year as Lord Derby at St. John's. I have not traced an Italian source for the poem.

The other poem has not, to my knowledge, been noted before: it is preserved in Cambridge MS Dd5.75 f.32v, where it is ascribed "ferd. Strange". It is perhaps relevant to recall in this connection that MS Dd5.75 appears to have been compiled by Henry Stanford, a retainer in the household of Derby's sister-in-law, Lady Elizabeth Carey, and so the ascription is likely to be correct. Stanford took his B.A. at Trinity College, Oxford, in 1570 and his M.A. in 1575,[5] so he would have been an

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1. See Cummings, p.567
2. [S2v]: See volume 2, p.273.
3. See C. Crawford's edition of Englands Parnassus (Oxford 1913) p.485; H.E. Rollins, "New facts about George Turberville" in MP xv (1918) p.130; H.B. Lathrop, "James Cornarius's Selecta Epigrammata Graeca and the early English epigrammatists" in MLN xliii (1928) p.226.
4. See Foster's Alumni Oxonienses.
5. Ibid.

Oxford contemporary of both Derby and Kendall.

Both "My mistress in her breast doth wear" and "A restless life by loss of that I love" were apparently copied out before Lord Strange acceded to the Earldom in 1593: in fact, the position of both texts in the miscellanies suggests a date of about 1588 for both.[1] But if the Oxford connection is relevant, the poems may actually have been written in the 1570s.

These three poems are no major achievement, but at least they give one a brief hearing of a minor voice that might otherwise have diappeared entirely. Between the three of them, they do, I think, give one a certain impression of Lord Derby's talents as a poet. "A restless life by loss of that I love" is the most conventional - a standard love complaint, kept, it would seem from the third stanza, deliberately dark so that the world can only guess the author's identity while his lady will understand the hidden message. This suggests that the very conventionality of a poem of this sort was intended and expected - part of the raison d'être of a courtly lyric.

The other two poems are both in the same ballad metre and show more individual touches, notably a fondness for nature imagery suggested by the apples, strawberries and cherries of the blason-like "My mistress in her breast doth wear" (though this may be due perhaps to the Italian source Kendall mentions), and shown more extensively in "There was a

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1. See above, pp. 39, 56.

shepherd that did live". The latter poem is long enough to give one a fairly extended example of Lord Derby's ability - a delicate pastoral tale of a young shepherd who decides to leave his flock and follow love instead. The poem rises in places to stanzas of neatly observed and well expressed detail in the best pastoral tradition.[1] It shows also a certain psychological insight and understanding of the shepherd - notably in the description of his awakening from his "restless dreams".[2] The poem is, in fact, far more subtle and polished than the two shorter lyrics, so that one might be doubtful of the ascription to Lord Derby from the difference in style. It is therefore unfortunate that more is not known about Hawkins's manuscript.

The author of the poem tends to overwork the device of holding back the narrative in order to make parenthetical comments, especially at the beginning.[3] This seems to have been a device popular among the writers of pastoral - Breton, for example, used it in the same way in "Fair in a morn, oh fair morn, was never morn so fair" and so does Lodge in poems such as "Phoebe sat, sweet she sat". It enables the poet to pass courtly comment in a way which qualifies the pastoral, but it tends at the same time to become rather patronising. Puttenham, who called this figure "the Insertour", considered that it was "no disgrace but rather a bewtie

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1. E.g. lines 49-52; 57-60; 93-96. (Volume 2, pp. 276-8).
2. Lines 121-132 (Volume 2, pp. 278-9).
3. E.g. lines 9-12 (Volume 2, p. 275).

and to very good purpose, but you must not vse such insertours often nor to thick, nor those that bee very long ..., for it will breede great confusion to haue the tale so much interrupted."[1]

Lord Derby seems to have been fond of commenting on the subject matter in his poems - defining love, for instance, with a sententiousness his contemporaries would undoubtedly have admired. In style he was not unaccomplished; his long poem is seldom awkward or lumbering, and his three poems all show a sense of form and neat expression. No doubt more of his lyrics lie unidentified in the miscellanies, and others may yet come to light. On the basis of these three poems, however, he seems to belong with the courtly lyricists of the late 1570s and early 1580s - with Dyer, Gorges and Lord Oxford, and the other minor figures in the shadow of the great Sidney.

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1. Puttenham, p.169.

PART THREE

POETRY AND THE EDUCATION OF A GENTLEMAN

Whearfore as I wold cownt them to lyght that wold wholly apply them selves to nothing but poetry, so I iudg them to stryct that wold have poetry excluded from a yowng mans studyes ...

Sir John Harington's translation of Virgil

Chapter Twelve

"Sweet Impes Of Early Hopes"

The Poems of WILLIAM PAGET

GEORGE BERKELEY

HENRY STANFORD

Sweet impes of early hopes whose smiling brow
Beckens the cincture of the laureate bough,
Whose lips seem made, to tast no other spring,
Than that by which the Thespian virgins sing.
Whose sprightly face, and active eyes descry
The Muses in a rising majesty:
You that without th' edition of a book,
Can make men read a Poet in your look;
Whose downy plumes with happy augurie,
Presage betimes, what the fledge soul will be.
For you (Ingenious spirits) thus I trie
To find a milkie way to Poesie ...

Joshua Poole, The English Parnassus

The more important manuscripts in the select group examined here are not simply collections of poems already in courtly circulation; they contain also poems written by the compilers themselves, or by friends of theirs. These more private poems are among the most interesting pieces in the miscellanies for they generally help to identify the compilers, and they often provide evidence which narrows down the dates when these manuscripts were compiled. They are complementary to the courtly poems in that they show the compilers being influenced by the poems they collected and the poetic fashions of the

time. They offer a good insight into the compilers' attitudes to poetry, the models they liked to imitate, the poetic forms they used, the subjects they chose to write about. They provide too an interesting commentary on the place of poetry in the life of a young gentleman, and, I believe, yield valuable evidence of poems in English being written by young Elizabethans in their teens, at various stages in their education.

MS Dd5.75 preserves more of these private poems than any of the other manuscripts (nearly 80 in all), of which a quarter seem to be the work of William Paget (later 4th Lord Paget) written between the ages of nine and fourteen; and another quarter the work of George Berkeley (later 8th Lord Berkeley) written between the ages of nine and thirteen. The remainder seem to be mostly the work of Henry Stanford, apparently a tutor or chaplain in the households of Anne, Lady Paget (between 1582 and 1587); Elizabeth Carey, Lady Hunsdon (between 1596 and 1597); and then her daughter Elizabeth, Lady Berkeley (between 1610 and 1613).[1]

The poems are nearly all complimentary and occasional, the majority being new year's gifts[2] (though some that appear to be Stanford's are translations, riddles and epitaphs) and a good many of them are dated. The poems of the two young noblemen are the only examples I have come

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1. See the Appendix to this chapter for a full discussion of these families.

2. On the practice of giving books as New Year's Gifts, see E.H. Miller, "New Year's Day Gift Books in the Sixteenth Century" in SB xv (1962) p.233.

across of quite extended English verses being written by children of such a young age.

The proper education of the nobility was a subject that interested many sixteenth century educational theorists.[1] Sir Thomas Elyot, whose Boke named the Gouernour (1531) was one of the first English guides to deal with the topic, suggests that at the age of seven a boy should have a tutor to ground him in Latin and Greek literature until the age of fourteen, when he should move on to a more advanced course like that provided by the Universities. A much more elaborate scheme of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's for an English academy to educate the royal wards and the nobility and gentry of the land was not put into practice, and by the end of the century Elyot's suggestions seem on the whole to have had widespread application: young noblemen tended to be educated at home until about the age of fourteen, when they were sent to Oxford or Cambridge and then perhaps one of the Inns of Court or Chancery.[2]

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1. See, for example, Elyot's Boke Named the Gouernour (1531); Hoby's Boke of the Courtier (1561); Sir N. Bacon's On Reform of the Court of Wards (1561); Laurence Humfrey's The Nobles (1563); Ascham's The Scholemaster (1570); Sir H. Gilbert's Queene Elizabethes Achademy (1572); S.R.'s The Court of Civill Courtesie (1577); Cyuile and Vncyuile life (1579); Pettie's The ciuile conuersation of M. Stephen Guazzo (1581); Mulcaster's Positions (1581); Bowes's The French Academie (1586); Jones's Il Nennio or a Treatise of Nobility (1595); Coote's The English Schoolmaster (1596); Vaughan's The Golden-groue (1600).

2. Joan Simon, Education and Society in Tudor England (Cambridge 1967) pp.292-3, 340 ff.; J. Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making (Philadelphia 1935) p.24.

Important families thus usually included in their household a tutor, who would often be the chaplain as well - perhaps a gentleman's younger son who was a University graduate and could earn a respectable living in this way.[1]

This seems to have been essentially the situation that existed in the Paget, Carey and Berkeley households as reflected in MS Dd5.75, though one cannot be certain of Henry Stanford's exact relationship with William Paget and George Berkeley: (the latter at the time of his association with Stanford seems to have been under the tuition of Dr. Philemon Holland, the translator of Camden).[2] Stanford however was an M.A. and former Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford (and so would presumably have been in orders). He was a younger son of a family related by marriage to the Pagets, with whom he had also Staffordshire connections.[3] His association with both William Paget and George Berkeley seems to have been when they were between the ages of nine and thirteen or fourteen, and both were afterwards sent to Christ Church, Oxford.

Of the sixteenth century theorists, Mulcaster in his Positions (1581) is the first to suggest that children should be taught to express

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1. Ruth Kelso, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century (Illinois 1929) p.55; L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy (Oxford 1965) p.683.

2. See Commentary below, p. 327.

3. Ibid, p. 305.

themselves well in English,[1] though he does not recommend any English literature, and it is really not until Peacham's Compleat Gentleman (1622) and Hoole's New Discovery of the old Art of Teaching School (written in 1640s) that one finds any suggestion that the English poets should be read and imitated.[2]

Children had, however, long been encouraged to write Latin and Greek verse - Elyot suggested that they should start by imitating Virgil and Homer[3] - and certainly by the early Elizabethan period, the writing of Latin and Greek verses seems to have been a regular part of the syllabus at most schools.[4] Brinsley, in his Ludus Literarius (1612) has a whole chapter on the writing of verses:

"Poetry bee rather for ornament then for any necessary vse ... it serueth very much for the sharpning of the wit and is a matter of high commendation, when a schollar is able to write a smooth and pure verse, and to comprehend a great deale of choise matter in a very little roome." It is to be used especially for "occasions of triumph and reioicing, more ordinarily at the funerals of some worthy personages ..." According to Brinsley "the making of a verse, is nothing but the turning of words forth of the Grammatical order, into the Rhetoricall, in some kinde of metre ..."[5]

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1. Chapter 5.
2. Peacham, chapter 10; Hoole, sig. [G8v].
3. Chapter 10.
4. Foster Watson, The English Grammar Schools in 1660 (Cambridge 1908) p.471.
5. sig. [2B4].

He recommends daily practice and the extempore versifying of "theams". Two Latin poems written by William Paget at the age of fourteen are preserved in the manuscript (26, 28).[1]

It may have been Stanford who encouraged William Paget and George Berkeley to write English verses. He was certainly interested in English poetry: he collected lyrics in manuscript circulation, bought printed books of poetry and wrote a number of poems himself. He was at least interested enough in the two boys' work to copy it into his manuscript, together with his own work.

On the other hand, one should not underestimate the possible influence of the families concerned: The Arte of English Poesie lists William Paget's uncle Henry, 2nd Lord Paget, as a courtly maker,[2] and William writes of his father Thomas, 3rd Lord Paget, as "the guider of my muse and verse" (14). The Carey family were well-known patrons of letters: Sir George Carey, 2nd Lord Hunsdon, was an important court figure - as Lord Chamberlain he was patron of Shakespeare's company of actors, and works were dedicated to him by writers such as Churchyard, John Dowland, Thomas Morley, William Warner.[3] Nashe stayed with the Careys in the Isle of Wight in 1593-4,[4] and Sir George is one of the

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1. These numbers refer to the poems as listed in the Commentary in the appendix to this chapter.

2. Puttenham p.61.

3. See F.B. Williams, Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses in English Books before 1641 (1962).

4. See C.G. Harlow, "Nashe's visit to the Isle of Wight" RES n.s. xiv (1963) p.225.

noblemen mentioned by Chapman in The Shadow of Night, who has been associated with the so-called "School of Night".[1] Lady Carey was also a patron: she was a distant relative of Spenser's (see 69) and according to Nashe, a poet herself (see the note on 43). Their only child, Elizabeth, who married Sir Thomas Berkeley and was George Berkeley's mother, was also a patron of letters (see note on 44), and seems to have encouraged the same interest in her son, for he writes of her: (72)

> By tutours paines you haue me taught, & made that I now rellish
> Castalian springes & Helicon which virtuous myndes embellish.

George Berkeley had literary connections on his father's side too, for his grandmother Katherine Lady Berkeley was the daughter of the poet Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. George seems to have kept up his interest in literature, for he was later to be a patron himself and dedicatee of a number of books, including Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy (1621), Webster's Dutchesse of Malfy (1623) and plays by Massinger and Shirley.

The Pagets, Careys and Berkeleys would surely have known a number of courtier poets: Ferdinando Stanley, Earl of Derby, was married to Lady Hunsdon's sister; Sir Arthur Gorges named William Paget as executor in his will, had married Daphne Howard (a relation of the Berkeleys), and had as godmother to his daughter Ambrosia, Elizabeth Carey, Lady Hunsdon.[2] The poems of both Lord Derby and Gorges must have been known to members

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1. See above, under Lord Derby, p. 275.

2. See Sandison, p. xxxvii.

of these families; it is surely no coincidence that Stanford's anthology of courtly lyrics is the only source outside Gorges's own manuscript to preserve copies of some of Gorges's lyrics,[1] and has also one of the very few texts ascribed to Lord Derby.[2]

It seems reasonable to suppose, then, that both William Paget and George Berkeley were brought up in literary surroundings - some of the poems in the manuscript allude, for example, to long winter evenings spent reading (46, 53). Their own verses, however, seem exercises in particular rhetorical techniques rather than poems written in imitation of contemporary models. The nature of the poems may partly account for this, as the verses are mainly new year's gifts and so tend to be stylised expressions of good will and service. If the boys were consciously following any models, they may have been poems by writers such as Turbervill/e and Breton.[3] The rhetorical elaborations are what give the poems of Will Paget their particular flavour, for in expanding his themes Will often chose examples from his own experience, and these have a freshness that is very appealing, and give an attractive insight into Elizabethan daily life.[4]

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1. ff.36, 38, 39.

2. f.32v.

3. See, for example, Breton's poem "This little toy to thee" in Toyes of an Idle Head (published with A Floorish vpon Fancie, 1582): in Grosart's edition, i, p.33.

4. E.g., poem 2 with its lists of people giving gifts.

Will's procedure seems to have been to take a theme which would then be rhetorically ornamented.[1] He probably collected lists of *exempla* with which to expand any given theme, as this was how rhetoric was usually taught. Both Brinsley and Hoole recommended that young children keep "a little paper-book, wherein to gather the more familiar phrases".[2] These commonplace books enabled the child "to haue references wherby to turn of a sodaine to matters of all sorts, in the most exquisite and pure Poets: to haue some direction both for matter and imitation" and were specially recommended for versifying.[3] Poem 13, for example, is really a versified list of examples elaborating the effects of Time. Poems making use of *exempla* in much the same way appear in collections like *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*.[4]

The conventional quality of a new year's gift must have made it difficult to find new ways of expressing love and good wishes. Will had various basic patterns of figures, usually accompanied by lists: I wish you as many joys as there are leaves on the trees, sands on the shore, stars in the sky, and so on;[5] if I cease to love you, let the following terrible things happen to me.[6] One of his favourite figures seems to have

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1. See poem 15, lines 5-6.
2. Hoole, *The Usher's Duty* (1659) [C3].
3. Brinsley, *Ludus Literarius* (1612) [2C2v]. See also Ruth Mohl's *John Milton and his Commonplace Book* (New York 1969).
4. E.g. those of Lord Oxford discussed above (p.182), and others by Richard Edwards and John Thorn.
5. Poems 1, 15, 19, 20.
6. Poems 1, 4, 10, 11.

been that of reversing the natural order of things - my love will last until fire freezes, water burns, mountains move, rivers return to their springs.[1]

While most of his examples are fairly conventional, at times his imagination seems to have been caught and he achieves a pleasing breadth of fancy and exaggeration, notably in the lists in poem 11. He has the ability too to express himself with a certain balance of phrase, as in the neat division of his life into four stages, in poem 10.[2]

His examples are wide ranging - they are drawn from nature, the elements, the weather, animals, birds, fish, rivers and the sea, ships, stars, flowers and the country, children, pictures, jewels, cloth, saints, heaven and hell. There is also a surprisingly wide range of classical reference - to figures like Croesus, Janus, Nestor, Hercules, gods and goddesses, and places like the Caucasus, Babylon, Olympus, Thrace, Hybla, Scythia, the Ganges and the Ister, Some local references are included too - the Thames, the Trent, "Poules". All this seems to indicate the extent of Will's tuition: for example, at the age of nine he writes of Homer and Cicero (see poem 2) - and one is reminded of the Latin and Greek authors recommended for elementary teaching at this time.[3]

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1. Poems 2, 9, 11, 14, 15, 21.

2. Lines 27-30.

3. See Foster Watson, "The Curriculum and Text-Books of English Schools in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century", in Trans. of the Bibliographical Soc. vi (1902) ii, p. 159.

Will Paget may not always have written his poems alone: in 1584/5 and 1585/6 another boy, described by Stanford as "fyrkyns the Ierkinmaker in St.Martyns" appears to have written new year's poems very like Will's, perhaps to the same people. At the new year 1585/6 Will wrote two poems, to his grandmother and his aunt (21, 22) and Firkins wrote two very close imitations of these, also to a grandmother and an aunt (23, 24). Both boys may perhaps have written their poems at the same time, in rivalry, or else Firkins imitated Will's poems. Will's two poems are his only experiments in metres other than poulter's measure: one in four-stress and the other in five-stress couplets. If one compares, for example, Will's poem to his aunt (22) with Firkins' companion piece(23), the latter follows exactly the same basic pattern, but expands Will's ideas in places.[1] Both poems are very similar to a poem by George Turbervile published in Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs and Sonets (1567), which may have been the boys' model.[2]

When one turns to the poems written by George Berkeley from 1609/10 to 1612/3, one notices a certain similarity: George's poems are, on the whole, much shorter than Will's, and addressed to a wider group of people, including members of the family and household, friends and servants (Will's had been addressed mainly to his grandmother, his aunts and cousins). George seems to imply at one point that his time for writing

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1. E.g. lines 3-4, 7-8, 21-2, 25-6 of poem 23.

2. See Volume 2, p. 314.

poems was limited,[1] and the shorter length of his new year's gifts makes them sometimes very slight - no more than a few lines of good wishes (like 59). At other times, however, he has a breadth of examples to draw on that compares with Will's, as in his list of national characteristics in 65, or in his country scenes of fruit and corn in 55. He too draws on his own experience, as in his attractive description of his childhood in 76. Like Will, he takes a theme which he uses as a basis for the poem - in 75, for instance, which is addressed to "Mrs Caue his mother wayting woman", the theme he takes is her name, warning her to "take hede".

George's references and allusions are almost as wide-ranging as Will's, and there are some stylistic links between the poems of the two boys. Will, for instance, mentions the image of the nurse feeding the baby with sugared pap in his first poem and again in 10; in 73 George uses the same image, and alludes to it also in 76. Similarly, Will in 15 uses the image of doves in towers, which George picks up in 61.

Some of these echoes may be the result of drawing on common (probably classical) sources - for example the story of the crow greeting Augustus, mentioned by Firkins in 18 and George in 64, which appears to originate in Pliny and Macrobius,[2] and is retold in an expanded form in Erasmus's

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1. Poem 60.

2. See Pliny's Naturalis Historia, bk.x, section 121; and Macrobius's Saturnalia, II, iv, 29.

Apophthegmata[1] - a work popular in the contemporary teaching of rhetoric.[2] Other echoes, however, are so close in phrasing that they would seem to indicate a borrowing or perhaps a derivation from Stanford. In one of his sonnets (51) Stanford writes of maps and counters in terms which repeat phrases from one of Will's poems (12).

But most of the examples probably come in the first place from some versifier's aid or florilegium owned by Stanford and used by him and the boys. There were many such rhetorical handbooks available at the time,[3] and not all were in Latin: for example the series of collections of extracts of prose and verse in English arranged under headings, associated with the name of John Bodenham and published between 1597 and 1600.[4]

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1. See Nicholas Udall's translation (1542) sig. [Ilv].

2. See W.G. Crane, Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance (New York 1937), chapter 2.

3. For example Erasmus's Adagia (1500), Similia (1513), Apophthegmata (1531) and translations by Taverner (1539) and Udall (1542); Baldwin and Palfreyman, A Treatise of Morall Phylosophie (1547 on); Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique (1553); Rainolde's Foundacion of Rhetorike (1563); Blage's Schole of Wise Conceytes (1569); Sandford's Garden of Pleasure (1573); Peacham's Garden of Eloquence (1577); Phiston's Welspring of Wittie Conceites (1584); Fraunce's Arcadian Rhetorike (1588). See also Crane, op. cit.

4. Politeuphuia: Wits Commonwealth (1597); Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury (1598); Wits Theater of the little World (1599); Englands Parnassus (1600); Bel-vedere or The Garden of the Muses (1600). Joshua Poole's aid to writing English verses, The English Parnassus, is later, published in 1657.

The poems of William Paget and George Berkeley amount to nearly half the occasional poems at the beginning of MS Dd5.75, and they are nearly all attributed or easily attributable to the boys. Of the remaining poems some are certainly the work of Henry Stanford (they are ascribed to "H.St." or "H.Stanford") and many of the remainder would appear to be his also. Stanford seems to have separated the section of the manuscript containing his own and the Paget/Carey/Berkeley poems from the larger part of the manuscript containing courtly lyrics and other poems in manuscript circulation. There is no indication that any of the poems in the occasional section of the miscellany are poems taken from manuscript circulation, except perhaps the last - a song headed "anonymous" and the only item in this section to be so described. The way in which the poems seem to be entered in a generally chronological sequence, the nature of these poems and the stylistic similarity all suggest that Stanford kept this part of the miscellany for occasional poems by himself or by members of the households with which he was associated.

The poems which do not appear to be the work of either William Paget or George Berkeley have, on the whole, a similarity of form, language, content which suggests very strongly that they are by Stanford. They fall into three loose groups which one may characterise as sonnets, riddles and epitaphs.

Of the eight sonnets, seven (44, 47, 51, 53, 59, 77, 78) are new year's gifts addressed for the most part to Elizabeth, Lady Hunsdon, and

her daughter Elizabeth, Lady Berkeley, and written in 1595/6-6/7 and 1609/10-12/13. They were all written to accompany gifts of books, most of which are identified in the text and which give one an interesting insight into Stanford's literary tastes. The eighth (70) is a commendation of Holland's translation of Camden.

The sonnet was often used for complimentary verse - Constable's complimentary sonnets have already been noted, and a large number of books printed from the last quarter of the sixteenth century onwards have commendatory verses in the form of sonnets (like 70). A sonnet rather similar to Stanford's new year's gifts is printed in A Poetical Rapsody (1602), headed "To a worthy Lord (now dead) vpon presenting him for a New-yeers-gift, with Caesar's Commentaries and Cornelius Tacitus".[1]

Stanford's sonnets are all of the same standard Shakespearean form of three quatrains and a final couplet; five are attributed to Stanford and the other three are so alike in form, language, subject and dedicatee that they are almost certainly his too. The earliest (44) has a rather pleasing stateliness of diction, and Stanford at times achieves a pithiness in his final couplet (78) or offers a sudden glimpse of himself - troubled by gout in 78. At times, however, his phrasing is very awkward (47, 51); to achieve his rhyme he often has to resort to inversions, or to padding out his line with words like "eke", "whilom", "erst". He likes too rather Drab alliterative phrases, such as "worthie wightes" and

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1. See Rollins's edition (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1931): poem 48 - probably by Francis Davison and perhaps addressed to Robert, Earl of Essex.

"pleasing profit". In later sonnets he experiments with double and triple rhymes: "pleasure/treasure" (70); "suitable/mutable" (77); "euer/perseuer, creation/contentation, show of price/sympathize" (78).

Stanford's interest in sonnets and his occasional awkwardness of phrasing suggests that he may have been the author of the translation of Petrarch's nineteenth sonnet (43). The Italian form of abbaabbacdecde has been altered to Stanford's typical form, and after the relative success of the first quatrain, the language becomes awkward and inverted.

It would seem that Stanford was interested in translations: not only does he copy a translation of Petrarch, but he has, too, seven translations of riddles by Straparola, probably translated from the French version.[1] Straparola was not published in an English version and Stanford may have translated the riddles himself, though they bear none of the corrections and alterations that appear in the Petrarch sonnet. The English versions (33-39) are quite close to the French, though sometimes the length or rhyme-scheme is changed. Such riddles were perhaps popular in the late sixteenth century: for example Humfrey Gifford's A Posie of Gilloflowers (1580) has a section of "Certaine Questions and Riddles ... translated out of Italian into English verse, by H.G." some of which are very like those in MS Dd5.75.[2]

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1. See Commentary below, p. 322.

2. See Grosart's edition (Miscellanies of the Fullers Worthies Library, 1870) p.164.

Stanford was certainly interested in riddles: in his anthology he copied large numbers of them.[1] The occasional section of the miscellany preserves also some genealogical riddles about curious family inter-relationships (8, 41, 42), one of which (8) has a number of alternative versions which suggest that Stanford may have been the author: certainly in form and language they could be his.

Stanford's fondness for riddles is perhaps shown also in the group of short simple quatrains written about everyday things, possibly as a sort of A.B.C. for a very young child (29). The form is straightforward and the content largely descriptive or with a simple moral precept. These short poems are not unlike the Epigrams in Martial's 13th and 14th Books, some of which were translated by Timothy Kendall in his Flowers of epigrammes (1577) in a form very similar to Stanford's.[2] Kendall has riddles too, including a group headed, like Stanford's, "Ænigmata".[3]

As well as this group of little poems, the miscellany also preserves a number of short poems scattered here and there - sometimes of good wishes (30, 31, 45, 46) and sometimes perhaps short English renderings of epigrams or lines from some classical author (48, 49, 50). Whether Stanford was the author of these one cannot really say, though they look like the sort of fragments an amateur poet might jot down in an odd corner

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1. Ff.46-63.
2. See Kendall, op. cit. sig. [C6v] for instance.
3. Sig. [S3].

of his book.

The problem of authorship occurs again with the two epitaphs - on Lady Lee and Thomas Tallis (16, 25). The evidence for Stanford's authorship of these is discussed in some detail in the Commentary; both were actually carved on the tombs of the people concerned, and are very similar in style, form and language; both are written to the same basic formula and use phrases common in Stanford's work. Perhaps he had a reputation for being able to produce verses for various occasions, and was specially commissioned to write these epitaphs.

If most of these poems are by Stanford (and I think the circumstantial and stylistic evidence would suggest that they are) then he emerges as a not incompetent versifyer, if a little staid in his verse forms and lumpish in his diction. He seems to have been something of a translator, and to have been able to produce verses to suit different occasions. His literary tastes were wide: in his miscellany he collected poems by leading courtiers such as Sidney, Ralegh, Gorges, and songs by writers like Bartholomew Yong. He gave to ladies of the Carey and Berkeley families as gift books not only classics - Ovid, Homer - and works of local history - Camden, Heywood - but also Spenser's Faerie Queene and probably Sylvester's Du Bartas.[1] Yet in spite of this, his own poems seem to have been largely unaffected by changing literary tastes and fashions, and remain rather early Elizabethan in quality.

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1. See Commentary below for details of these.

He did however start writing sonnets in the mid 1590s - and was still writing them in 1613. He was not really influenced by his reading and the poems he collected, and seems to have remained largely rooted in the poetic styles of his youth and Oxford in the 1570s. What he liked particularly were poems full of classical exempla and suitable moral concern, and riddles and apophthegms. His tastes, in fact, are rather like those of his contemporary Thomas Whythorne, whose background and social status were similar to Stanford's.[1]

It may have been Stanford's influence that led young George Berkeley, writing twenty years later than Will Paget, to produce substantially the same sort of poems that Will had produced - mainly in poulter's measure and not unlike the work of Googe, Turbervile and Breton in the 1560s and 1570s. This suggests that to Stanford and the two boys, poetry of this sort was a social grace, a medium for compliment and the expression of feelings appropriate to particular social occasions, to be written according to convention, with suitable rhetorical flourishes; it bears little relation to the literature current at the time. Thus the great change that English poetry went through between 1580 and 1610 left little mark on this poetry of social gesture.

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1. See The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne, ed. J. Osborn (Oxford 1961).

Appendix

A COMMENTARY on MS Cambridge Dd5.75

The Complimentary Poems

MS Cambridge Dd5.75 is the personal anthology of Henry Stanford, fourth son of Sir William Stanford of Hadley (Middlesex).[1] The Stanfords came originally from Rowley, Staffordshire; Henry's grandfather was a second son and moved to London as a mercer, and his second son, Sir William, (1509-1558) was educated at Oxford and Lincoln's Inn, and went on to a very successful legal career. A zealous Roman Catholic, he was knighted in 1554 and made a Judge of the Common Pleas, and was the author of two popular legal books, Les plees del Coron (1557) and An exposicion of the kinges prerogatiue (1567).[2] He acquired the manor of Hadley, where he had been born, and was also able to buy the manors of Handsworth and Perry in Staffordshire. Perry (or Pyrie) Hall became the family's Staffordshire seat, and Sir William also acquired an interest in his cousin's manors Packington and Rowley, in the same county.

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1. Details of the family of Stanford (Stamford/Staunford) will be found in: Shaw's History and Antiquities of Staffordshire, ii (1801) pp.26, 108-113; Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica, n.s. iii (1880) p.73; Staffordshire Pedigrees, Harl. Soc. lxiii (1912) p.216; Middlesex Pedigrees, Harl. Soc. lxv (1914), p.68; A Visitation of Staffordshire, William Salt Soc., iii, (1883) part 2, p.134; Lysons, The Environs of London, Middlesex, i (1795) p.525.
See family tree, Volume 2, p. 6.

2. See S.T.C. 23213-23224.

Packington belonged to the Pagets of Beaudesert, with whom the Stanfords were connected, for Sir William had married Alice Palmer of Kentish Town, whose eldest brother, Jerome Palmer, had married Eleanor, fourth daughter of William, first Lord Paget.[1]

Henry Stanford was a scholar of Trinity College, Oxford, taking his B.A. on October 23rd 1570 and his M.A. on May 14th 1575.[2] On May 19th 1573 he had been made a Fellow of the College and kept this post until 1581,[3] when he seems to have joined the Paget household, perhaps as some sort of tutor to William, only child of Thomas, third Lord Paget.

The Pagets, like the Stanfords, were a Catholic family who had risen to high office in the first part of the sixteenth century.[4] Sir William Paget (1505-1563) had been a trusted councillor to Henry VIII and Protector Somerset, and was highly regarded by King Philip. He was made a Knight of the Garter in 1547, acquired the property in Staffordshire which was to become his family seat, and in 1549 was created Lord Paget of Beaudesert. But he was not popular: other courtiers frequently complained of his low birth, and managed in 1552 to have him degraded

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1. See Harl. Soc. lxv, p.48.
2. See Foster's Alumni Oxonienses.
3. Unpublished records in Trinity College, Oxford.
4. For the Paget family, see the D.N.B.; The Complete Peerage; Shaw's History and Antiquities of Staffordshire, i (1798) pp.211-6; Visitation of Staffordshire, William Salt Soc., iii (1882) p.122; Lysons, Middlesex Parishes (1800) pp.33-40; E.C. Paget, Memoir of the Hon. Sir Charles Paget (1913).

from the Garter for this reason. At the end of Mary's reign, however, he was a Councillor and Lord Privy Seal.

In 1530 he had married Anne Preston from Lancashire, and they had four sons and six daughters.[1] Lord William was succeeded by his eldest son, Henry, who is mentioned in The Arte of English Poesie as a "courtly maker", and who died in 1568. His widow, Katherine, daughter of Sir Henry Knyvet, then married Sir Edward Carey of Aldenham, by whom she had nine children. Henry's brother Thomas succeeded as third Lord Paget; he was married to Nazareth Newton, widow of Thomas Southwell of Wood Rising, and they had one child, William, later fourth Lord Paget, born probably December 18th 1572.[2]

Lord Thomas and his wife fell out, and by March 1581/2 a separation had been arranged. In a letter to Lord Burghley, who seems to have helped draw up the articles of separation, Lord Paget gives the impression that his domestic situation at this time was not pleasant: "This artyculatinge neade not but that it pleaseth her [his wife] to vse it for a delay, for if she could tell what wold please herself this busines were sone at ende, euery day she commeth in with one newe demande or other & resolueth vppon nothinge; yet wyll I be euer reddye to doe what I should ..."[3]

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1. See family tree in Volume 2, p.7.

2. See below, poem 20.

3. R.M. MS Lansdowne 34 f.17, dated 21st March 1581/2.

It is against this background that the manuscript opens: after his parents' separation young William (who unlike his father and uncles was brought up a Protestant) was cared for by his grandmother Anne, widow of the first Lord Paget. Since her husband's death Lady Paget had lived at West Drayton, the family's house in Middlesex, and it may have been here that William Paget and Henry Stanford were staying over the new year of 1581/2, perhaps while the separation was being arranged. Certainly at the beginning of the manuscript, which seems to be 1581/2, Stanford has copied four poems written by William (who was just nine) to four ladies, including his grandmother and a young kinswoman.

The great majority of the complimentary poems that make up this section of the miscellany are new year's gifts, and most of them are dated.[1] This makes it clear that the entries are in chronological order, so that an undated poem is usually flanked by dated poems, and its dating can thus be inferred. Most of the early poems in the manuscript have at the end a number which in each case corresponds with the number of lines in the poem. This is significant because it helps to indicate that one of the leaves of the manuscript is out of place. The complimentary poems take up folios 1-20v of the book, and then two more appear on folios 57-57v; the manuscript was recently rebound, but before this the collation was apparently: $1^{10}2^{6}3\text{-}5^{8}6^{6}7^{12}$(wants 12)$8^{6}$. It is clear from

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1. Although the year did not change until March 25th, New Year's Day was celebrated as January 1st - see A.F. Pollard, "New Year's Day and Leap Year in English History", English History Review lv (1940) p.177.

this that the seventh gathering has been disturbed, and the last leaf present (7_{11}) is f.57. Furthermore, ff.58-62 are blank. F.57 has a poem headed "1581. A new yeres gift" which seems to be unfinished, and f.57v a short poem also a new year's gift, from "yong wilkin". F.1 of the miscellany starts with a poem which seems to lack its beginning, and has the number "68" at the end, although there are only 28 lines in the poem. If however, one were to consider the poem on f.57 as the beginning of one poem and f.1 as the continuation of the same poem, there would be no break in the sense, and the poem would have 68 lines. It seems to me that f.57v is thus really the first page of the manuscript (it has in the top right-hand corner a curious group of markings which look like old library catalogue numbers); f.57 is thus the verso of the first page, and f.1 the second page.

The first four entries are thus as follows, and they all seem to be written at the new year 1581/2 by William Paget:

* 1: Yf Momus wish had taken place, that to eche mortall mynd
[f.57v, 28 lines; headed "a new yeres gift" and subscribed "28". From "yong wilkin" to "your ladiship"; undated.]

* 2: The tyme is ronne about & Phebus golden sphere
[ff.57 & 1, 68 lines; headed "1581. A newyeres gift" and subscribed "68". From "Your little sonne Will Paget" to "my Grandam dear" (Anne, Lady Paget). Lines 13-14 contain an interesting contemporary reference to Alençon's visit. Line 51 mentions the river Trent, which flows past the Paget's Staffordshire estates at Beaudesert.]

3: A glove I do present in signe of mindfull mynd
[f.1v, 36 lines; headed "1581. A new yeres gift" and subscribed "36". From a "frend ... & kinsman" to a lady of "yong tender yeres", with the gift of a glove.]

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* Entries marked by an asterisk are transcribed in Volume 2.

4: The face they say a picture is, of mynd which lurkes within
[f.2, 32 lines; headed "1581. A new yeares gift" and subscribed "32". From "one which a favrer is, of rare good giftes of thine" to a young lady.

There follow four poems which are undated and bear few signs of authorship. Two are complimentary poems in praise of ladies, one is about flowers, and one a riddle with its answer and some alternative versions. The first two look as if they could be the work of William Paget - the style is not dissimilar to poems that are certainly his - though they could be by Stanford, whom I should guess to be the author of the riddle. All four poems probably belong to 1582:

⁂ 5: Althoughe thou art not sprong of princes as I hear
[f.2v, 15 lines; a compliment to a young lady.]

⁂ 6: The marigold all flowers doth passe in glittering glorious hew
[f.2v, 22 lines; a poem in praise of the marigold above all other flowers.]

7: So fair a creature never I, with eyes of myne haue sene
[f.3, 18 lines; a number of quatrains and couplets in praise of a lady. Perhaps unfinished?]

⁂ 8: Fayr courteous dame I the besech this question to vnfold
[f.3, 32 lines; "question" with "Answere" and "resolution". f.3v has diagram and two six-line stanzas which appear to be alternative versions of the "Answere". A riddle about a knight who has had three wives and whose family is a curious tangle of inter-relationships. Such intermarriages were not uncommon at this period - George, eighth Lord Berkeley, married his step-grandmother's neice (see below).]

The next four poems are new year's gifts from Will Paget to his grandmother, his aunt, two young cousins, and a young lady who is about to marry a kinsman of his, all dated 1582/3, when Will was ten. The identity of Will's cousins and aunts is not easily determined. At the time of Robert Glover's Visitation of Staffordshire in July 1583,[1] Will seems to have had at least six aunts still living:[2] of the six daughters of William, first Lord Paget, Ethelred, Lady Allen, had six sons and five daughters in 1583; Joan, Lady Kitson, had no children; Anne, Lady Lee (whose two sons had died young) had only a daughter; Eleanor had already two daughters by her second husband Sir Rousland Clerk, as well as a daughter from her first marriage to Stanford's uncle; Dorothy, Lady Willoughby, was dead; and Grisild, Lady Waldegrave, had only a daughter by her first marriage to Sir Thomas Rivet. In addition, Will's aunt Katherine, widow of Henry, second Lord Paget, was now married to Sir Edward Carey, and had three sons and six daughters (the eldest of whom, Elizabeth, was to be married in 1586, and the youngest, Anne, not born until 1585).[3]

There are several poems from Will addressed to "my aunt" and numerous poems addressed to young kinswomen and female cousins, but more exact identification is difficult. It is also uncertain how close a relationship is implied by the terms "cousin" and "kinsman" - they could

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1. See William Salt Soc. vol. 3 (1882) p.122.
2. See Family Tree in Volume 2, p.8.
3. See The Herald and Genealogist vol. 3 (1866) p.43.

include, for example, members of the Palmer family, through whom the Pagets and the Stanfords were related.

* 9: In sign that phebus now: his course & race hath ronne
[f.4, 38 lines; headed "1582. A new yeres gift" and subscribed "38". From "your nephew" to "my ... Aunt ... sister to my sire", with whom he has passed "the halfe of all my life". This may refer to Anne, Lady Lee, who often seems to have been staying with her mother at West Drayton - see below. The poem shows considerable correction and alteration of phrasing. Lines 9-10 may contain an allusion to the Paget seat and arms for the Paget crest was a tiger's head, and the family's Staffordshire estates were at Beaudesert.]

* 10: by newyeres gift to seperate, you twayne which so are knit
[f.4v, 48 lines; headed "1582" and subscribed "48". From "your Cosyn" to two young sisters.]

* 11: When men to catche the fleting fish shall angle in the ayre
[f.5, 62 lines; headed "1582" and subscribed "62". From "your little sonne" to "dear Grandame".]

* 12: A little map may represent the earth & eke the skies
[f.6, 16 lines; headed "anno 1582" and subscribed "16". To a young lady about to be married to a kinsman of Will's (see line 15).]

During 1583 two things happened to darken life in the Paget household: on April 16th Will's mother died in London,[1] and then in the wake of the Throckmorton conspiracy, Will's father, Lord Thomas, left the court on November 23rd, apparently to go to West Drayton, but in fact to cross to France with Sir Charles Arundel, and to join his brother Charles Paget in Paris.[2] From here on December 2nd he wrote three letters:[3] to

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1. See Complete Peerage.
2. See L. Hicks, An Elizabethan Problem (1964) p.33.
3. See P.R.O. SP/12 vol.164, item 5.

Burghley, saying that he had left without permission but hoping the Queen would not be too angry - he wanted a spell on the Continent because of his gout, and for freedom of conscience. To his mother at West Drayton he wrote, "But if yow wyll well way with yourself the disgrace I lyued in at home & the maner of lyfe that I haue ledd for these iij yeares, I trust your L. wyll not myslyk this course that I haue taken in hand ..." He has done this "after a longe tyme & deliberation", for his "securytie" and so that he might have "the free excersyce of my relègion". To her he intrusted Will - "Good Madame loue Wyll styll, I haue appointed him to remayn with yow as here after when I shalbe dryuen to open myne Estate it shall appeare. let him lerne to pray & serue god every day more & more, for that is the chefist lerninge ..." In the third letter, to his "syster lee" also at West Drayton, he gave instructions for some servants to be paid off and hoped others will be allowed to follow him to France. He added "I pray yow tak care of wyll ..."

It seems that to start with the authorities did not look upon Lord Paget's departure in too serious a light - he was told to return, and it was only in 1586/7 that he was attainted and forfeited his barony and estates. The effect on his family was however one of gloom. On January 29th 1583/4, Anne Lady Lee, who was staying with her mother at "Drayton", wrote to her brother Charles Paget in Paris: "youe knowe my malyngcholy nature well inowgh/ and beinge dayly opressed with greifes and trowbles and wantynge the good and comfortable company of them whiche I was wont to have youe may easely gesse how hardly I dryve forthe the tyme here for

now we live alone and almost ther is none that ether dareth come to vs or loke apon vs/ of the course that hathe byn here kept agaynst my brother I am suer youe can not but here longe syns ..." She added "my lady is in helth and I thanke god hathe passed over thes trowbles a greate deale better then I loked for / my nephew William withe all the rest here are in helth & my nece collis delyvered of a gerle longe sins..."[1]

Will's reaction appears in the next three poems in the miscellany, written at the new year 1583/4, when he was eleven:

* 13: In tyme the vnruly Steere is made to draw the heavy plow
[f.6, 32 lines; headed "anno 1583 Calendis Ianuarii" and subscribed "32". To "Madame" wishing that "god ease your grief"; his mind is "out of tune not apt in verse t'endight".]

* 14: Myn Alderleivest lady deere whom nature hath decreed
[f.6v, 42 lines; headed "anno 1583 Calendis Ianuarii" and subscribed "42". To his "Dere Grandame", "to whom the part of parentes now cross fortune hath assigned". He misses his father who first encouraged him to write verses, (see lines 9-14). Lines 27-8 apparently refer to the "gerle" born "longe sins" to Lady Lee's "nece collis" - i.e. Mary, daughter of Lady Lee's sister Eleanor by her first husband Jerome Palmer (and thus a first cousin to both Henry Stanford and Will Paget). She married William Coles of Lye.]

* 15: A paper I do send as Herault of my hart
[f.7, 34 lines; headed "anno 1583. Calendis Ianuarii" and subscribed "34". To a "cosyn" who will probably soon be married.]

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1. See P.R.O. SP/12 vol.167, item 51; also Chambers, Sir Henry Lee (Oxford 1936) p.77.

Lady Lee may have had more than one reason for being "malyngcholy" at this time, for her last surviving child, Mary, apparently died some time in 1583. Sir Henry Lee now had no heirs, and it seems to have been at this time that he arranged for his wife's monument to be made - it can still be seen in the Aylesbury parish church, and has two kneeling women, two infants, the Lee and Paget arms, the date 1584 and a twenty-line verse inscription indicating that the tomb bears the bodies of Lady Lee and her three children. Lady Lee did not die until December 1590, but her tomb was apparently ready in the vaults of the church in 1586, when the body of Mary Lee was transferred there (presumably from the church at Quarrendon, the Lees' seat).[1]

Curiously enough the verse inscription appearing on the tomb is preserved in the manuscript immediately following Will Paget's poems for the new year 1583/4:

* 16: Yf passing by this place thou doe desire
[f.7v, 28 lines (4 perhaps deleted); headed "epigramma sepulchrae dnae Lee incisū" and subscribed "24". The entry has several corrections and alternative wordings, and a comparison with the inscription on the tomb shows that most of the corrections were not followed, and that the fifth and sixth stanzas (which appear in the MS to be alternatives) were both discarded. This seems to suggest that Stanford was himself the author of the inscription, and that it was perhaps composed at the new year 1583/4, when Lady Lee was at West Drayton.]

* 17: The virtuous Lady Lee Sir Henry Lee his wife
[f.7v, 8 lines; another, shorter, epitaph on Lady Lee, perhaps also by Stanford. Marginal note, "Lillye".]

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1. See Chambers, Sir Henry Lee (Oxford 1936) p.77.

The poems for the new year 1584/5 include the first of three poems in the manuscript which are ascribed to "fyrkyns the Ierkinmaker in St. Martyns". Most of these poems seem to be imitations of Will's poems, and Firkins is apparently "a lad" - perhaps he was a young member of the household or a friend of Will's.

* 18: The earth no worse a monster bredes
[f.8, 100 lines; headed "Anno 1584 Calendis Ianuarii" and ascribed "qd fyrkyns the Ierkinmaker in St Martyns". Addressed to "Madame" from one who is "but a lad".]

19: Sweet Cosin thoughe I want som gift fit for this tyme & tyde
[f.9v, 32 lines; headed "anno 1584 Calendis Ianuarii". From Will to his cousin and "thie little mopsie maydes". He wishes "that husband maye the promise keepe made when he did the wed and that no iarre betwixt you fall when ye are coucht in bed" - perhaps a reminder of the unhappiness between Will's parents; in a letter to Burghley, Will's father had once said that a separation would be "lesse yll than ... lyvinge together with continyall Iarres". (1)]

20: Sith that the sonne his yearly course hath brought vnto an end
[f.10, 28 lines; headed "Gulielmi Pagetti versiculi quos ex suo cerebro depromptos Aviae officii & aīj testificandi causa obtulit Calendis Ianuarij anno dm̄i 1584. annos natus 12 dies 14." From Will to his "Deere Grandame" wishing her "in this world redresse of grief". The heading helps to pin down the day of Will's birth.]

At the beginning of December 1585, Anne Lady Paget of West Drayton made her will.[2] Her main concern was for the welfare of her grandson Will, whom she entrusted to the care of Sir William Waldegrave, and his wife, Lady Paget's daughter Grisild. She made bequests to her daughter Lady Lee,

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1. See B.M. Lansdowne MS 34 f.17. ~~in the B.M.~~

2. P.C.C. 32 Rutland.

to her grand-daughter Mary Coles (whose mother, Lady Paget's daughter Eleanor, is now described as "deceased"), and to various other grand-children, godchildren and servants.[1] The will includes a very detailed inventory of Lady Paget's belongings.

In the new year 1585/6, Will, now thirteen, wrote poems to both his grandmother and his aunt, and both are imitated in companion pieces apparently written by young Firkins at the same time, also to a grandmother and an aunt (perhaps addressing the same people):

21: When turtle shall haue many a make
[f.10v, 30 lines; headed "anno 1585 - calendis Ianuarii". To "deere grandame", probably from Will.]

* 22: In yong & tender aege. in youthfull yeares
[f.11, 24 lines; headed "anno 1585 Calendis Ianuarii". To his "good Aunt" (? Lady Lee), probably from Will.]

* 23: In greene & childish aege in lustie years
[f.11v, 28 lines; headed "anno 1585 Calendis Ianuarii" and ascribed "qd firkins". Also addressed to "good Aunt" - a close imitation of 22.]

24: When turtle shall forsake his make
[f.12, 38 lines; headed "anno 1585 calendis Ianuarii" and ascribed "qd firkins". Addressed to "dere Grandame" - a close imitation of 21.]

Immediately following the new year poems for 1585/6 is another verse epitaph, rather like that on Lady Lee (16) commemorating the death of the musician Thomas Tallis. Tallis died on November 23rd 1585, when the court was at Greenwich, and was buried there, in the chancel of St.

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1. There is, however, no mention of Stanford.

Alphege's Church.[1] His wife Joan lived on in Greenwich until 1589, when she was buried in her husband's tomb.

Over a century later, St. Alphege's "having become very ruinous by length of time, the roof fell in on the 28th of November 1710, about midnight",[2] and by 1718 a new church had been built. Tallis's tomb is now marked by a Victorian inscription but in the old church there had been "a Stone before the Rails, having a Brass Plate ... inscribed in old letters" with a verse epitaph, which was recorded by Strype in his Perambulation or Circuit-walk[3] and turns out to be the same as that preserved in the manuscript (though Strype misread the name as "Gallys").

The poem is very similar to that on Lady Lee, and it seems possible that if Stanford wrote the earlier epitaph, he may well have written this one also. It is dated 1585 and so must have been copied soon after Tallis's death:

* 25: Entombed her doth lie a worthie wight
[f.12v, 20 lines; headed "1585 Carmen sepulchro Thomae Tallis in re musica peritissimi incisū" and subscribed "Decembris Die". Stanford was fond of music - many of the poems he copied in his anthology are songs.]

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1. See D.N.B.; Lysons' Environs of London vol.4 (1796) p.465-7; The Musical Times, 1 Nov. 1876, p.649.

2. Lysons, op. cit. p.465.

3. See Strype's continuation of Stow's Survey, vol.2 (1720), p.91.

By the new year 1586/7, Will Paget, now fourteen, was learned enough to send his grandmother two Latin poems, one with a sprinkling of Greek words in it, and the other accompanied by a translation into English verse:

26: Laeticia afficior mihi ter gratissima mater
[f.13, 20 lines Latin; headed "anno 1586 in Auspicū novi anni Aviae suae officii ergo Gulielmi Pagetti carmen".]

27: My Grandame dere I do reioice
[f.13, 44 lines; headed "The same in english". Will to his grandmother, rejoicing "that you recovered are | of former sicknes which from vs | all comfort did debarre".]

28: Maximus olim
[f.13, 71 short lines Latin; headed "Amitae chariss. in auspicū novi anni Guliel. Pag. carmen dmie trū".]

Will's pleasure at his grandmother's recovery was not to last very long: in February 1586/7 she died, and on February 27th, Will was made a ward of Sir George Carey, and sent to the Isle of Wight where Sir George was Captain-General.[1] After the summer he went up to Christ Church, Oxford, where he took his B.A. in February 1589/90. After the new year of 1586/7, however, he passes from the manuscript.

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1. See Complete Peerage .

At this point there is a time gap in the miscellany, and the next poem dated is a new year's gift for 1595/6 addressed to "Mrs. Elizabeth Carey". What may have happened is that Stanford followed Will Paget into the household of Sir George Carey, later second Lord Hunsdon. Certainly, the mid 1590s, he seems to have been in the service of Elizabeth Carey, Sir George's only child.

The Careys in the sixteenth century were a family of powerful and rising courtiers[1] (as opposed to the Pagets who flowered briefly in the earlier part of the century and then faded from the corridors of power through their religious convictions). They came from an old Devonshire family, and by the 1580s several branches were established in positions of influence. There were two main groups of Careys - the descendants of Sir John of Hackney and Essex; and the descendants of William, Esquire of the Body to Henry VIII. Sir John's children were Sir Wymond of Hackney and Snettisham, and his younger brother Sir Edward of Aldenham, later Master of the Jewel House, who, it will be remembered, had married Katherine, widow of Henry, second Lord Paget.[2]

Descended from William Cary, Esquire of the Body to Henry VIII, (who had married Mary Boleyn, Anne's sister) was Sir Henry, first Lord Hunsdon

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1. For the Carey/Cary family, see: the D.N.B.; The Complete Peerage; Visitation of Herffordshire, Harl. Soc.xxii (1886) pp.134-7; Nichols, Herald and Genealogist, iii (1866) pp. 33-43, 129-130; iv (1867) pp. 42-6, 136; vii (1873) pp.19-26; V.C.H. Hertfordshire iii, p.328; V.C.H. Hampshire v, p.224.
   See family trees in Volume 2, p.9.

2. From Sir Edward Carey were descended the Viscounts Falkland.

(and first cousin to the Queen). His sons were Sir George, second Lord Hunsdon (to whom Will Paget was sent in 1587); Sir John, third Lord Hunsdon; Sir Edmond; and Sir Robert, later Earl of Monmouth. There were also three daughters, Philadelphia, married to Thomas Lord Scrope; Margaret, married to Sir Edward Hoby;[1] Catherine, married to Charles Howard, Lord Admiral and first Earl of Nottingham.

Henry Carey, first Lord Hunsdon, who had been Warden of the Northern Marches, Governor of Berwick, Lord Chamberlain of the Household and Captain of the Pensioners, died at Somerset House in July 1596 and his eldest son Sir George was recalled from the Isle of Wight to take over these offices. Sir George was married to Elizabeth, second daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorpe, a keen patroness of literature and a distant relation of the poet Spenser.[2] Their only child was Elizabeth, born in June 1576.

Henry Stanford had another possible connection with the Careys apart from his association with Will Paget. His twin sister, Margaret, had married Richard Astley of Hill Morton, an official in the Queen's Jewel House. Richard's eldest brother, John Astley, was Master and Treasurer of the Jewels and Plate until 1589, when he surrendered the post to Sir Edward Cary of Aldenham (who held it until his death in 1618).[3] The

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1. He kept a commonplace book which includes some courtly lyrics - now B.M. Add.MS 38823.

2. See Lady Elizabeth Carey in DNB.

3. See PRO, records of the Jewel House: LC/5 vol.107, item 1.

Stanfords were also distantly connected with the Careys through the Carews, another Devonshire family, related to the Careys by marriage.[1] After his father's death, Stanford's mother had married Roger Carew Esq., of Hadley, and they had one son, Henry, born c.1565.[2]

The first appearance of the name Carey in the manuscript follows immediately the last poems of Will Paget, in a series of short quatrains apparently written for a child, on various objects in a room. One of these mentions "Robin Carey", and the only member of the Carey family who was a child at the time, that I have been able to trace, is Robert, eldest son of Sir George Carey's younger brother, Sir Edmond Carey of Culham, Esquire of the Body to the Queen. This Robert was baptised at Hunsdon on March 21st 1582/3,[3] and so would have been four when Will Paget was made a ward of Sir George Carey. He would thus have been about the right age for simple poems of this sort which have something of the ring of an A.B.C. about them. By March 1599, he was ready to go up to Christ Church, Oxford.[4]

* 29: This a.b.c. you do read
[f.14, 11 quatrains; probably written by Stanford for young Robert Carey - see lines on a bed.]

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1. The Carews/Carows ought not to be confused with the Carys/Careys: the Carew arms were "Or, three lions passant in pale, sable", and the Carey arms "Argent, upon a bend sable three roses of the field". See Herald and Genealogist, vii (1873) pp.19-26.

2. See Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica, n.s. iii (1880) p.73.

3. See Herald and Genealogist, iv (1867) p.42.

4. See Foster's Alumni Oxonienses.

30: As new yeares gift this booke I send
[f.14, 4 lines, undated.]

31: In signe of this new year
[f.14, 4 lines, undated.]

32: Long time mans becke for to obey
[f.14, 8 lines on the passing of time; undated.]

At this point in the manuscript, Henry Stanford's interest in literature begins to appear; his short poems for Robert Carey mention an A.B.C. (of which there were versions published in 1538, 1545, 1562), and Ovid's Metamorphosis (Latin editions published in England in 1548 and 1589, and Golding's translation in 1565, 1567, 1584, 1587, 1593).

The next entries consist of eight riddling poems, headed "Ænigmata in francisco Strapparola", six of which have answers in French. They are English translations of verse riddles which appear in G.F. Straparola's Notti, first published in Italian in the early 1550s. These Notti are a collection of stories told by a group of young ladies and gentlemen on a series of nights, each story culminating in a riddle. Straparola was not translated into English, and Stanford seems to have known his work through a French translation - probably that of Jean Louveau, published in 1560 and again in 1596, as Les Facecieuses Nuicts du Seigneur Iean François Straparole.[1]

* 33: I am ashamed my name to tell
[f.14v, 8 lines; headed "2 noctis 5. le pot". French version is "Honte me prent de mon nom reciter" (M5v).]

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1. See Douce S.327 in the Bodleian, (Lyon, 1596): references are to this copy.

34: At supper three companions sate
[f.14v, 6 lines; headed "1 noctis 5". French version is "Trois compagnons estans à table" (G5v).]

35: A goodlie thing in vs ther lies
[f.14v, 8 lines: headed "2 noctis 4. L'ame immortelle". French version is "Entre nous est vn tres noble subiect" (L7v).]

36: I am a thing both fair & smooth
[f.14v, 8 lines; headed "2 noctis 3. La belle & Blanche serviette". French version is "Chose ie suis assez plaisante et belle"(K6v).]

37: On lyving with two dead hath made on lyue
[f.14v, 4 lines; headed "2 noctis 2. vn homme q' produit le son du pierre & du fusil". French version is "Si par vn vif, deux morts, vn vif ont fait" (K1).]

38: My Ihon I would thou shouldest me gyue
[f.15, 6 lines; headed "2 noctis 1. a child | a husband | milke." French version is "Ie voudroy bien amy, que me donnasses" (H6).]

39: Enclosed betwene two walles I first was born
[f.15, 6 lines; headed "1 noctis 1. La febre seiche." French version is "Entre deux serrures nee" (C4).]

40: In every place of old & yong: so many vse amisse ther tongue
[f.15, 31 lines; a poem about gossip, which seems to have a "noctis" heading similar to the others but obscured by a blot. I have not been able to find a French version.]

41: we of these 2 children are the 2 mothers
[f.15v, 6 lines; genealogical riddle poem, with diagram, cf.8.]

42: The first is my vncle of my fathers side doubtles
[f.15v, 6 lines; another genealogical riddle, apparently referring to the situation of 8.]

43: To purchase peace at those fayre eyes of thyne
[f.15v, sonnet; headed "Petrar. Sonet 19." An English translation of Petrarch's 19th sonnet, "Mille fiate, ò dolce mia Guerrera" - see, for example, Il Petrarca (Venice 1575) sig.(B12v) (Bodleian Toynbee 234). The translation has some alterations and is perhaps the work of Stanford. The choice of Petrarch is interesting, because in his dedication of The Terrors of the Night (1594) to Elizabeth Carey the younger, Nashe writes of her mother, Lady Carey, "Into the Muses societie herself she hath lately adopted, & purchast diuine Petrarch another monument in England."(1)

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1. See McKerrow's edition of Nashe, vol.1, p.342 (repr. Oxford 1966).

This suggests that translating Petrarch was a concern of the Carey household at this time, though none of Lady Carey's work is known.]

By the new year 1595/6, Henry Stanford seems certainly to have been a member of the household of Lady Elizabeth Carey, wife of Sir George, and her daughter Elizabeth. The Carey ladies seem often to have been in their London house at Blackfriars while Sir George was in the Isle of Wight,[1] and Elizabeth (now nearly twenty) was engaged for a while to Lord Pembroke in 1595, but this was broken off.[2]

* 44: Goe booke as token to my mistris deere
[f.16, sonnet; headed "To Mrs Elizabeth Carey sending <poppelliner his freme historie> for a newyeres gift. 1595." Probably from Stanford, who describes himself as "her swain" to Elizabeth Carey the younger. I have not been able to identify the book sent. She apparently liked literature (see line 6): to her were dedicated Nashe's Terrors of the Night (1594), Erondelle's French Garden (1605), and translations of Camden's Annales (1627) and Britannia (1637).]

45: In sign that thou art fair & matcheles without peere
[f.16, 4 lines: probably from Stanford, sending "this fayrie quene" to a lady as a new year's gift. Books 1-3 of Spenser's Faerie Queene were published in 1590, and books 1-6 in 1596. Spenser was a distant kinsman of Lady Carey's, and dedicated his Muiopotmos to her. See also 69 below.]

46: Because the nightes are long & nouelles tyme deceaue
[f.16, 4 lines; probably from Stanford, sending a book of tales written by "a quene of witte & bewtie rare" to a lady for a new year's gift.]

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1. See H.M.C. De L'Isle and Dudley, II (1934) passim.

2. Ibid., pp. 173, 188.

On February 19th 1595/6 Elizabeth Carey was married to Thomas Berkeley, son and heir to Henry, seventh Lord Berkeley, and their first child, Theophila, was born on December 11th 1596.[1] On July 23rd 1596, however, Henry, first Lord Hunsdon, had died, and Sir George Carey succeeded. Stanford may have been in the service of Elizabeth Carey, for he seems to have moved with her to the Berkeley family household.

The Berkeleys[2] had lost favour at the time of the fall of the Duke of Norfolk (1572), for Henry, seventh Lord Berkeley, had married the Duke's sister, Katherine Howard, daughter of the poet the Earl of Surrey. During the lifetime of Lord Henry's only son, Thomas (born in 1575), the family were plagued with lawsuits over Berkeley Castle and their estates in Gloucestershire, and spent their time in various houses, notably at Callowden (Warwickshire) and Coventry. After the death of his first wife in 1596, Lord Berkeley married Jane Stanhope, widow of Sir Roger Townsend, and spent much of his time at her house in the Barbican.

* 47: Loe here in signe of seruice which is due
[f.16, sonnet; headed "Anno 1597. stilo Romano". From Stanford at the new year 1596/7, to Elizabeth Carey, now wife of Thomas Berkeley, sending a little book for a new year's gift. Theophila Berkeley (see line 12) would have been not quite a month old.]

48: A crabtre face the felow had his stature great & tall
[f.16, 3 lines.]

49: Deere nephew pallas, put not on thie dismall armor braue
[f.16, couplet.]

50: By on thing somm men famous are & names & titles haue
[f.16v, 12 lines. 48-50 are short pieces, with Classical allusions.]

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1. See Smyth's Lives of the Berkeleys ed. Maclean (1883) ii, p.396.
2. See Smyth op. cit., vol.ii, pp.364-437; DNB; Complete Peerage; S. Rudder, A new history of Gloucestershire (1779) p.277.

After the new year of 1596/7, there appears to be another time gap in the manuscript, for the next entries are dated 1609/10. Whether Stanford remained with the Berkeleys seems uncertain, for they were travelling from house to house and living with restricted means. For a time he may have stood in as Rector of Handsworth, his home in Staffordshire where his eldest brother owned the living; Shaw writes of the descendants of Sir William Stanford, "His second son Henry was parson of Handsworth but surrendered it to Mr Furnaby".[1] However, the lists of Rectors of Handsworth have: William Walter (1571-1602), John Fulnetby (1602).[2]

Stanford may possibly have remained in the household of Sir George Carey, now Lord Hunsdon, who made his will in May 1599, and mentions Stanford in a context which seems to imply a certain seniority in the household: "Item I give to Teesy Purdue my wives Gentlewoman to Mr Stamforde and to George Blande my Steward to eache of them Fourtie pounds ..."[3] To his wife Dame Elizabeth, Lord Hunsdon left his house in Blackfriars and the manor at West Drayton (formerly belonging to the Pagets) which he had acquired in 1592.[4]

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1. See Shaw's Staffordshire vol. ii (1801) pp.108-9.
2. Ibid., p.113.
3. P.C.C. 68 Bolein.
4. See Lysons's Middlesex Parishes (1800), p.34. On Lord Paget's attainder, the manor was granted to Sir Christopher Hatton; in 1592 the Queen demised it for 21 years to Lord Hunsdon, but Will Paget was later granted a reversion (1597) and in 1603/4 he was restored in blood, honours and estates.

Lord Hunsdon died in September 1603, and was succeeded by his brother Sir John Carey. Elizabeth, Lady Hunsdon, seems now to have devoted some of her time to caring for her grandchildren: On October 7th 1601 the Berkeleys had had a son, George, though the family was still no more settled. John Smyth of Nibley, whose Lives of the Berkeleys is a mine of detailed information about the family, has a passage about George's upbringing worth quoting in full for the light it sheds on conditions in the Berkeley household (and indirectly on MS Dd5.75):

> It fared with the father and mother of this Lord George during their joynt lives, as with younger brethren (though heires to two noble families) who having Anuities for their maintenance, and noe houses wherein to settle themselves, must sojourn with freinds or hire where they may for money; So consequently it fell out with this lord, a part of themselves and the hope of both their posterities, who (having been nursed at Envile) moved with them according to their motion, to London, to Claredon, to Newpark, and lastly to Callowdon, where and at Coventry, till the dissipacon of his grandfathers family a month after his death, hee remained a Scholler under Doctor Philemon Holland; And from thence to London with his mother, as hath been said; where between her houses of Redcrosse street, Mylend, Durdens and Cranford, hee continued under the instruction and example of Mr Henry Ashwood, his sober and vertuous tutor, till he was fitted for Oxford. (1)

George's father was made K.B. at James's Coronation and in 1603 was M.P. for Gloucestershire. He was, however, "profuse in expense beyond his ordinary means" and according to Smyth, "inconstant and too sodaine in his determinations: In the years 1600, 1608, 1610 he thrice posted into France ..."[2]

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1. Ed. Maclean (1883) vol. ii, p.426.

2. Ibid., pp.397-9.

In 1611 Sir Thomas Berkeley returned from Europe, spent the summer with his father and on his return to Callowdon with his family, fell ill and died on November 22nd. He had made no will and left his family in debt, and after his death his father's "most care seemed to bee for his two grand children, George & Theophila."[1]

By the new year 1609/10, however, Henry Stanford seems to have been with the Berkeleys (who may perhaps have been staying with Lady Hunsdon while Sir Thomas was on the Continent). The items in the manuscript now cover the years 1609/10 to 1612/3: they are not all in chronological order but are mostly dated. They consist of complimentary poems from Stanford to Lady Hunsdon, Lady Berkeley, Theophila Berkeley and Philemon Holland; and new year poems from George Berkeley to various members of the household. George (aged nine at the new year 1609/10) writes to his mother, Elizabeth Lady Berkeley; his grandmother - probably Elizabeth Lady Hunsdon rather than his step-grandmother Jane Lady Berkeley; his sister Theophila; his grandfather Henry Lord Berkeley; to various servants - Mr. James Orwell, Mrs. Ann Fitch, Mrs. Margaret Egerton, Mrs. Cave (his mother's waiting woman), Mrs. Powel (his sister's gentlewoman); and to "Sir John Millesant". The identity of the latter is uncertain: a John Millesent of co. Camb. was knighted by King James at Royston in January 1606/7,[2] and appears to have been a Fellow-Commoner at Peterhouse,

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1. Maclean, op. cit., p.404. They were the only two of six children to survive.

2. Shaw, The Knights of England (1906) vol.2, p.141.

Cambridge, at this time.[1] He may have been one of the Millicents of Bergham Hall, Cambridgeshire,[2] although there are also records of a family named Mileson who moved from Yorkshire to East Anglia in the sixteenth century;[3] (a John Mileson appears to have been a younger brother of Edward, who had property at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, in 1612).[4] The former is perhaps the more likely; he appears to have been a minor favourite of the king's in 1614-1615, and is mentioned by Sir Anthony Weldon in a passage worth quoting in full as it provides a tenuous link between Millesent and Sir John Finnet, compiler of MS Rawl. Poet.85:

> Then began the King to eate abroad, who formerly used to eat in his Bed-chamber, or if by chance supped in his Bed-chamber, would come forth to see pastimes and fooleries; in which Sir Ed.Souch, Sir George Goring, and Sir Iohn Finit, were the chief and Master Fooles, and surely this Fooling got them more then any others wisdome, far above them in desert: Souch his part to sing bawdy songs, and tel bawdy tales; Finit to compose these songs; then were a set of Fidlers brought up to purpose for this Fooling, & Goring was Master of the game for Fooleries; sometimes presenting David Droman, and Archer Armstrong the kinges Foole, on the back of other fools, to tilt one at another, till they fell together by the eares; sometimes Antick Dances, but Sir Iohn Millisent, who was never knowne before was commended for notable fooling, and so was the best extemporary Foole of them all; ... (5)

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1. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses.

2. Waters, Genealogical Memoirs of the Extinct Family of Chester (1872)p.167.

3. Foster's Visitation of Yorkshire (1875) p.628.

4. Metcalfe's Visitation of Suffolk (1882) p.153.

5. Weldon, The Court and Character of King James (1650) [G6]. See also a reference to Sir John Millicent in Bodleian MS Rawl.Poet.26 f.118 (a Cambridge collection made 1615-60).

* 51: Thrice honourd dame: yf I a gift estem'd
[f.16v, sonnet; headed "To the Lady Hunsdon 1609. homer giuen". Ascribed in the margin "H.St.". A new year's gift for 1609/10 sent by Stanford with a copy of Homer. There were editions of Homer in Latin in 1580, in Greek in 1591, and in English translations by Hall (1581), Chapman (1598, 1610) and William Fowldes (1603).]

52: to pray I will not cease
[f.16v, 4 lines. Short poem of good wishes, written in the margin.]

* 53: A new yeares gift receaue thrice honord dame
[f.16v, sonnet; headed "To ye the (sic) Lady Hunsdon. 1612. Brittaines Troy sent". Probably from Stanford in 1612/13 sending as a new year's gift Thomas Heywood's Troia Britanica or Great Britaines Troy (1609).]

54: In stede of gift a stammering verse I send to shew my loue
[f.17, 10 lines; headed "George Bercley 1611" - new year's gift to his "dere Grandam".]

* 55: My knight as many happie happes I wishe the this new yeare
[f.17, 10 lines; headed "George to Sr Iohn Millesant. 1610".]

56: Last new yeares day my rugged rime orwell did the salute
[f.17, 10 lines; headed "George to Mr Orwell. 1611".]

57: My Egerton this paper I you send
[f.17, 4 lines; headed "George to Mrs Egerton 1610".]

58: My Egerton receaue my verse & me excuse I pray
[f.17v, 8 lines; headed "George Berckley to Mrs Margaret Edgerton 1611."]

* 59: My fitche I wishe the store of heauenly grace
[f.17v, 4 lines; headed "George Berkley to Ann Fitche. 1610".]

* 60: My Nan althoughe I haue scarce tyme, allotted to indight
[f.17v, 8 lines; headed "George to the same 1611". George to Mrs Fitch again - interesting in its suggestion that he wrote to a strict schedule.]

* 61: The doues shall leaue to haunt the stately towres
[f.17v, 10 lines; headed "George to his Grandame 1610".]

62: Sibyllas tyme I wishe you sister deere
[f.18, 4 lines; headed "George Berckley to his sister. 1610".]

63: Deere mother I you wishe a merry yeare
[f.18, 4 lines; headed "George Berckley to his mother. 1610".]

* 64: Trice honourd lord the prop & cheifest stay
[f.18, 10 lines; headed "George Bercklay to his Grandfather. 1610".]

* 65: Last newyeares day I wish'd the well & now doe wishe againe
[f.18, 14 lines; headed "George Bercklay to Sr Iohn Millesant. 1611."]

66: Sir Iohn I the salute, & wishe the this new yeare
[f.18v, 10 lines; headed "1612 to Sr Iohn Millesant".]

67: Thrice Phebus in the tripping Goate hath taken vp his Inn
[f.18v, 22 lines; headed "George to his Grandmother. 1612".]

68: My fitche I the salute I know thou dost me loue
[f.18v, 10 lines; headed "George to Mrs fithe (sic). 1612". She has four children, including "little Mall" whom George wishes "may learn to sow and also to speak frenche". The French Garden, Peter Erondelle's French manual "for English Ladyes and Gentlewomen" published in 1605, was dedicated to George's mother, Elizabeth Berkeley.]

* 69: hauing no other gift right noble dame
[f.19, sonnet; headed "h.St. to the Lady Hunsdon 1610 faery quene". From Stanford as a new year's gift, with a copy of The Faerie Queene, perhaps in the third edition of 1609. (Cf. 45 above.) Stanford reminds Lady Hunsdon (née Spencer) of her kinship with the poet (lines 3-4) and suggests she should read his "sugred verse" for its moral usefulness (lines 9-13).]

* 70: What Cambden wrote for profit & delight
[f.19, sonnet; headed "h.St. to D. Hollandes translation of Cambdens Brittain". Dr. Philemon Holland's translation of Camden's Britannia (published in Latin in 1586) appeared in 1610. Holland lived at Coventry from 1595, not far from the Berkeleys' house at Callowdon, and was tutor to young George Berkeley. (1) He probably knew Stanford, for he married Anne, the daughter of William Bot alias Peyton of Perry Hall, Staffordshire - the Stanford family seat. (2) Stanford's poem was later printed among a group of extra prefatory verses added

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1. See Smyth, op. cit., quoted above.

2. See DNB.

in the second edition of Camdens Britain (1637) and signed "Henry Stanford, Master of Arts". This second edition was dedicated to Lady Elizabeth Berkeley, George's mother - to whom Stanford alludes in the final couplet; she may have been the "learned dame" referred to in the poem, at whose suit the translation was made.]

71: God send you all content & to bring forth a boy
[f.19, 6 lines; a poem to a lady, hoping either for a boy "which other self, to me may be ... or else som prety girle". Perhaps by George Berkeley to his mother, 1611/2: Lady Berkeley was expecting a child at the time of her husband's death in November 1611; a boy, Henry, was born, but died in March 1611/2. (1)]

72: Most louing mother this new year let me my duty shew
[f.19v, 20 lines; headed "George to his mother 1612". It is his mother who has encouraged his interest in literature:
By tutours paines you haue me taught, & made that I now rellish
Castalian springes & Helicon which virtuous myndes embellish.]

73: Dere sister I this new yeares tyde do wish to you such hap
[f.19v, 10 lines: headed "George to his sister 1612".]

⁂ 74: Sweete sister you are riche, in golden < > of grace [blot]
[f.19v, 16 lines; headed "George again to his sister", who must have been ill at this time (see lines 7-8). The poem is undated but probably refers to 1612/3 for it mentions the death of Prince Henry (November 6th, 1612) (lines 9-10). George had obviously been reading Chapman's An Epicede or Funerall Song (1612), which has the comment (sig.D1) "The Fever the Prince dyed off, is observ'd by our Moderne Phisitions to be begun in Hungarie."]

⁂ 75: My caue I wishe the this new yeare suche fortune & suche hap
[f.20, 18 lines; headed "George to Mrs Caue his mother wayting woman" and making play with the name Cave.]

⁂ 76: My powel I this newyeares tyde doe wishe to the good hap
[f.20, 10 lines; headed "To his sisters Gentlewoman Mrs Powel" whom George has known for seven yeares.]

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1. See Smyth, op. cit., p.399.

* 77: My deerest dame this history I send
[f.20, sonnet; headed "H.Stanford to Lady Berkley 1612". He is troubled by the "gowte" but sends her a new year's gift.]

* 78: for new yeares guift accept this little booke
[f.20v, sonnet; headed "H.Stanford to Mrs Theophila Berkelay 1612". He sends her a book of "Bertas" - probably Joshua Sylvester's translation Bartas his deuine weekes & workes published in 1605, 1607, 1608, 1611, 1613. He has wished her well from her cradle and hopes that she will continue in her studies.]

79: nether life nor death affordes
[f.20v, 3 8-line stanzas; headed "Anonymous". A song, the last entry in this section of the MS, as ff.21-24 are blank.]

1613 saw some profound changes in the Berkeley household. In the first place George's sister Theophila was married on August 12th to Sir Robert Cole, son of the Chief Justice.[1] Then on November 26th Henry Lord Berkeley died at Callowdon, and young George, just twelve, succeeded as eighth Lord Berkeley. He became a ward of his great-uncle, the Earl of Northampton, while his mother worked hard to preserve for him his family heritage of land and property. She acquired the manor of Cranford (Middlesex), to which she retired, and a marriage was arranged between George and Elizabeth Stanhope, the daughter of George's step-grandmother's younger brother. This took place on April 13th, 1614, when George was thirteen and a half, and his bride was nine. Then on June 16th the Earl of Northampton died, and George's mother had to make fresh efforts to secure the property.

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1. See Smyth's Lives of the Berkeleys, vol.2, p.400.

George meanwhile was continuing his education. At the age of twelve he had been writing Latin letters to John Smyth from Coventry,[1] but after his grandfather's death he moved to London. Eventually, in May 1618, leaving his wife behind with her father at Clerkenwell, George matriculated (like Will Paget and Robert Carey before him) at Christ Church, Oxford. But after 1612/3 he too passes from the manuscript.

On April 23rd 1614, shortly after George Berkeley's marriage, Henry Stanford of the Black Friars, London, gentleman, made his will. He asked to be buried at West Drayton, made substantial bequests to his relations, his godchildren, and to the poor of Hadley and West Drayton, and left mourning rings to his nephew, his step-brother, Lady Elizabeth Berkeley of Cranford, and Lord George Berkeley. He probably died in 1616, when the will was proved.[2]

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1. Smyth, op. cit., p.426.

2. P.C.C., 111 Cope.

Chapter Thirteen

"Slack Not, But Write ..."

The Poems of JOHN FINNET, ROBERT MILLS, JAMES RESHOULDE, and the Poems Associated with HUMFREY CONINGESBY, ROBERT ALLOTT, and "IOH.ED."

> Slack not, but write; sleepe not, but sing; let your mornings muse like Aurora blushing march her equipage, in her statliest buskind Poetrie. I know Cambridge howsoeuer now old, thou hast some young, bid them be chast, yet suffer them to be wittie; let them be soundly learned, yet suffer them to be gentlemenlike qualified: Oxford thou hast many, and they are able to sing sweetly when it please thee. And thou youngest of all three, either in Hexameter English, thou art curious (but that thou learnedst of my daughter Cambridge) or in any other kinde thou art so wisely merrie, as my selfe (though olde) am often delighted with thy musick, tune they sweet strings, & sing what please thee.
>
> (England to her three daughters, Cambridge, Oxford, Innes of Court)
>
> William Covell's Polimanteia

SECTION I: The Poems of John Finnet, Robert Mills and James Reshoulde.

MS Cambridge Dd5.75 does not record whether William Paget and George Berkeley continued to write poems in English during the time they spent at Christ Church, Oxford, but English poems written by young gentlemen at Cambridge in the 1580s are preserved in MS Rawl.Poet.85. It was noted

above[1] that this miscellany was probably compiled in the late 1580s by John Finnet (born in 1571), son of a Kentish squire and later to be Master of Ceremonies to James I and Charles I.

Finnet seems to have begun collecting poems at court, and continued after he had entered St. John's College, Cambridge, as a Fellow-Commoner at Easter 1588. Two sections of the manuscript (ff.36v-43v and 53v-85v)[2] appear to preserve poems copied at Cambridge probably between 1588 and 1590,[3] and from these it becomes clear that Finnet had a little circle of friends at St. John's, who wrote poems in English, imitating the fashionable writers of the time. Finnet himself (though he was later well-known as a composer of bawdy songs to amuse the King)[4] does not seem to have been a great writer of English verse - the items in the manuscript that appear to be his are mainly epigrams, some of which look like translation exercises. More interesting, however, are the poems he preserves written by his friends Robert Mills and James Reshoulde.

Mills (from Lincolnshire) entered St. John's as a Pensioner nominated by Lord Burghley in the Lent Term 1582/3, and took his B.A. in 1586/7.[5] He was thus a contemporary of Thomas Nashe[6] with whom he

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1. Chapter 2, p.40.
2. See Volume 2, p.341.
3. Cummings p.40.
4. See the article on Finnet in the DNB.
5. Venn's Alumni Cantabrigienses: other information given here concerning admissions, degrees etc. comes from this work.
6. Matric. 1582, B.A. 1586/7. Verses in Latin written by both Mills and Nashe for presentation to Lord Burghley in 1585 are among those preserved in the P.R.O.: SP Add.Eliz. xxix ff.151-171.

appears to have been involved in an entertainment called Terminus et Non Terminus (probably at Christmas 1588) which displeased the authorities and brought about the departure of both Mills and Nashe from the College.[1] Reshoulde (baptised in 1567 at Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk) entered Trinity College as a sizar at Easter 1582, but moved to St. John's in November 1586 as a scholar, took his B.A. (like Mills) in 1586/7 and his M.A. in 1590. In 1591 he was ordained and was Vicar of Clare, Suffolk, at his death in January 1598/9.[2] A third contemporary of Finnet's, the author of a short Latin poem on f.65v, was Edward Chapman of Kent,[3] who entered St. John's in 1575, took his B.A. in 1578/9, his M.A. in 1582, and was a Fellow from 1579 until his death in 1591/2.[4] He would thus have been a contemporary of Robert Greene (matric. 1575), Henry Constable and Abraham Fraunce (both matric. 1576).[5]

Of the poems in the Cambridge sections of the manuscript, ten are ascribed to Mills and three to Reshoulde, while four are probably by Finnet and four more may be his also. Six poems of some length and four epigrams are written in English versions of Classical quantitative

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1. See Cummings p.37, and poem 97 in Volume 2, p.354.
2. See Cummings p.34.
3. Chapman contributed a poem to the Cambridge Lachrymae (1587) in mourning for Sidney: sig. [B3].
4. Cummings p.512.
5. See J. Parr, "Robert Greene and his classmates at Cambridge" PMLA lxxvii (1962) p.536, which contains much information about undergraduates at St. John's at this time.

metres - mainly English hexameters but including also some sapphics.

The "reformed versifying" movement has been a subject of some discussion among scholars this century;[1] it seems to have been at its height in the 1580s. What has not been emphasised before is the importance to the movement of St. John's College, Cambridge. Of the theorists and practitioners of this new poetry, Cheke, Watson, Ascham, Drant, Webbe, Blenerhasset, Greene, Fraunce and Nashe were all educated at St. John's, and the similarity of much of their theorising (attacks on rhyme, pleas for a learned Classical poetry) must, I think, be attributed to "that most famous and fortunate Nurse of all learning, Saint Iohns in Cambridge, that at that time was as an Vniuersity within it selfe."[2] Of the other reformed versifiers, Harvey, Spenser, Puttenham, Greville, Campion and the Davison brothers were at various other Cambridge colleges, while Sidney and Dyer, Stanyhurst, Barnes and Daniel went to Oxford.

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1. See R.B. McKerrow, "The Use of so-called Classical Metres in Elizabethan Verse", MLQ iv (1901) p.172, and v (1902) p.6; Gladys Willcock, "Passing Pitefull Hexameters", MLR xxix (1934) p.1; G.L. Hendrickson, "Elizabethan Quantitative Hexameters", PQ xxviii (1949) p.237; W.A. Ringler, "Master Drant's Rules", PQ xxix (1950) p.70; J.C. Maxwell, "Gabriel Harvey", Essays in Criticism i (1951) p.185; J. Thompson, The Founding of English Metre (1961) chapter 5. For a list of works in classical metres, see T.S. Omond, English Metrists (Oxford 1921) p.273: there are also examples in the works of Barnabe Barnes, Fulke Greville, Sir Arthur Gorges, and in the Arundel-Harington MS.

2. Nashe's Preface to Menaphon, ed. McKerrow, iii, p.317.

It seems possible that St. John's, that bastion of the reformed church and the new Classical learning, was interested enough in the fate of English poetry to favour what might be described as a literary reformation, a sort of poetic puritanism. Certainly members of the College were interested in literature: the statutes of 1545 lay down that a "lord" be appointed at Christmas, to compose verses and plays,[1] and that on weekdays in the short vacations, students should write verses, letters or speeches, read Greek authors or act plays.[2] On evenings when, in celebration, a fire was made up in the Hall, fellows, scholars and servants were allowed to stay up after the evening meal, and amuse themselves with songs, poems and tales.[3]

The poems apparently collected by Finnet at St. John's give one a good impression of the interests of a young gentleman (who, as a fellow-commoner, would have dined with the fellows and be allowed special privileges) and his two graduate friends: there are Latin speeches made by the Queen on visits to both universities (O16, O17), Latin couplets and translations (some in English hexameters), a Latin poem on the death of Leicester's son (D8), a Latin drinking song adapted from the medieval Confessio Goliae (F15), a long medieval Goliardic poem which seems to have

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1. Early Statutes of the College of St. John, ed. Mayor (Cambridge 1859) p.139.
2. Ibid., p.249.
3. Ibid., p.165.

come into popularity again (A26),[1] the libels on Oxford and Baeshe,[2] and lyrics by courtier poets like Sidney and Lord Derby.[3]

The emphasis on the Classics was thus considerable. Undergraduates and graduates studied and imitated Classical literature, and Finnet and his friends composed Latin verses as well as collecting them. Members of the College could be punished for speaking in Hall any language other than Latin, Greek or Hebrew.[4] In this environment, any attempt to make English a more "Classical" language, capable of the same sort of literary effects as Greek or Latin would no doubt have been popular - especially if, in writing English quantitative verse, one was following a fashion approved of by the court and practised by some of the leading poets of the day.

James Reshoulde's poem in English Sapphics (no.78) is the first sustained attempt at quantitative metre in the manuscript. It consists of twelve rather repetitive stanzas on the theme of friendship. At best it achieves a not unpleasant patterning of phrase (as in lines 21-4), but

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1. It was printed with a translation in Chapman's Ouids Banquet of Sence (1595) sig. [G2], and translated by R.S. as Phillis and Flora (1598).

2. Cummings suggests that the Baeshe libel may have been resurrected to embarras Edward Baeshe's two sons, who entered Peterhouse as fellow-commoners at the same time as Finnet entered St. John's: see p.538.

3. See list in Volume 2, pp. 341 ff.

4. Statutes ed. Mayor, p.39.

the general effect is one of clogged half-Latin repetitions. What is apparent, though, is the attention paid to spelling - rules like that of position were not easy to apply in a language with as free an orthography as Elizabethan English, and Finnet has emended and regularised his text, cancelling vowels and double consonants in places, and even substituted ampersands for "and".

Reshoulde's other poem in Classical metre is his echo poem in hexameters (no.108), in imitation of Sidney's poem of the same form in the Arcadia (OA31). Reshoulde seems to have been fond of rhyme (which on the whole the St. John's theorists condemned as a barbarism, invented by the Goths); his echoes are rhymed, unlike Sidney's but perhaps owing something to Lord Oxford's echo poem in conventional metre "Sitting alone upon my thought". Reshoulde even goes to the extent of internal rhyme - a device he uses again in his third poem, a slightly ribald ballad in conventional metre (no.87). His hexameters are rather more successful than his sapphics, and the echo endings quite neatly managed.

Curiously enough, what appears to be a companion piece to Reshoulde's poem is preserved in MS Marsh Z3.5.21, f.20, unascribed. It is apparently also in English hexameters though they are more clumsily handled than Reshoulde's. It was apparently this poem that led Professor Ringler to state that some of Reshoulde's work appears in the Marsh MS:[1]

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1. Ringler p.559.

the two poems have some similarity, but there is nothing in the Marsh MS that can be attributed to Reshoulde. The Marsh echo poem is, however, an item contributing to the relationship between MSS Rawl.Poet.85 and Marsh Z3.5.21, which share some very closely related texts.

Much more successful than Reshoulde's quantitatives are those by Robert Mills. Mills was obviously quite a capable writer of Latin verse, and his English hexameters are on the whole interesting and readable. He has a good turn of phrase and an ear for rhythm, and usually manages to place his words so that their natural stress coincides with the quantitative pattern. His three poems in hexameters (nos.97-9) seem to have been sent to Finnet from Stamford, Lincolnshire, where he was a schoolmaster after his departure from St. John's.[1]

Poem 97 gives an attractive picture of how Finnet and his friends seem to have spent their time at St. John's - in "playes meriments, conceytes, and pleasure" (lines 19-33). "Ware the Water" (no.98) is an ambitious mock-heroic narrative, full of Classical example and rhetorical embellishment, about a group of Cambridge scholars whose boating excursion almost ended in disaster. It shows the use Mills made of his education: he invokes the watery powers, collects examples of Classical figures who suffered through water, and uses appropriate epic similes at the right points. Although the poem refers to an actual incident, the realistic description of the event is almost obscured by the mass of Classical

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1. See the notes on ff.77v and 82, and Cummings p.38.

parallel and commonplace wisdom. It is possible that the Cambridge authorities would have been none too pleased with the tale: a decree of 1571 "That No One Go Into the Water" forbade swimming or bathing near Cambridge on penalty of a whipping in Hall,[1] though the poem does refer to "Jordan" and "Paradise" as "two swymming places in Camb:".

These two poems show that Mills (rather like Will Paget and George Berkeley) liked to use _exempla_ extensively - they are full of proverbs and aphorisms, commonplaces and apophthegms (e.g. no.98, lines 83-6). Mills's other poem in hexameters is a translation of part of Ovid's _Amores_ (no.99)[2] and reminds one of Fraunce's translation of _Amyntas_.[3] Ovid was certainly popular at the universities - Marlowe and Harington (among others) translated some of the _Amores_,[4] and there are fragments in Latin of the _Ars Amatoria_ at the start of MS Harl.7392.[5]

Mills may have known Fraunce, who was at St. John's from 1576 to c.1583. His influence is apparent also in the poem on f.85v of the manuscript (no.107), "Verses made in manner of argument vpon 11: Lamentations of Amintas". The ascription has been torn out, but the poem

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1. C.R. Thompson, _Universities in Tudor England_ (Washington 1959) p.29.
2. _Cummings_ (p.589) identifies it as Amores I, v: "Aestus erat ..."
3. Cf. _The Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch_ (1591) sig. [G1v].
4. Marlowe (B.A. Corpus Christi, 1583) translated some of the _Amores_ at Cambridge: see L.C. Martin's edition of _Marlowe's Poems_ (1931) p.15. Harington translated a poem from the _Amores_ in 1593: no.222 in the Arundel-Harington MS.
5. f.11.

is apparently the work of Finnet or one of his friends. Though obviously based on Fraunce's Amyntas, it owes something also to Breton's Phillis and Coridon poems, especially the song "Sweet Phillis is the shepherds' queen".

Mills's other poems preserved in the miscellany are in more conventional rhymed metres. His song in praise of peace (no.100), referring to the quarrels in the town of Stamford in 1588-9,[1] shows once again his fondness for sententious statement, as the four middle stanzas of the poem are made up entirely from such exempla. His poem "To a feygned faythless and vngratefull frende" (no.101) is also neatly turned; the form and sententious style recall some of Ralegh's early lyrics, such as "Many desire but few or none deserve". Finally, Mills's "Inuentiones of the .9. Muses" (no.131) is a sort of Classical narrative that could almost be acted like a masque, describing, in tetrameter couplets, the attributes of each of the muses.[2]

Robert Mills was certainly the group's most competent versifier, and John Finnet the least successful. Finnet seems to have mutilated his own work in the manuscript, and may have torn out some of his longer poems - perhaps after f.83v - and most of what is left consists of epigrams and translations of Latin couplets, some of which attempt jog-trot English hexameters with little success (e.g. nos.55-6). One of these provides an

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1. See Cummings p.828.

2. Perhaps this owes something to other poems about the nine muses - such as Spenser's Teares of the Muses (1591), or Puttenham's Partheniades (B.M.MS Cotton Vespasian E.viii ff.169-178).

interesting link with other manuscripts in the group. On f.83v Finnet has a translation of "Pastor, arator, eques, paui, colui, superavi"[1] - a Latin couplet providing a short summary of Virgil's works (the Eclogues, Georgics and Aeneid), probably dating from the Renaissance, for it appears in editions of Virgil in the 1580s and 1590s among a group of epigrams that seem to have become attached to the canon.[2] It was quoted together with two translations in French alexandrines in Tabourot's Les Bigarrures du Seigneur des Accordz (Paris 1583),[3] which seems to have been known by Abraham Fraunce, who quoted the French versions in his Arcadian Rhetorike (?1588) and added an English translation.[4] MS Marsh Z3.5.21 (f.20) has another English rendering, and MS Harl.7392 has two (f.61), one by "Saintlowe Knyuetowne".

Translating epigrams of this sort seems to have been popular at this time: Finnet has three examples in MS Rawl.Poet.85,[5] and there are others in MS Rawl.Poet.148,[6] Kendall's Flowers of Epigrammes (1577),[7] Whetstone's

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1. See item 104.
2. E.g. Opera P. Virgilii Maronis (London 1583) sig. [2N1] and Scaliger's Pub. Virgilii Maronis Appendix (Leyden 1595) sig. [M3].
3. Sig. [R2].
4. Sig. [E1].
5. ff.39v, 83v.
6. ff.110v, 111v.
7. Sig. [P4v].

English Myrror (1586),[1] Davison's Poetical Rapsody (1602),[2] and even as early as Taverner's translation of Erasmus (1545).[3]

H.H. Hudson has pointed out how epigrams were taught in Elizabethan schools to encourage conciseness and compression of thought,[4] using as examples the Greek Anthology and the Latin epigrammatists like Martial. Henry Stanford's fondness for epigrams has already been noted, and that the epigram was popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is evident from the number of published works containing this type of poetry.[5]

How many of the St. John's circle kept up their interest in English verse after 1590 one cannot really determine. Fraunce and Nashe could perhaps have shown some of the literary possibilities open to them, but Mills vanishes from sight in the early 1590s, and Reshoulde was dead before the turn of the century. Finnet developed into an expert on court protocol,[6] but he kept his fondness for bawdy songs and was apparently in

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1. Sig. [D1].
2. Ed. Rollins (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1931) poem 69.
3. Proverbes or Adagies gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus, passim.
4. The Epigram in the English Renaissance (Princeton 1947).
5. See the epigrammatists discussed by Hudson, op. cit., and T.K. Whipple, Martial and the English Epigram from Sir Thomas Wyatt to Ben Jonson (California Berkeley 1925).
6. See his later works The Beginning, Contrivance and Decay of Estates (1606) and Finetti Philoxenis (1656).

other respects a representative Caroline gentleman-courtier.[1] The continuing interest in contemporary literature among the next generations of undergraduates at St. John's is, however, well brought out in the three Parnassus plays acted by members of the College between 1598 and 1603.[2]

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1. See the article on him in the DNB.

2. The Three Parnassus Plays, ed. J.B. Leishman (1949).

SECTION II: Poems Associated with Humfrey Coningesby, Robert Allott, "Ioh.Ed.", and Others.

The poems of Finnet, Mills and Reshoulde in MS Rawl.Poet.85 give one a fairly well-authenticated insight into the interests and preoccupations (both literary and non-literary) of young gentlemen and bachelors of arts at Cambridge in the late 1580s. A similar picture emerges from MS Harl.7392, which seems to have connections with Oxford and the Inns of Court, although the compiler has left fewer clues and the identifications are much more tentative.

It was suggested in chapter two that this miscellany was the work of Humfrey Coningesby, who may have been the undergraduate from Worcestershire of that name who matriculated as a member of Christ Church, Oxford, in November 1581, aged fifteen, and was M.P. for St. Albans from 1584.[1] He had a first cousin, Thomas Coningesby, who was a friend of Sidney's and who was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1584. The miscellany includes items ascribed to a certain "Ioh.Ed." and a group of poems at the end in a different hand and subscribed "Robert Allott". A Robert Allott of Lincolnshire was admitted as a scholar to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in September 1577, aged fifteen,[2] and (like Coningesby) matriculated

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1. This and other references to admissions to Oxford and the Inns of Court comes from Foster's Alumni Oxonienses.

2. See unpublished admissions registers of Corpus Christi College. See also A. Clark's Register of the University of Oxford, OHS x (1887) p.xxiv for an explanation of differences in dates between entry to a college and matriculation. The latter was only enforced after 1581 and often took place just before degrees were taken.

four years later; he was admitted to the Inner Temple in 1584. A John Edwards of Oxfordshire and Oriel College matriculated at Oxford in August 1578, aged thirteen, and was probably admitted to the Inner Temple from Clement's Inn in 1587; alternatively (and perhaps more likely from the point of view of dates) a John Edmonds of Monmouthshire and Gloucester Hall matriculated at Oxford in May 1584, aged twenty, and was perhaps the same year a student at Gray's Inn from Clement's Inn. The manuscript has also two small items subscribed with the name of St. Loe Kniveton of Derbyshire, who was admitted to Gray's Inn in May 1584; and an item subscribed "Ed.Evans", who may be the Edward Evans of Shropshire and Christ Church who matriculated at Oxford in August 1583, aged seventeen.

While most of these identifications are only speculative, they do suggest the existence of a circle of young gentleman at Oxford from about 1584. Certainly MS Harl.7392 and MS Rawl.Poet.85 are very similar in content, sharing nearly a third of their texts.

A spell at the Inns of Court and their associated Inns of Chancery was a common way of finishing off the education of the sons of the landed gentry. Young men often moved there from the Universities, and the Inns provided an extension of the life of an Oxford or Cambridge college with the added advantages of being in London and near the court. They also had a very close connection with the literary life of the period.[1]

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1. This is well documented in the references given in P.J. Finkelpearl's John Marston of the Middle Temple (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge, Mass. 1969).

Other forms of finishing school for young gentlemen were foreign travel (like Sidney's Grand Tour)[1] and serving as a Member of Parliament: in the Parliament of 1584 (when Humfrey Coningesby took his seat) two thirds of the members were new.[2]

The poems in MS Harl.7392 associated with these young amateurs include some epigrams like those in MS Rawl.Poet.85: "Ioh.Ed."'s short translations of Latin verses (nos. 121b, 125) are not unlike Finnet's, though rather more successful. His more courtly poems (nos. 101,102) show strong patterning and a fondness for repeated phrases like "I will forget ..." and "Farewell .../ Welcome ...". Items 108, 121, 124 are full of Classical allusion, the latter two using the rather conventional conceit that heroines and goddesses must all give place to the poet's lady. Item 121 seems to have been accompanied by the gift of a golden ball (see the title) - an incident which may be hinted at also in item 101 (line 6). "Ioh.Ed." may have had some standing as a poet, for his golden ball poem (121) seems to have been imitated by John Woodford in a Latin poem included in the Oxford collection Musa Hospitalis Ecclesiae Christi (1605),[3] and an inferior and bowdlerised version of poem 101 appears unascribed in Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591).[4]

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1. Professor Cummings tells me he has evidence that Finnet left on a European tour in the early 1590s.

2. See Joan Simon, Education and Society in Tudor England (Cambridge, 1967) p.356.

3. Sig. [D4].

4. Sig. [F2]: variants are given in Volume 2, p.381.

Both poems have little extra phrases at the end, such as

> Only yowr Serv:
> though not your only serv: (101)

which remind one of the love poems and letters included in courtly works of the time.[1]

The poems subscribed with the name of Robert Allott are again rather standard, conventionally courtly lyrics. One item on f.77v is marked in the margin "Incerti Authoris" and still subscribed with Allott's name, which may suggest that these poems were not by Allott but perhaps merely written out by him, although I have found no other texts of them. Some (like no.132) could be songs. The first of the group (131) is curious in that only the last two lines of each stanza rhyme, and the remaining eight lines of each stanza rely instead on rhetorical patterning devices - the gathering figure that Puttenham called "the collectour" and the linking of words he called "the marching figure".[2] The last poem (135) is a plea to Apollo and the Muses, which achieves a certain evocative intensity (in the last stanza, for example).

Allott may have continued his interest in poetry, for a Robert Allott seems to have been the author of two books of quotations, Wits Theatre of the little World (1599) and Englands Parnassus (1600), both associated

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1. E.g. Gascoigne's Adventures passed by Master F.I. (1573); Breton's Toyes of an Idle Head and Workes of a young wyt (c.1575-7); Grange's Golden Aphroditis (1577); Wotton's Courtlie Controuersie of Cupids Cautels (1578); Whetstone's Heptameron of Civil Discourses (1582).

2. Puttenham, pp.208, 237.

with the series probably inspired by John Bodenham.[1] If so, he was probably a friend of the more popular writers Christopher Middleton, Gervase Markham and John Weever, for the four wrote commendatory verses to one another's works, and quotations from Middleton, Markham and Weever appear in Allott's collections.[2]

Few, if any, of the poems in MS Harl.7392 seem to be by Coningesby, though he apparently added and then deleted his initials at the end of a number of them. However, items 86 and 87 are two deleted poems subscribed "HC to QR" and "HC ~~to~~ of CG" respectively, which may indicate that Coningesby wrote them, or merely that he made use of them in connection with friends of his.

Both these poems and many others in the manuscript are signed with Latin tags - apparently a fashion at the time. Gascoigne signed all the poems in his Hundreth Sundry Flowers (1573) with one or other of a group of similar tags or posies,[3] and two of his tags reappear in MS Harl.7392: "Ferenda Natura" (f.22) and "Ictus sapio" (f.47). "Forme nulla fides"

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1. See Rollins's edition of Englands Helicon (~~Harvard~~ Cambridge Mass. 1935) and Crawford's edition of Englands Parnassus (Oxford 1913) for details about Bodenham and his associates.

2. See Middleton's Legend of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester (1600), Markham's Devoreux (1597) and Weever's Epigrammes (1599). See also Allott in the DNB, and F.B. Williams's "Notes on Englands Parnassus" in MLN lii (1937) p.420.

3. See edition by C.T. Prouty (Columbia, Missouri 1942) pp.35 ff.

(f.53v) seems to have been adopted by George Whetstone,[1] two of whose poems appear in the manuscript, one unascribed (W40 - f.47) and one ascribed "Incerti Authoris" (H4 - f.24v).

Such tags are found in other manuscripts[2] and in works by writers such as Breton, John Grange, Thomas Howell, Matthew Grove, and George Turbervile.[3] They have a connection with posies inscribed on rings[4] (of which there is a large collection in MS Harl.6910, ff.160v-163), and also with the habit (apparently popular at the Inns of Court)[5] of writing verses on set themes, as encouraged by rhetoricians. In MS Harl. 7392 they seem to have been added at the end of a poem as a sort of neat summing up, rather than to have been the starting point of the poem.

On the whole, the poems in MS Harl.7392 associated with Coningesby, Allott and "Ioh.Ed." are more conventionally courtly and much less scholastic and Classical than those of Finnet and his friends in MS Rawl. Poet.85. Apart from the translated epigrams and the gods and heroes, the

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1. See his Rocke of Regard (1576) and Promos and Cassandra (1578); also his Remembraunces of Gascoigne (1577), Sir Nicholas Bacon (1578), Sir James Dyer (1582), Thomas Earl of Essex (1583).

2. E.g. in MSS Rawl.Poet.148, Add.22601, Add.36529, Egerton 2642, and the Arundel-Harington MS.

3. Breton's Workes of a young wyt (1577), Grange's Golden Aphroditis (1577), Howell's Deuises (1581), Grove's Pelops and Hippodamia (1587), Turbervile's Tragical Tales (1587), and also Willobie his Avisa (1609).

4. See Joan Evans, English Posies and Posy Rings (Oxford 1931).

5. See "Gascoignes Memories" in Hundreth Sundry Flowers, ed. Prouty, p.152; and Whetstone's "Fiftie apples of Admonition" in The Rocke of Regard (1576), p.66.

poems in MS Harl.7392 have moved out of the world of the college into that of the court, from student ribaldry and Ovidian imitation to the elaborately mannered graces and protestations of the Petrarchan situation, with its hints of actual liaisons veiled by the standard love conceits. They give the appearance of poems by young men about town with connections at court, imitating the courtly makers of the day.

MSS Cambridge Dd5.75, Rawl.Poet.85 and Harl.7392 thus exemplify quite neatly the three stages in the education of a young Elizabethan gentleman, from elementary tuition at home, through the University to London and the Inns of Court. That such a progress should be documented in poems written in English adds, I think, a new literary-historical value to these three manuscripts, for in them one can follow young courtiers learning to express themselves in verse, beginning with rhetorical exercises and moving through scholastic classicising into the typical courtly love situations.

Youthfulness was really the essence of an Elizabethan courtly lyric: many a courtier wrote poems "in his youth", but most, having reached the discretion of their twenties, would leave such toys behind them. One or two, baulked of their proper employment in the service of the state, might, like Sidney, develop literary ambitions; and most would still be able to extemporise a sonnet or sing a song, but on the whole a young courtier, his "green youth" behind him, would like Breton's Don Frederigo, sent to finish his education as a gentleman at court, reflect,

For to tell his Mistris a Tale of the nine Muses, to breath his Horse for a breakfast in a morning, or to break a Bulrushe on a buffe Ierkin, to daunce a galliard after dinner, and to leade a Masque after Supper, these are necessary to be knowne, vsed for a time, but soone to be forgotten... (1)

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1. Breton's Poems ed. Robertson, p.xlv.